

CHRONOS

The History Journal of
Yeshiva University

2012 - 2013

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Editors

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Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 2012-13 edition of Chronos, the undergraduate History Journal of Yeshiva University. Since its reinvention last year, Chronos has become a popular and important institution for the publication of student research on a broad range of topics: from the history of Biblical canonization to the history of the Irish Potato famine and from pirate histories to the history of American privateers.

We would like to thank the authors of these papers who have worked side-by-side with the editors of Chronos to polish and publish their papers. We thank Ann Levenson and Meirah Shedlo for their skillful design and formatting work, as well as our printers for all their efforts in producing Chronos. We are indebted to last year's editorial board for their guidance.

We would also like to thank Dean Bacon of Stern College, Deans Eichler and Sugarman of Yeshiva College, and the undergraduate Student Councils for their enthusiastic support of Chronos, both fiscally and academically. Finally, we would like to thank our faculty coordinator, Dr. Hadassah Kosak, and the history faculty at Yeshiva University for their patience and advice throughout the editing and publication process.

We hope you will enjoy exploring these fascinating works of history as much as we have enjoyed bringing them to you!

Sincerely,

The Editors

Gavi Brown

Tammie Senders

Dani Steinberg

Rachel Varon

CHRONOS

British Culpability in the Irish Potato Famine

Joshua Abramson

I.

Scholarship devoted to the Irish Potato Famine of 1845-1850 has focused on the question of British responsibility.¹ The biological stimulus of the Famine was the *Phytophthora infestans* blight, a plant disease that renders the potato plant inedible. However, historians note that modern famines are triggered by natural causes; the largest damage is caused by failures of government administration.² As cultural historian Patrick Brantlinger summarizes, "the blight was unpreventable, but that it should turn into the Famine was not inevitable."³ Under the Acts of Union 1801, the Irish people in the 1840s were citizens of the United Kingdom. What distinguishes the Potato Famine from all other mass famines of the 20th century – Biafra, Ethiopia, Sudan – is that it did not take place in a poor country. On the contrary, the United Kingdom in the mid-nineteenth century was arguably the most powerful country in the world.⁴ Though historical consensus acknowledges that even with British relief many Irish would have died, historians likewise argue that many deaths would have been prevented had the British taken more action.⁵

In this discussion of culpability, many historians have indicted the British administration. These accusatory voices range from Irish nationalist scholars who claim that the British were the primary cause of the Famine to revisionist historians arguing that the Famine "was primarily a disaster like a flood or an earthquake."⁶ Within this back-and-forth debate, one signifier stands out: the term *genocide*. Historians posit that such an accusation is

¹ Cormac Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 49.

² Jenny Edkins, "Mass Starvations and the Limitations of Famine Theorising," *IDS Bulletin* 33.4 (October, 2002), p.12-18.

³ Patrick Brantlinger, *Victorian Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 202.

⁴ Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland's Great Famine: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2006), p. 196.

⁵ James S. Donnelly, Jr., *The Great Irish Potato Famine* (Sutton Publishing, 2006), p. 57-65.

⁶ Ó Gráda, *Black '47*, p. 47.

implied by the writings of Irish nationalist, though the word was invented one hundred years later by Polish Jewish lawyer Raphael Lemkin.⁷ Most contemporary scholars deny it, concluding that the British do not bear such a high burden of responsibility.⁸ British dismissal of this accusation of genocide, however, does not seem rooted in any legal definition. Most historians deny the label of genocide not because the actions of the British government fail to meet the definition proscribed by international law, but rather, because the colloquial sense of the word (as associated with mass murders) does not seem appropriate. They contend that British Prime Ministers Robert Peel and John Russell, and Secretary of the Treasury Charles Edward Trevelyan did provide relief after all. At first glance, given Britain's passive response, the accusation of genocide does not seem suitable.

Francis A. Boyle, Professor of International Law at the University of Illinois - Champaign, was commissioned by the Irish Famine Genocide Committee to investigate the accusation under the definitions of international law. His 1996 report argues that based on the definition of the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" of 1948, the British did indeed commit genocide.⁹

Clearly, during the years 1845 to 1850, the British government pursued a policy of mass starvation in Ireland with intent to destroy in substantial part the national, ethnical, and racial group commonly known as the Irish People.¹⁰

However, his terse report (short of one thousand words) fails to explain and substantiate what specific actions support his conclusion. A close reading of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and an understanding of the complex factors that led to the failure of the relief efforts supports a different conclusion.

While British leaders were not culpable of the crime of genocide, they

⁷ "Holocaust History." What Is Genocide? Accessed September 19, 2012. <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007043>.

⁸ David Nally, "That Coming Storm": The Irish Poor Law, Colonial Biopolitics, and the Great Famine," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 98.3 (2008), p. 733.

⁹ Francis A. Boyle, *The Irish Famine was Genocide* (<http://hnn.us/node/124588>).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*



Irish Emigrants Fleeing their Country, 1847

were culpable of another: *crimes against humanity*.

II.

In defining genocide, the Rome Statute of 1998 states:

For the purpose of this Statute, "genocide" means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such."¹¹

The third act of the Rome Statute directly relates to an examination of British culpability in the Famine:

Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.¹²

In defining crimes against humanity, the Statute posits:

'Crimes against humanity' means any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack: murder, extermination...¹³

Defining this term "extermination," the statute explains:

'Extermination' includes the intentional infliction of conditions of life, *inter alia* the deprivation of access to food and medicine, calculated to bring about the destruction of part of a population.¹⁴

Despite the ample number of clarifying statements, the distinction between "genocide" and "extermination" is not readily apparent from the

¹¹ UN General Assembly, Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (last amended January 2002).

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.* The crime of "deportation or forcible transfer of population," while ostensibly worthy of discussion (2 million Irish left the country), is difficult to demonstrate. The crime of "persecution," though worthy of consideration, is not discussed extensively in Famine literature and is beyond the scope of this paper.

Rome statute. International law analysts have indeed struggled to clarify the ambiguity.¹⁵ Both require *mens rea*, "guilt of the mind," and both can be accomplished without *directly* killing anybody. "The deprivation of access to food" fulfills the condition of "deliberately inflicting...conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction." On a closer reading, however, subtle distinctions emerge. The first distinction, noted by the International Law Commission, reads: "Extermination covers situations in which a group of individuals who do not share any common characteristics are killed."¹⁶ The first distinction, then, is one of targeted victim. Only when a criminal specifies a population can the criminal be convicted of genocide; extermination may take place even when there is no precise target. However, with regard to the Irish Famine, this distinction is irrelevant. British apathy targeted only one population. As will be shown, British culpability rests on policies that directly targeted the Irish.

A second distinction that emerges from a close reading of the Rome Statute regards intent. "Genocide" according to the Rome Statute, must be an act "committed with intent to destroy." As the evidence demonstrates, British policy through the Famine was not motivated by intent to destroy the Irish population. Rather, the primary motivation behind their inaction was a commitment to *laissez-faire* economics.¹⁷ Believing that tampering with the market would hinder economic growth, the British administration refused to import more grain and curtailed aid. The British were of course partial to this economic policy because it was specifically the Irish who suffered. Consequently, though the motivation behind the policy was economic, the *willingness* to follow it despite the human consequences was criminal. The distinction is important. To qualify as "extermination," a policy must only be "calculated to bring about...destruction;" the primary intent of the policy need not be wanton.

The final distinction regards specificity. The Rome Statute lists the "crime of depriving food" under crimes against humanity, not genocide.¹⁸

¹⁵ Machteld Boot, *Genocide, Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes: Nullum Crimen Sine Lege and the Subject Matter Jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court* (Intersentia Uitgevers N V, 2002), p. 497.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Susan Campbell Bartoletti, *Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine 1845-1850* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001), p. 41.

¹⁸ The Rome Statute.

Why imposed famine is not listed as an example of genocide is left unanswered by the Statute.¹⁹ Navigating the difficult general categories of international law becomes rather moot when a crime is specifically titled. The British cannot be accused of genocide when their crime is specifically labeled otherwise.

In analyzing British policy in Ireland as a crime against humanity, an issue of action emerges. The Rome Statute speaks of "acts...committed," "attack directed," and "intentional infliction." The British, it may be argued, did not *do* anything. Their behavior was limited to atrocities of passive *inaction*. They did not supply effective relief, they did not provide effective job programs, and they did not import enough grain.²⁰ The only *active* killer of the Irish was the blight itself. To address this potential defense, two responses may be given. Firstly, acts of omission with respect to famine crimes in international law may indeed be criminal. As international law analyst David Marcus argues:

Authoritarian governments, impervious to the fate of their populations even though arguably possessing the means to respond to crises, turn blind eyes to mass hunger. While deplorable, [this] behavior of government officials responsible for mismanagement in these countries is often not characterized by the *mens rea* for criminal responsibility and therefore does not necessarily implicate criminal responsibility under international criminal law.²¹

Marcus's objection to convicting sovereigns for a passive irresponsibility is rooted in the difficulty of demonstrating intent. However, in the case of the Famine, demonstrating *mens rea*, intent, is not an impossible task. Recorded dialogues and documents demonstrate that refusing to relieve the Famine was precipitated by Irish ethnicity.²² Secondly, the British created policies that exacerbated squalor, homelessness, and disease, and condoned the exportation of much-needed grain.

Lastly, the British eliminated relief programs that were saving thousands of lives and introduced false senses of security in Britain that

diverted relief.²³

III.

To demonstrate British culpability in the Irish Potato Famine it must be shown that government officials knowingly and deliberately refused aid while actively removing measures that provided it. Furthermore, it must be demonstrated that the reason why the British were prepared to ignore the plight of the Irish was because of their ethnic differences.

To enumerate the crimes perpetrated by the government, a brief history of the Irish Potato Famine will be provided. The blight first appeared in October 1845.²⁴ It soon spread through the island, destroying approximately one third of the potato crop. Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel was at first skeptical of the reports emerging from Ireland, but upon confirmation acted quickly to provide relief.²⁵ Facing the difficult legislation of the Corn Laws,²⁶ which effectively prevented him from importing grain, he secretly imported Indian maize, which was not tariffed by the legislation of the Corn Laws.²⁷

The distribution of this corn was slow and was met with mixed results. While it provided relief for some, many Irish didn't know how to cook the maize, could not handle its consumption and suffered intestinal damage.²⁸ Fighting a parliament more concerned with British farmers than Irish civilians, Peel was only able to repeal the Corn Laws in June 1846. Even then, the amount of grain that was imported through his efforts was not effective in providing adequate relief. Peel was also responsible for creating a system of public works that would alleviate hunger by providing jobs, but failed. Peel's repeal of the Corn Laws left his party divided and his parliament angry. One month later, he was replaced by Whig John Russell.

Peel is remembered for trying to alleviate the Famine despite the technical stumbles of his policies. His administration fed thousands who otherwise would not have had access to food. Historians who fault his policies as ineffective do not accuse him of wicked intentions. Fighting

²³ Donnelly, p. 80.

²⁴ Bartoletti, p. 1.

²⁵ Donnelly, p. 41-56.

²⁶ Note: "corn" did not mean maize, but rather grain (wheat, oats, etc.).

²⁷ Bartoletti, p. 43.

²⁸ Donnelly, p. 49, 51-3.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Christine Kinealy, *The Great Irish Famine: Impact, Ideology and Rebellion* (31-60).

²¹ David Marcus, "Famine Crimes in International Law," *American Society of International Law* 97.2 (2002), p. 246-7.

²² Brantlinger, p. 198-9.

those opposing aid in parliament, Peel notably exclaimed:

Good God...are you to sit in cabinet and consider and calculate how much diarrhea and bloody flux and dysentery a people must bear before it becomes necessary to provide them with food?²⁹

The difficulties he faced in providing relief to the Irish foreshadowed the tragedy to follow. Under the administration of Russell and Charles Trevelyan, the head of the British treasury, Ireland would suffer under a policy of apathetic inaction and crippling trade.

By the summer of 1846, Prime Minister Russell thought the Famine had come to an end. He began removing the public work system introduced by his predecessor, announcing his intention to terminate the project by mid-August.³⁰ When the potato blight returned again in the harvest of 1846, this time affecting the majority of the crop, Russell reintroduced the works system. However, aid was sharply curtailed under the advice of Trevelyan, who expressed that the Irish justly deserved starvation as a punishment from God.³¹

By January of 1847, the public works system had become overwhelmed with workers. On top of that, British tax collectors insisted that grain be imported into Britain from Ireland, starving the island of what little was left of the harvest.³² Although the amount of grain exported from Ireland to Great Britain is debated by historians, most agree that this continued policy of grain collection led to a greater death toll.³³ Compounded with the British commitment to the free market, which prevented the British from importing grain into Ireland, the situation became dire.³⁴

Relying on the Poor Laws of 1838, legislation that managed poverty relief in Ireland, the British administration abandoned the public works system and instead provided relief through a network of workhouses.

²⁹ Bartoletti, p. 43.

³⁰ Bartoletti, p. 49-50.

³¹ Brantlinger, p. 198.

³² Kinealy, p. 96-117.

³³ Ó Gráda, *Black '47*, p. 77-83.

³⁴ *ibid.* Interestingly, the net spending of Britain did not change significantly over the famine years. Ó Gráda notes that when other crises emerged in the 19th, the British were prepared to spend handsomely. In the Crimean War, the British increased spending by £92 million.

The workhouses functioned as government-sponsored welfare homes, exchanging manual labor for food. Soup kitchens were soon introduced under the Temporary Relief Act in February.³⁵ The food provided was contested by medical officials who argued that soup did not provide adequate nutrition. Under the limited budget provided for relief, however, soup seemed the best option.³⁶ Not surprisingly government institutions soon became overwhelmed by the poor. To make things worse, the poor laws were amended by parliament in June 1847, placing burden of maintaining workhouses on Irish landlords and tenants. Landlords were forced to raise rates.³⁷ As Irish landlords began to collect payments, it became apparent that few could break even. Landlords began evicting their tenants. The British wanted to collect funds from the Irish landlords but soon realized that the landlords themselves couldn't collect back-payments. In response, the British parliament introduced the infamous Gregory clause, limiting workhouse relief to those who owned no more than a quarter acre of land.³⁸ The Irish chose eviction over starvation. Leaving their homes, they discovered that the workhouses were overpopulated and unable to provide adequate relief. Aid, now supported by the Irish, began to shrink. Tens of thousands died.³⁹

The summer harvest of 1847 was unaffected by blight, but because of the lack of potatoes planted in the previous season, not enough food was available. In response to reports of the success of the potato harvest, Trevelyan closed the soup kitchens in October.⁴⁰ Predictably, the blight returned in the summer of 1848.

Relief from private sources began to dwindle. The British Relief Association, one of the largest private organizations for providing aid, had spent all of its funding by July. Without access to relief, some Irish citizens organized to fight. William Smith O'Brien led a small rebellion against government forces, which soon failed.⁴¹ The British response was

³⁵ Bartoletti, p. 75.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

³⁷ Donnelly, p. 92.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Christine Kinealy, *This Great Calamity: The Irish Famine 1845-52* (Gill & Macmillan, 1995), 95.

⁴⁰ Bartoletti, p. 88.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 137-51.

merciless. All remaining relief measures were stopped, and the burden of paying for the workhouses shifted further on the Irish.⁴²

Estimates of the toll of the Famine range slightly, but a generally accepted figure claims the death toll at million, while two-million were forced to emigrate.⁴³ By the harvest of 1849, the blight had almost disappeared, and the harvest of 1850 was blight free. Deaths resulting from the after-effects of the Famine ceased in 1852. One particularly shocking report helps put the sheer loss of life in the Irish Potato Famine into perspective. In 1871, the census reported an Irish population of 4.4 million, half that of the pre-Famine years.⁴⁴

III.

While British action and inaction led to the Famine, it may be argued that the failures of the British administration were not the results of racist, malicious policies, but rather unfortunate incompetence. It could be argued that parliament was unaware of the dire consequences of continued grain export and was ignorant of the consequences of terminating relief policies. However, recorded speeches of members of parliament and British newspapers prove otherwise.

The British were aware of the Famine and were prepared to watch their fellow countrymen die because of ethnic differences. As this paper has already argued, prejudicial *motivation* need not be demonstrated to conclude culpability. To prove that crimes against humanity occurred, one need only prove a prejudicial *willingness*. A series of quotes from government officials and public opinion concerning the suffering Irish population should be enough to demonstrate this mindset. Lord George Hill, author of the controversial *Facts from Gweedore*, reflected on the famine:

The Irish people have profited much by the famine, the lesson was severe; but so rooted were they in their old prejudices and old ways, that no teacher could have induced them to make the changes which this visitation of Divine Providence has brought about, both in their habits of life and in their mode

⁴² Ibid, p. 154.

⁴³ Ó Gráda, Black '47, p. 4.

⁴⁴ Bartoletti, p. 171.

of agriculture.⁴⁵

Rationalizing his policies to claim that the Famine was over while the Irish still starved, Trevelyan wrote:

The great evil with which we have to contend... [is] not the physical evil of famine, but the moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the [Irish] people.⁴⁶

Trevelyan invoked theology to explain why administering relief was not appropriate:

Posterity will trace ... to [the] famine ... a salutary revolution in the habits of a nation long ... unfortunate, and will acknowledge that ... Supreme Wisdom has educes permanent good out of transient evil.⁴⁷

Public support for the administration's decision to refuse aid was expressed in the *Times*:

The potato blight [is] a blessing... which will teach the Irish the virtues of sexual restraint, hard work, and being carnivorous... In a few more years, a Celtic Irishman will be as rare in Connemara as the Red Indian on the shores of the Manhattan.⁴⁸

This hatred of the Irish for their ethnic differences and accompanying support of parliament's refusal to provide aid can be found even in the writings of leading intellectuals. Returning from Ireland, Charles Kingsley wrote "I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw ... to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much, but their skins ... are as white as ours."⁴⁹ Understanding the blight as a divinely ordained curse against a people at fault, the British were prepared to accept the consequences of a public policy that intentionally limited relief efforts. Far from tolerating the death toll, some British *encouraged* it. These

⁴⁵ Nally, p. 731.

⁴⁶ Brantlinger, p. 198.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

remarks point to the pervasive attitude among the British that played out in a purposeful and directed policy that was "calculated to bring about the destruction of part of a population."

To defend the British administrators, it may be argued that the British did indeed provide relief. How can the acts of parliament be labeled crimes against humanity, when Russell and Trevelyan were financially supporting (albeit in limited fashion) the workhouses and soup kitchens of Ireland? Historian David Nally explains that far from an effort to provide relief, the primary motivation behind the support of the workhouses and soup kitchens was an attempt to gain greater colonial power over the Irish: "from its inception the Irish Poor Law was considered an engine for social development rather than simply a technique for controlling poverty."⁵⁰ The British government, argues Nally, wanted to intervene in Ireland not because of any sense of a moral obligation to its citizens, but rather because it helped centralize power and socially change the Irish countryside. The reports from government administrators supports this hypothesis. Government official George Nicholls in his recommendations to parliament noted:

I do not propose to impart a right to relief, even to the destitute, but to place the ordering and directing of all relief in the hands of the central authority... [Relief] is only to be administered by receiving the applicants into the [work]house, and subjecting them to the regulations established for its government... The [Poor Law] established would thus become like a colony, a kind of centre of civilization, and the Unions collectively might be made important engines for effecting improvements in the condition and habits of the Irish people⁵¹

Nally demonstrates through quoted government officials, that almost all of the relief measures were motivated by an intent to "enshrine the right to govern."⁵² The aid given to the Irish during the Famine were not a benevolent form of support, but a calculated power play.

As demonstrated, the difference between genocide and extermination rests in the subtle distinction between motivating intent and willingness

to allow. The British tolerated the humanitarian consequences because the humans suffering were Irish. Through acts of omission— not purchasing and providing grain, not administering enough effective relief—and commission—the decision to legislate the Gregory clause, the continued exportation of grain—the British were responsible for the deaths of thousands. In reading the words of British administrators, it becomes readily apparent that the British were aware of the dire consequences of their economic pursuits but were prepared to accept them because of a perceived inferiority of those suffering. Finally, defending the British administration with the relief they provided fails because such relief measures were motivated by self-furthering, colonialist goals. The Famine was a crime against humanity.

IV.

One question that emerges from any discussion of atrocity is that of relevance. By the time an international crime is discussed, most of those involved in the crime's perpetration are dead or incapacitated, leaving prosecution impossible. In the case of the Irish Famine, however, investigating the history of atrocity for the sake of national conscience and memory is an important issue. Indeed, much of the nationalist movement throughout 20th century was inspired by the collective memory of the Famine.⁵³ Memory of the Famine is of such cultural importance to the Irish that many found relief when Prime Minister Tony Blair apologized in June, 1997.⁵⁴ Study and open discussion of the Famine is important as it helps relieve long-standing tensions between the two countries.

Ultimately, study of the Famine, especially in the context of international law is important because it establishes precedent. The question of how to label famine crime under international law and what constitutes famine crime still remain ambiguous.⁵⁵ If the Famine were taught in schools as a crime against humanity, if the Famine were acknowledged as such by the international community, it would set precedent for future atrocities. Sovereigns with the capacity to feed starving citizens who refused to do so could ultimately face prosecution.

⁵⁰ Nally, p. 720.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 725.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Donnelly, p. 209-46.

⁵⁴ Kinealy, p. 10,14.

⁵⁵ Marcus, p. 245-81.

The End of Eden: The *Farhud* of Baghdad

Yehuda Cohn

For over two millennia there had been a continuous Jewish presence in the area known today as Iraq. It began with the exile of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar after the destruction of the first Temple in Jerusalem, and continued until the mass emigration of the early 1950s, when the overwhelming majority of Iraqi Jews left. The flourishing Iraqi Jewish community did not vanish of its own accord: it was the result of a changing political climate that allowed for the horrifying events of the *Farhud* (pogrom) to occur thereby forcing Iraqi Jews to decide between a proud history and a viable future.

The Jews had thrived in Babylon, establishing prosperous communities and founding intellectual centers of Jewish scholarship. Here were the ancient Talmudic academies of Sura and Pumbedita which formed the Babylonian Talmud. Under the rule of the Abbasids, Baghdad the home of the famous Rav Saadiah Gaon, became the center of Babylonian Jewry. With the general decline of wider Babylonian society, the prosperity of the Jewish population also waned and the Baghdad community dwindled as Jews migrated to other parts of Iraq. However in the 16th Century the community was reestablished. With the advent of Ottoman rule in the 18th Century, Baghdad became a magnet for Jewish immigrants from Kurdistan, Persia, and Aleppo, who breathed new life into the Jewish community.¹

At the end of the 19th Century, when organizations like the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU), a French-Jewish organization that set up schools teaching western languages and ideas to Jews around the world, Iraqi Jews gained the tools they needed to succeed in a rapidly modernizing Iraq, outpacing the general population. This put Iraqi Jews in a particularly favorable position for landing government jobs and other prominent professions, in addition to their impressive success as merchants and importers.

The years of World War I were not easy ones for Iraqi Jewry, as many were conscripted into the Ottoman military never to return.² Those that

¹ Simon, Reeva S. "Iraq." *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern times*. New York: Columbia UP, 2003, print p. 352.

² *Ibid*, p. 353.



A Police Officer in the Midst of a Farhud, Iraq 1948

remained behind faced increasing hostility from the Turkish government who charged them with hindering the war effort, an accusation that led to a few executions. With this as a backdrop, the Jews treated the British victory and arrival in Iraq as a miracle and a "Yom ha-Nes" was declared to commemorate the event annually with special prayers.

With a new British government in place, the Jews of Iraq entered a period of great prosperity. Equipped with the skills to fill the ranks of the imperial civil service, Jews took up top posts in various ministries ranging from the justice department to the telephone service. The only place where Jewish influence was limited were the ministries of education and defense, two institutions that remained strongholds of Arab nationalist ideologues.¹ Under direct British mandate rule anti-Semitism was minimal save for 1929 when the riots in Palestine inspired some anti-Zionist action in Iraq. Despite of the fact that the Iraqi community had not been known for its Zionism, its officially chartered Zionist group had been shut down by King Faisal I in 1922, and the underground Zionist activity that continued had been minimal—the showing of anti-Zionist sentiment made them tense nonetheless.

Despite the best efforts of Iraqi Jewry, the situation began to slowly deteriorate. Over the next several years, due to a number of compounding factors, anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish sentiment would continue to rise, reaching a crescendo with the incredibly violent and tragic events of the *Farhud* in 1941. In the years that followed the *Farhud*, and even more so after the founding of the state of Israel, almost the entirety of the Iraqi community emigrated, leaving behind the two millennia of history of a Jewish Iraq.

British rule of Iraq began with the end of WWI. The Allies' victory over the central powers gave them the chance to carve up the territories of Germany and its allies and create colonies for themselves. The British, who had recently begun making use of petroleum as fuel, took particular interest in the former Ottoman Arab provinces of the Middle East. In this way they could guarantee themselves a supply of oil, as well as maintain an air link to the British colony of India. The creation of the kingdom of Iraq, whose mandate they would administer, fulfilled both of these aims.

Iraq was comprised of a combination of three provinces: Mosul in the north, Baghdad in the center, and Basra in the south. It was an artificial

creation, as beyond geographic proximity, there was no real connection between the peoples that lived in each area; however, it served the strategic interests of the British. King Faisal I, a member of the Hashemite clan, who had been promised reward in exchange for the military assistance he provided in the Middle East during WWI, was appointed to be the ruler of the newly created kingdom.

The mandate system was meant to foster the independence of the nations within it. It was supposed to be a change from the previous attitude of colonialism in which an "enlightened" western power dominated over the native population. Mandates were designed to help these nations modernize and fall in line with the west. The western country administering the mandate was to theoretically act as a mentoring nation to help the people of the mandate form their own government and eventually become an independent state. In reality it was quite similar to colonialism, but it did eventually lead to autonomy; Iraq declared independence in 1932.

Iraqi statehood came with some strings attached. The Anglo-Iraqi treaty of 1930 stipulated that in return for independence, the Iraqis were required to allow the British to maintain two airbases within their territory, maintain strong ties with Britain for "full and frank consultation between them in all matters of foreign policy,"² and uphold a clause of mutual assistance in the event of war. British companies also kept a large stake in the oil companies that were in control of the wells and petroleum exploration in Iraq.

British occupation had been relatively good to the Jews. Barring the flare up of anti-Zionist activity in 1929, things had been relatively calm and anti-Semitic attacks virtually non-existent. Iraqi independence though, set into motion a series of events that, coupled with outside factors, led to a change in the Jews' fortunes.

After its independence, Iraq continued to be ruled over by the British instated King Faisal I until his death in 1933. His son that came to power after him, King Ghazi, was not nearly as much of an anglophile as his father. King Ghazi was an advocate of Arab nationalism, and was not in favor of the heavy influence Britain exerted on his country. His Arab nationalist views served to attract Arab political refugees from the surrounding countries of Syria and Palestine. The fact that Iraq was the only independent Arab country at the time also attributed to this. These outsiders, who were not

¹ Ibid, p. 354.

² Treaty of alliance between his majesty in respect of the United Kingdom and his majesty the King of 'Iraq, Article 1.

particularly philo-Semitic, landed positions as teachers and elite members of political parties. They also founded various anti-Jewish clubs and societies. These clubs distributed anti-Jewish, anti-British, and anti-Zionist leaflets and papers to help disseminate their propaganda. With influential positions and a network of supportive groups, they were able to spread their ideas with ease throughout the kingdom.

Simultaneously, Hitler and the Nazi party had come to power in Germany. The German envoy in Iraq, Dr. Fritz Grobba, worked to spread Nazi propaganda as well as influence the Iraqi government to take a more pro-German stance. His work increased both anti-British and anti-Semitic sentiment amongst many officers in the military, soldiers, and youth – an achievement that had major repercussions later on.

The first overt anti-Semitic act occurred in 1934. The minister of Economics and Communication, soon after his appointment, decided to dismiss a large number of the Jewish employees in his ministry. Some Muslim and Christian workers were let go as well, but they were rehired soon after. From that time on, an unofficial limit on Jews in the civil service was enacted. A year later, a secret quota for Jews was authorized in secondary schools and universities. Jews were never barred completely as happened in Europe under the Nazis, but their participation in greater society was certainly being curtailed in ways that it had not been before.

The Jews of Iraq had always maintained a connection with the Jews of Palestine. Whether through visits, mail, books, or newspapers, Iraqi Jewry had a connection with their brothers in the west. In fact, in many Jewish schools in Iraq there were imported Jews from Palestine serving as teachers. Starting in 1929 however, this relationship came under scrutiny and increased restriction, and in 1935 these books and newspapers were outlawed, and the last two Palestinian teachers deported.

In 1936, some homemade bombs were thrown at Jewish clubs, and a few were killed. On the eve of *Rosh Hashana* of the same year, two Jews were shot and murdered while leaving a Jewish club, in complete view of the public. Beatings of Jews in Baghdad were becoming commonplace, and they continued through to the *Farhud* itself. These acts of violence were a reaction to the riots in Palestine that occurred at that time, and were aimed at attacking the Zionists and their supporters. In response, the Chief Rabbi and head of the community, Rabbi Sassoon Kadoori, issued a declaration that effectively distanced the Iraqi community from the Zionists. Articles

to a similar effect were published in Arab papers, and had titles like "We were Arabs before we became Jews,"³ and contained statements like "The Arab Jew... When he speaks of the Arab lands, he speaks of homelands..."⁴

In 1939 a law was passed that required all students of secondary schools to receive military training. One group that helped coordinate this training was al-Futuwwah, whose 'general trainer' was a man by the name of Salah ad-Din as-Sabbagh, one of the four members of the Golden Square Generals who orchestrated the Pro-Nazi coup of 1941. This was yet another avenue through which anti-Jewish propaganda was able to reach the general population, particularly the youth.

In 1941, sponsored by the German envoy Dr. Grobba, three pro-Nazi youth groups were established. This went along with his continual distribution of anti-Jewish and pro-Nazi books, films, and pamphlets. Many young Iraqi's were influenced by his efforts, and their demographic was instrumental in perpetrating the attacks of the *Farhud*.

At the same time, Iraqi-British relations were souring. The British had requested that Iraq sever diplomatic ties with Germany at the start of World War II, and the Iraqis, as the treaty of 1930 stipulated, complied. But resentment of the British had only intensified since independence, and the increased diplomatic pressure from Britain following the outbreak of World War II, strengthened anti-British sentiment in Baghdad. Through a series of political machinations and intrigue, the tone of the Iraqi government began to change, and it soon took on a much more overt anti-British and pro-Axis quality.

In April of 1941, in a coup d'état orchestrated by the Golden Square (the group of pro-Nazi generals who controlled the military and held the real power behind the government), the pro-British regent was forced to flee, and Rashid Ali, the preferred candidate of the Golden Square, became prime minister. He had been the head of government in January, but had been forced out by the end of that month because the pro-British regent refused to dissolve parliament for him. Now, with the backing of the Golden Square, he returned to power.

The British had good reason to be troubled. The pro-British parliament that had been supportive of their war effort was now defunct, and its

³ Rejwan, Nissim. *The Jews of Iraq: 3000 Years of History and Culture*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985. Print, p. 219.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 219.

replacement was barely hiding its opposing preferences. In order to test this new government, the British decided to request to transfer troops through Iraq, a privilege that was accorded to them by the treaty of 1930.⁵ Rashid Ali complied, but was then put under pressure by the Golden Square to severely limit the extent to which Britain could take advantage of its welcome. The British correctly read this as confirming their fears that they had lost the support of Iraq, and refused to accept the limitations. The Iraqi government protested, and sent a regiment to stand guard as the British troops arrived. The British objected, and demanded that the soldiers watching over them be withdrawn. The Iraqis refused to heed the ultimatum, and on May 2nd 1941 the British attacked the Iraqi forces. By the end of May the British had resoundingly defeated the Iraqis, and on May 29th Rashid Ali and his supporters fled the country. The British brought their advance to a halt outside Baghdad, deciding to camp at a spot just 3 miles from the center of the city, but not to enter the capital itself. It was a decision that would prove fatal to the Jews of Baghdad, and forever change the history of Iraqi Jewry.

One member of Rashid Ali's government remained behind, Colonel Yunis al-Sab'awi, who among other credentials, was the head of the three Nazi youth groups that had been founded by Dr. Grobba. On May 30th, the day after Rashid Ali had fled, he declared himself Governor of Central and Southern Iraq. An interim governing body, the Committee for Internal Security, had been formed a day earlier to fill the power vacuum created in Ali's absence, but it wasn't very strong and had little actual authority. Al-Sab'awi summoned Rabbi Sassoon Kadoori, and asked him to instruct the Jewish community to remain in their homes for the next three days, May 31st-June 2nd (June 1st and 2nd of that year was the holiday of Shavuot). Leaving for any reason was forbidden. It was clear that his intention was to slaughter the Jews.⁶ In a miraculous turn of events, al-Sab'awi was arrested by the Committee for Internal Security, which exiled him to Iran. The Committee then issued an order for the disbanding of the paramilitary youth groups run by Sab'awi, and required them to turn in their weapons. The committee also declared that there would be severe punishment for disorderly conduct. The actions of the Committee for Internal Security

⁵ Tripp, Charles. *A History of Iraq*. NY: Cambridge UP, 2000. Print, p. 104.

⁶ Shamash, Violette, and Tony Rocca. *Memories of Eden a Journey through Jewish Baghdad*. Virginia Water, Surrey: Forum, 2008. Print p. 195.

served to calm the Jews, who had been living in fear since Rashid Ali had come to power. With the danger behind them, the Jews of Baghdad prepared to celebrate the upcoming holiday, unaware of the new tragedy that was about to befall them.

The Jews of Baghdad were still somewhat apprehensive, and refrained from overt celebration. Often the holiday of Shavuot included excursions to the tombs of the prophets buried in Babylon, but many this year elected to limit their outings to the synagogue and neighborhood friends.⁷ A group of Jews did join in with those who were headed to the airport to greet the returning regent. They were dressed in their holiday finery, which the demobilized Iraqi soldiers they encountered took to be in celebration of the Iraqi defeat. On their way back, while crossing the bridge from one side of Baghdad to the other, these Jews were attacked by these soldiers, while the military police in the area just looked on. In the end, one Jew was killed and 16 were wounded. The *Farhud* had begun.

Violence spread throughout the day in the Jewish neighborhoods of Baghdad. The scale and ferocity of the attacks were astounding. As Violette Shamash describes in her memoir:

Women were raped. Infants were killed in front of their terrified parents before they, too, felt the knife or bullet. Jewish shops were looted a second time and then torched. Jewish drivers were dragged from their cars and passengers pulled from buses and roughed up or killed. Homes were broken into, the mob often torturing and mutilating those they found as a diversion from killing before looting the property and setting it ablaze... A synagogue was invaded, set ablaze and its Torahs' destroyed in classic Nazi fashion.⁸

The Jews of the city were at the mercy of a heartless mob of disgruntled soldiers and propaganda-poisoned youth, who were joined the next day by bands of opportunistic Bedouin looters. The violence continued until the early evening of the second day when the order for a curfew was finally approved by the regent, and those violating it were shot. Within an hour the streets were empty, and the 48 hours of brutality and carnage had come to an end.

The final tallies estimate that the *Farhud* claimed the lives of

⁷ Shamash, Violette, and Tony Rocca. *Memories of Eden a Journey through Jewish Baghdad*. Virginia Water, Surrey: Forum, 2008. Print p. 197.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 202.

approximately 180 people, while 240 people were injured, and over 200,000 dinars worth of damage was incurred.⁹

Amidst this horrifying episode there were bright spots of decency amongst a Muslim population that had not forgotten its longstanding friendship with the Jews. In mixed neighborhoods, many Muslims, at great risk to themselves, defended their Jewish neighbors from the bloodthirsty mobs. As Ms. Shamash recounts "our own Muslim next-door-neighbor, the noble-hearted Abdel Razzaq Hilmi...insisted that our part of the family should go with him, to the safety of his home...We were to find that our generous benefactor had about 150 [people] sheltering in his [home]."¹⁰

What is so unsettling about the *Farhud* is that it seems that it could have been easily prevented, or at the very least, ended quickly. Instead, it was allowed to continue unopposed for the better part of two days. The British army that was camped outside the city remained there, an act that allowed for a power vacuum and its accompanying disorder and lawlessness to develop. Those actually in charge of the Iraqi government—namely the Committee for Internal Security, the police, and the regent—took their time in ordering the army to impose a curfew with a shoot-on-sight order. If hastened, the curfew would have likely stopped the *Farhud* in its tracks, as it did when it was ultimately executed at 5:00 PM on June 2nd.

The inaction of the British and the Iraqi government begs exploration. The Committee had originally put in place a plan to react to disorder. The plan divided up the police force and army and assigned them neighborhoods to patrol, and called for swift action in the face of any disturbances. However, this plan collapsed with the outbreak of the *Farhud*, as the soldiers and police, having been corrupted by Nazi propaganda and lacking any sort of organized leadership, joined in with the mob and began attacking Jews themselves.

While this was going on, officials at every level of government were reluctant to give the order to fire on the rioters. Neither the director-general of police, the army representative, nor the mayor of Baghdad were willing to take control and give the necessary command. Each preferred to pass along the decision to their "superior", whether or not there was someone who could be clearly defined as the one with the real authority to make

⁹ Ibid, p. 209.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 205.

that decision, which these officials claimed that they themselves did not have. Incredibly, towards the end of the first day, some officers approached a colonel and suggested that he impose a curfew. He agreed, but then declined to sign the proclamation. His superior, a general, also withheld his approval, saying that he required the endorsement of the regent for such an act. Lost in the search for approval was the fact that the police, by virtue of the law, were allowed to fire on looters and murderers caught in the act. The director-general of the police had simply forgotten this point, or at the very least, neglected to remind his officers of it.

All of the officials who were searching for a superior to pass the decision on to could have pushed it to the regent, whose arrival in Baghdad on June 1st had, in some sense, triggered the attacks. However, it took until the late morning of June 2nd, a full 24 hours after the attacks had begun, for the regent himself to issue the order to use force to quell the riots. The regent's lack of alacrity can perhaps be attributed to one of two possible reasons. The first is that he was waiting for Kurdish troops loyal to him to arrive from the regions in the north to suppress the violence. The regent may have felt that the soldiers in Baghdad at the time, who were anti-British and pro-Nazi, could not be relied upon to carry out the order.¹¹ However, this answer does not seem likely because when the attacks were eventually stopped, it was not due to the action of Kurdish soldiers alone, but rather a joint effort of the Kurdish soldiers and a cavalry brigade from the Baghdad front. Instead, the most probable explanation for the regent's slow response is that like many of his ministers, he was simply reluctant to come to terms with his obligations, and pushed off the decision for another time.¹²

The Iraqi government was not the only party that was guilty by way of inaction. The British army was encamped just three miles from the city center when the *Farhud* broke out yet failed to make any movements towards the city to help restore law and order. The decision not to get involved was the result of a give and take between the British military, the British ambassador to Iraq, and His Majesty's foreign office.

The British forces in Iraq were under the leadership of Archibald Wavell, the commander-in-chief of the Middle East. If it had been up to him, the

¹¹ Cohen, Hayyim. "The Anti-Jewish Farhud in Baghdad, 1941." *Middle Eastern Studies* 3.1 (1966), p. 2-17.14.

¹² Kedourie, Elie. "The Sack of Basra and the Farhud in Baghdad." *Arabic Political Memoirs and Other Studies*. London: Cass, 1974. Print p. 300.

British army would never have gotten involved in Iraq. Wavell advocated for negotiations with the government of Rashid Ali, saying that it would be prudent to "avoid any action to suggest we have any intention of infringing Iraqi independence...this...would have repercussions in Palestine Syria and Arab world generally."¹³ Wavell believed that military involvement in Iraq could spread the wrong message across the Arab world, and in the dark days of 1941, with London suffering under the blitz and the British army facing continuous losses to the Germans, Great Britain was in no need of additional enemies. Negotiations with the current government, he posited, would yield far more positive results. What Wavell was ignoring was the fact that Rashid Ali was a supporter of the Nazis, and was working hard to vilify the British in the eyes of his people.¹⁴ He had no negotiating partner.

Another influential figure who shared a similarly erroneous perspective was the British ambassador to Iraq, Sir Kinahan Cornwallis. Cornwallis approached the foreign office numerous times to allow him to negotiate with Rashid Ali. They declined his proposal as they were unsure of where Rashid Ali stood, and did not want to negotiate with an outright enemy. Even after hostilities broke out between the Iraqis and the British, and Rashid Ali fled the country, Cornwallis continued to believe that it would have been best not to rock the boat.¹⁵ In the interest of maintaining the fiction that the British were not occupying or controlling Iraq, he approved an armistice agreement that was rather lenient, and made certain that no British soldiers would be found in Baghdad or its immediate vicinity.

A small force of British soldiers known as the 'Habforce' had originally been instructed by Wavell to take control of the bridges over the Tigris which led from the West side of Baghdad to the East. Instead, they did not advance within the city and stayed on the outskirts, likely at the behest of Cornwallis,¹⁶ and his desire to uphold the fanciful fiction of British non-involvement. Had the Habforce made its way to the bridges, much of the *Farhud* would likely have been stopped. The first attacks themselves occurred in the direct vicinity of one of the bridges, and more importantly, many of the Bedouin and other non-Baghdadis who perpetrated the attacks

¹³ Dispatch quoted in Kedourie, *Ibid*, p. 286.

¹⁴ Kedourie, *Ibid*, p. 291.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 294.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 297.

joined the fray by crossing into the city over the bridges. A British presence in the capital would have prevented the wanton destruction and killing, but the ambassador was far too preoccupied with Iraqi pride. As was coyly observed by Somerset De Chair, "eight miles to the west waited the eager British force which could have prevented all this. Ah, yes, but the prestige of our regent would have suffered."¹⁷

The British, and particularly the ambassador, remained irresponsible to the *Farhud* because they believed that their interests were best served by allowing the Iraqis to be in charge of their own affairs. Britain was reeling in the summer of 1941, and another hostile enemy was not a desirable acquisition. Even if it came to the loss of life and property, Cornwallis's actions implicitly argued, it was best to allow for the Iraqi government to maintain a feeling of independence. In the end, Britain's diplomatic desires translated to a death sentence for the Jews of Baghdad.

The *Farhud* profoundly changed the perception Iraqi Jews had of themselves. No longer could they refer to themselves as Arabs and Jews; something clearly had changed. Assimilation had not been achieved, and they remained a separate group within society. The leaders of the Iraqi Jewish community were faced with a new reality, and in response, they chose compliance, passivity, and submission. As Esther Meir notes,

The leaders of the community chose not to deal with it [the issue]... They didn't put pressure on the government to raise the monetary reparations for the victims of the riots, even though the amount was unfathomable. The Jewish representatives in the senate and parliament didn't promote the agenda of the Jewish minority: Never once did they vote against the government of Iraq, and similarly they never came out to defend the rights of the Jewish minority.¹⁸

The youth on the other hand, reacted quite differently. Prior to the *Farhud*, they had already begun feeling the new anti-Semitic climate through the restrictions and quotas at the universities and schools. Now, in its aftermath, the question of their place in Iraq came to the forefront, and they answered it with a radicalization of their ideology which manifested itself in Zionism and communism.

The *Farhud* crystallized for young Jewish Iraqis that the Jewish nation

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 302.

¹⁸ Translated from Hebrew by author. Meir-Glitzstein, Esther. *Zionism in an Arab Country Jews in Iraq in the 1940s* (Hebrew). London: Routledge, 2004. Print p. 13.

did not have a future as guests in a strange land, and they therefore needed to look toward their true homeland. Having experienced firsthand the anti-Semitism that was already commonplace in Europe, Iraqi Jewry's youth decided to throw their fortunes in with the rest of world Jewry by exploring Zionism. This was a marked departure from the Iraqi Jewish community's traditionally indifferent relationship with Zionsim. This change in attitude inspired the *Yishuv* to being reaching out to Iraqi Jews and in 1942 they sent emissaries from Palestine to organize a Zionist underground network in Iraq that would teach Hebrew, conduct military training, and prepare the Iraqi Jews for illegal immigration.

While many youth adopted Zionism as the answer to the troubles facing Iraqi Jewry, another group looked toward communism as the solution. The logic behind the shift to communism was that if all of society is considered equal, with no distinctions based on race, ethnicity, or class, the Jews too will blend in, and the issue of a separate and different entity within society will be solved.

The *Farhud* left a lasting stain on the history of Iraq's Jews. In the years that followed, its horrifying memory remained seared vividly on their collective conscious. The Jews of Iraq now feared for their physical survival in a way they never had before, and many decided that staying in Iraq hoping for things to change was futile. In the months following the *Farhud* until the establishment of the State of Israel, Iraqis Jews immigrated clandestinely to Israel, (the quota for legal immigration of Iraqi Jews at this time was a paltry five Jews a year¹), as well as to Bombay and the West.

In March of 1950 the Iraqi parliament passed a law allowing Jews to emigrate as long as they were willing to relinquish their Iraqi citizenship. A few Jews took the government up on its offer and registered to make *aliyah*. This set off a snowball effect, and by the end of April, 50,000 Jews had registered to emigrate. A bomb thrown at a Synagogue (which had become a sort of staging area for Jews émigrés) early the next year served to further encourage the Jewish-Iraqi exodus, and in the next two months another 50,000 Jews registered to depart. These Jews were then airlifted to Israel over the course of the coming months in what became known as 'Operation Ezra and Nechemiah.' In the end, 107,603 Jews were airlifted

¹ Jewish immigration to Palestine had been severely limited by the White Paper of 1939, and preference was being given to European Jews escaping the Nazis.

to Israel, on top of another 16,000 that had left earlier and gone either to Palestine illegally, or to other destinations. By the beginning of 1952 there were no more than 6,000 Jews in Iraq; today there are perhaps a dozen Jews left in Iraq.

The *Farhud* set in motion a chain of events that brought about the end of Iraqi Jewry. Thousands of years of Jewish settlement in Mesopotamia met its demise with an outbreak of unchecked-Nazi propaganda-infused violence. A history of centuries of friendly and respectful relations between similar peoples was replaced by a climate that approved of anti-Semitism and fostered its growth. The new reality in Iraq following the *Farhud* proved fertile ground an attitude shift amongst its Jews, as well as fuel for more hate following the establishment of the State of Israel. The *Farhud* was the fault line in Iraqi Jewish history that divided between a prosperous past and a non-existent future; the Jews would sit by the rivers of Babylon no more.

The Book of Ben Sira in the Jewish and Christian Canons

Holly Hampton-Seidenfeld

The Book of Ben Sira was included in a collection commonly referred to as wisdom texts. Written by Jesus ben Sira (actual name is debated among scholars) approximately in 180 BCE during the time of the Hasmoneans,¹ this work is an anthology of ethical teachings which includes practical lessons for everyday life and common sense advice. Interspersed among the material are praises of holy individuals and figures, including Simon the High Priest.² Studies of the Book of Ben Sira were recently invigorated after its recent discoveries in Hebrew in the Cairo Geniza, Qumran, and Masada findings.³ Previously, copies of the text had only been known in Greek as part of the Septuagint.⁴ The Septuagint contains the Hebrew Bible's texts along with another set of texts, which are known as the Apocrypha. The Christians included the Septuagint's books (including the Apocrypha) within their canon, so the Book of Ben Sira is also included.⁵ In contrast, despite discussion within the Talmud⁶ and numerous influences throughout Jewish history, the book of Ben Sira is not included within the Jewish canon.

After the canonization processes were concluded in both religions, the book of Ben Sira is included in the Christian canon and is not included in the Jewish canon. This paper is attempting to determine the historical development of the Book of Ben Sira in Christianity and Judaism, and how the separate developments ultimately related to one another. It will do so by examining the historical context of the book within the Second

¹ Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1991 p. 124.

² *Ibid.*

³ Maurice Gilbert, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Studies on Tradition, Redaction, and Theology* ed. By Angelo Passaro and Guissepe Iellia, Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, 2008 p. 1.

⁴ Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1991 p.125.

⁵ Wooden, R. Glenn. "The Role of 'the Septuagint' in the Formation of the Biblical Canons" *Exploring the Origins of the Bible: Canon Formation in Historical, Literacy, and Theological Perspective*. Eds. Cragi A. Evans and Emanuel Tov. Grand Rapids, Missouri: Baker Academic, 2008, p.129-146.

⁶ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 100b.



Ben Sira Scroll from Masada, 73 CE

Temple period, the development of each of the canons, and the subsequent responses of the Christians and Jews in terms of the book's authority within the religions. The word "authority" should be defined as a largely accepted text of ethical guidance.

During the Second Temple period, the Book of Ben Sira was a well-known, highly-regarded text among the Jewish people.⁷ It needs to be clarified that the Christian religion had not yet formed from the Jewish people, so this discussion of how the Book of Ben Sira was originally viewed among this early population is representative of the early Jewish view and the view of the Jewish people who would later become Christians. The easiest way to determine a book's religious status is by looking to see if it was included within the canon. Yet, scholars suggest that there was no official canon (or term reflecting this concept) during this period. However, there was a general compilation of books that acquired an elevated status. The most significant list of these works is ironically within the Prologue to Ben Sira itself. The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls explains that this "indicate[s] that at least for certain groups some traditional literature of the Jewish people merited special status and study, and in some cases they offer classifications of the texts [like Ben Sira]."⁸ Therefore, while one cannot refer to the canon of this time period, there were religious writings that warrant distinction. It is also important to note that the High Priest Simon is included within Ben Sira's listing of books, which leads to the question if Ben Sira himself considered his work as part of this exclusive collection.⁹ There is another indication of a marked grouping when "the plural term 'ta biblia ta hagia (the holy books) does occur... in Maccabees 12.9 in a subordinate clause[.] It seems to denote simply a collection of books available (as in the Prologue to Ben Sira), not a restricted collection."¹⁰ This is additional evidence that a collection existed, but was not yet fixed during this time period. However, while the whole collection was not fixed, the first two sections (Torah and Prophets) of the future canon had become well-defined. The last section of the Biblical Hebrew tripartite, the Writings was still being discussed and was an assortment of various works that had

⁷ Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1991, p. 6.

⁸ "Canon." *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. 1st ed. 2000, p. 118.

⁹ Sirach 50:1.

¹⁰ "Canon." *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. 1st ed. 200, p. 117.

not yet become firmly established, leaving the collection still open.

The clearest evidence of the Writings' undefined nature is through a study of the Septuagint, the Jews' widely accepted Greek translation of the Bible and the Apocryphal works.¹¹ It should be noted here that the Septuagint also has textual differences from the proto-Masoretic text. It was completed from the third century BCE to the first century BCE and its contents demonstrate that "the Law (Torah) and the Prophets were held authoritative by both the Hellenistic and Palestinian Jews, but the latest part of the canon, the collection of so called hagiographa or 'holy writings' remained open for a very long time."¹² The inclusion of the Apocrypha was the result of an open canon, in which the Writings were still not well-defined. Therefore, the translation of additional books in the Septuagint is less of a religious statement but a result of the historical development of the Bible.

Since Ben Sira is included within this Apocrypha, and the Septuagint was well known throughout the Jews (even earning the praise of Philo and Josephus), it is evident that the Book of Ben Sira was widely known throughout some sects of the Jewish people. This is supported through recent archaeological findings of the manuscript at the sites of Qumran and Masada, which indicate the book's recognition among various Jewish groups. It is difficult to say definitely that a book was universally accepted throughout the Jewish people because the Jews of this time period were quickly becoming divided in theology and practice, including the formations of the Qumran sect and other sects with messianic figures like Jesus.¹³ However, even though its universal acceptance is questionable, it is still safe to assume that the Book of Ben Sira was well known based on this evidence.

After the destruction of the Temple, the Pharisaic traditions dominated Jewish thought, yet Paul of Tarsus also influenced many followers of Jesus, leading way to a new group, which would later be known as the Christian

¹¹ Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1991 pg. 89.

¹² Rajja Sollamo. "The Significance of Septuagint Studies." *Emanuel Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and the Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*. Eds. Shalom M. Paul, Robert A. Kraft, Lawrence H. Schiffman, and Weston W. Fields. Leiden, Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill, 2003 p. 497-513.

¹³ Jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/3269-bible-translations Visited on 9/20/2012.

people.¹⁴ The exact point where Christians separated from the Jewish people cannot be pinpointed, but the gradual shift happened over the next couple of centuries and was certainly established by the third century CE.

While Judaism and Christianity were slowly becoming distinct from one another, each religion attempted to finalize their individual canons; ultimately, the Jewish leaders excluded the Apocryphal books including the Book of Ben Sira, while the Christian leaders included them. Although this decision seems to indicate that the Jews ceased valuing the Book of Ben Sira, while the Christians continued to value it, this assumption proves to be false after an understanding of how the separate canons were formed. The Book of Ben Sira was still highly regarded among the Jewish people but was excluded for other reasons. The date of the Jewish canon's formation is debated among scholars. Some assert that it was a Pharisaic meeting at the Council of Jamnia in 90 CE,¹⁵ although recently this theory has been largely criticized. Eugene Ulrich notes that no fixed canon was probably the "situation at least up to the fall of the Second Temple in 70, probably as late as the end of the first century and arguably even up to the First Revolt against Rome in 132-135 since we find Rabbi Aqiba having to argue strenuously that, yes, The Song of Songs is in fact Scripture,"¹⁶ in the early second century. Other than this example, very few discussions regarding the canon's formation are recorded, so further analysis of its final development is highly speculative.

One way to determine the reason for a book's exclusion is to look at the similarities of books that were included, and how the book in question differs. These similarities however are hard to find since "the third collection of biblical books does not constitute a unified entry either contextually or ideologically."¹⁷ Therefore, it is difficult to determine why the Book of Ben Sira would have been excluded from the final canon, since it appears that it could have been part of a collection of various books. Perhaps Rabbi Simeon ben Menasya's explanation in Tosefta Yadayim

¹⁴ Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1991 p. 154.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 58.

¹⁶ Eugene Ulrich. "The Bible in the Making: The Scriptures at Qumran." *The Community of the Renewed Covenant: the Notre Dame Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Eds. Eugene Ulrich and James VanderKam. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004. 77-94.

¹⁷ "Bible." *Encyclopedia Judaica*. 2nd ed. 2006.

2:14 enlightens the question - "Ecclesiastes does not defile the hands since it is only the wisdom of Solomon."¹⁸ In Mishnaic Hebrew, a book that defiles one's hands is considered to have canonical status; therefore, his suggestion that Ecclesiastes does not defile one's hands means it is not included in the canon. His reason for its exclusion is Ecclesiastes is that it is a wisdom book, an ancient book about commonsense advice. Therefore, Ben Sira should not be included in the canon because it is also a wisdom book, which apparently means it is not a canonical one. (Ecclesiastes is ultimately included because "they said to him, 'And did he [Solomon] write only this?'"¹⁹ so Lawrence Schiffman explains that "this verse is cited to demonstrate that Solomon also wrote Proverbs and Song of Songs, books the canonical status of which is universally accepted."²⁰ Therefore, Ecclesiastes is ultimately included because its author is Solomon. This obviously would not be a reason for the Book of Ben Sira to be included, since wisdom books in general were excluded). Therefore, the exclusion from the Jewish canon is convincingly not a denunciation of the Book of Ben Sira, but its categorization as an authoritative wisdom book, rather than a canonical one.

While the Jewish canon excluded the Book of Ben Sira, the Christian canon included it. The reason for this can be traced to the Christians canon's relationship to the Septuagint. The Apocryphal books, which had been included in the Septuagint, were included in the Christian canon. Therefore, since the Book of Ben Sira was included in the Apocrypha, it too is included within the Christian canon. The Septuagint needs to be examined in order to ascertain the reason for the Christians' affinity to it. The Septuagint was respected throughout the Jewish people during the Second Temple Period, but even "from early times it was known that the Greek version was different from some Hebrew-Aramaic texts, and that the quality of the Greek was poor. [Yet] when Paul and others preached outside of Israel, they seem have quoted from the Greek Old Testament,

¹⁸ Tosefta Yadayim 2:14 Translation in Schiffman, *Texts and Traditions: A Source Reader for the Study of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism*, Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, 1998 p.120.

¹⁹ *Texts and Traditions: A Source Reader for the Study of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism: A Source Reader for the Study of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism*, Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, 1998 p.120 note 107.

²⁰ Lawrence H. Schiffman, *Texts and Traditions: A Source Reader for the Study of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism*, Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, 1998 pg. 107.

even where it differed from the Hebrew."²¹ This may seem like a perplexing decision if it was known among Jews that the Greek translation was weak, but Paul was preaching primarily to Greek-speaking pagans. Therefore, a text within their native language was understandable and appealing. Additionally, the translation probably went unquestioned by Paul's listeners, since there was little knowledge of the Hebrew language and thus, a comparison was virtually unfeasible. Another possible reason is that the Septuagint may be more in line with Christian ideas (Grunhaus).²² If this is so, since the Septuagint was comprised prior to the beginnings of the Christian religion, it adds authority to their theological claims. This belief led many to claim that the Septuagint was the original text, and the Jews had falsified it into the Masoretic text. The most likely theory is that "the Greek was translated from a Hebrew text different in general shape or in specific readings from the Masoretic Hebrew text. Although many of these differences are exegetical or may result from translation errors or from scribal errors in the original text, called the Vorlage, many are general textual differences."²³ Through the next few centuries, the Christians grappled with the decision of which text to use, include Marcionites who wished to discard the Old Testament all together. However, it seemed that the Septuagint was still the primary text among normative Christians. The most decisive moment about the Septuagint came when

After being commissioned to produce a good Latin translation of the Septuagint, Jerome (347/8-420) had moved to Bethlehem and there became familiar with the Hebrew Bible. He understood the importance of it as the original text behind the Septuagint. He had already begun to improve on existing translations of the Septuagint into Latin, but after coming to value the Hebrew Bible he began translating directly from Hebrew. But, Jerome's discontent was not shared by others in the Church, such as Augustine, who tried to convince him to produce a Latin translation of the Septuagint. For better or worse, the church had cut its theological teeth on the Greek

²¹ Glenn R. Wooden. "The Role of 'the Septuagint' in the Formation of the Biblical Canons." Exploring the Origins of the Bible: Canon Formation in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective. Eds. Craig A. Evans and Emanuel Tov. Grand Rapids, Missouri: Baker Academic, 2008, p. 129-146.

²² This is from a lecture.

²³ Lawrence H. Schiffman. Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1994-1995.

translation, and there was great reluctance to move away from it. Although Jerome translated the Hebrew Bible, the portions of the Septuagint not found in the Hebrew Bible over time found their way into his Vulgate ²⁴

Jerome's translation into the Latin was therefore based strongly from the Hebrew Bible, but the Apocrypha, books not included within the Hebrew Bible, were still included within the translation. Jerome was pressured by other Church authorities to make this decision.²⁵ Assuming this historical recount is accurate, the usage of the Septuagint stemmed less from an intellectual perspective, but one of history and theology. Therefore, the inclusion of Ben Sira within the Christian canon is not an affinity for the work as individually authoritative, but was a result of the Church authorities' decision to base their Bible off of the Septuagint.

The decision of Christian authorities to include the Book of Ben Sira within their canon worried Rabbinical authorities that the Jewish people would be influenced to believe that the book should also be included within the Jewish canon.²⁶ This fear was specifically focused on the Book of Ben Sira as opposed to other Apocryphal works because, as discussed prior, the Book of Ben Sira was an authoritative wisdom book within Judaism. However, a discussion of the a Rabbinical view "is problematic at the onset... as the term 'the rabbis' represents groups of people living in two different empires over the course of some 500 years."²⁷ In order to begin to dissect the situation, the first differentiation needs to be made between Palestinian Jewry and Babylonian Jewry.

²⁴ Glenn R. Wooden. "The Role of 'the Septuagint' in the Formation of the Biblical Canons." Exploring the Origins of the Bible: Canon Formation in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective. Eds. Craig A. Evans and Emanuel Tov. Grand Rapids, Missouri: Baker Academic, 2008, p.129-146.

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²⁷ Ibid.

The Palestinian community, they lived "under the difficult conditions of the Byzantine Christian rule, [so] the rabbis of Palestine felt pressured to redact the various texts of tannaitic and Palestinian amoraic Judaism."²⁸ It also suggests the Palestinian Jewish community definitely had contact with Christians and Christian authorities. This concerned the Rabbis for numerous reasons including the conversion of Jews to Christianity. In order to ensure a separation, "the tannaim enacted laws designed to further separate the Jewish Christians from the community by prohibiting commerce and certain other interrelationships with them."²⁹ They also "outlawed the writings of the early Christians, declaring the Torah scrolls or texts with divine names copied by Christians [as having] no sanctity. This was clearly a polemic against the Gospels."³⁰ But more interestingly per the discussion of the Book of Ben Sira specifically, is that in the Tosefta Yadayim and in Sanhedrin 100b, the Christian works and the Book of Ben Sira are listed within the same discussion regarding external and heretical works, creating a link between Christianity and Ben Sira.³¹ And even with this link, "some eighty-two times The Wisdom of Ben Sira is quoted with approval in the Talmud and other rabbinical writings. Sometimes its sayings are even introduced by the formula 'it is written' which is reserved only for quotations from the canonical Scriptures."³² How can one explain the Book of Ben Sira as a work linked with Christian theology and as a work that is quoted numerous times within the Jewish Talmud? It seems "the early Palestinian rabbis were apparently open to studying Ben Sira, and they cite him numerous times... The one problem they faced was the need to distinguish themselves from the Christians around them, who read Ben Sira alongside other biblical texts and afforded it a canonical status that rabbis opposed."³³ Therefore, the Jewish response was to include its wisdom within the Talmud but warn of its separate status in discussions

²⁸ Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1991 p. 211.

²⁹ Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1991 p.153.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.155.

³¹ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin, 100b.

³² Alexander Di Lella and Patrick Skenhan. "Canonicity of the Book and the Place in the Canon." *The Anchor Bible*. Vol. 39. New York, NY: Doubleday 1987.

³³ Jenny R. Labendz. "The Book of Ben Sira in Rabbinical Literature." *AJS Review*, Cambridge Journals Online (2006): 347-392. Visited on November 25, 2011.

about heretical books. This may also explain why the Talmud often "cite[s] Ben Sira as though he were a rabbi - 'Ben Sira said...,' or "So-and-so said in the name of Ben Sira..." - rather than as an author - 'It is written in the Book of Ben Sira.'"³⁴ This indicates an effort to deemphasize that these teachings were written in the form of a book by saying that a man named Ben Sira stated a point.

Now examining the Babylonian community, "it is difficult to say much about the closeness of the rabbis to the Christian community in Babylonia... mainly because of the scarcity of references to Christianity in rabbinic sources and the lack of Babylonian Jewish sources besides the rabbinic literature."³⁵ A rare discussion occurs with R. Joseph's cautionary warnings and possible prohibition about reading the Book of Ben Sira in the Babylonian Talmud.³⁶ Abaye explains R. Joseph's prohibition by quoting statements within the Book of Ben Sira that seem theologically problematic. Then, Abaye brings Jewish sources which suggest similar ideas, showing that Ben Sira is not theologically a problem based on those statements. It should also be noted that "Abaye's [explanation of] R. Joseph's initial prohibition against reading Ben Sira by citing a passage... does not actually appear in Ben Sira... Either Abaye made up a citation to reflect the inanities that he knew or believed Ben Sira to contain, or he believed this passage - based on oral tradition- actually originated in Ben Sira."³⁷ Therefore, the text may have been considered foolish, or it was not correctly known among Babylonian Jewry and was therefore often misquoted. Yet, either way, there are numerous places within the Talmud that it is cited, so it is obvious that there was significant exposure to the Book of Ben Sira within Babylonia.

The Christian response to the Book of Ben Sira's exclusion from the Jewish canon can only be determined through their response to the entire Apocrypha's exclusion. As noted previously, the Book of Ben Sira was not specifically selected to be included within the canon, but is included because it is part of the Apocrypha. Yet, even so, Christian discussion with Jews focused on the Jewish canon, so the Book of Ben Sira and the

³⁴ Jenny R. Labendz. "The Book of Ben Sira in Rabbinical Literature." *AJS Review*, Cambridge Journals Online (2006): 347-392. Visited on November 25, 2011.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Apocrypha are rarely argued in Jewish-Christian debates. David Berger asserts that "particularly in the early centuries, Christians would have liked very much to include the apocrypha in their arsenal, and they were even more anxious to quote Septuagint readings. The very nature of this issue, however, forced a resolution in favor of the Jews."³⁸ Since the Jews firmly did not consider apocryphal books as canonical, the Christians' usage of them was unpersuasive to any Jewish listeners. Eventually, the Christians had to accept that they would need to focus on the Jewish canon within their polemical arguments. However, unlike the Jews who had an established religion and foundation, the Christians "were also motivated by an internal need to deal with issues that were both crucial and profoundly disturbing."³⁹ The Christian religion was relatively new, so they needed to convince their believers of Christianity's validity itself. One of the successful ways of doing this was to connect themselves to the Jewish Bible, which had a respected, traditional authority. Yet, the Christians needed to explain the continued existence of a separate Jewish people, who had not accepted Christianity. Additionally, they needed to determine their own theological tenets and doctrines. Therefore, while the Jewish authorities were worried about Christian influence, the Christian authorities were concerned with their religion's continued survival based on external and internal challenges. Discussions from this time period concerning Ben Sira within the Jewish canon from a Christian viewpoint are therefore relatively nonexistent because the Christian authorities were focused on other concerns. In 325 CE at the Council of Nicea, Christianity was declared the official state religion, so they were no longer as concerned about other threats. In fact, "by the fifth century, Hellenistic paganism (another previous threat to the Christians) had virtually disappeared, leaving the Jews the sole target of the Byzantine Empire, as the Christianized eastern empire is generally termed."⁴⁰ The Jews were now subservient to the Christians and subject to their antisemitic attacks. Once the Christians gained political and religious authority, the polemical arguments between them and the Jews substantially decreased until the Middle Ages because

³⁸ David Berger. *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages*. Virginia: J. Aronson, 1996.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. 1991 p. 211.

Christianity no longer needed to prove to their followers about Judaism's falsities.

In conclusion, the Christians originally tried to drive the apocryphal books into Jewish-Christian discussions, but when that failed, they focused on the Hebrew Bible's contents. After this development, due to other concerns, the Book of Ben Sira is absent in their polemical works. Analyzing the Book of Ben Sira's development within a Jewish and Christian context is illuminating in two different academic fields. The first is the development of the separate canons. The Bible is the most popular book in today's world, yet many readers are unaware of its origins. Secondly, Jewish-Christian polemics have existed since the beginning of the Christian religion. The Book of Ben Sira is another window into the two religions' relationship up until the Dark Ages. It is important to note that this analysis was all prior to the Protestant Reformation, so this was concerning what would become the Catholic Church's canon. Polemical debates continue today in the forms of interfaith dialogue and social groups that join the religions together. Therefore, this creates a link between contemporary times and Second Temple times, making this discussion extremely relevant.

Vicious Villain or Famed Fool: The Development of the Many Different Characterizations of the Pirate Blackbeard

Ethan (Tani) Isaac

Though many people have heard the name Blackbeard, very few are aware of his notorious deeds. This is mainly because Blackbeard's character has been downplayed numerous times in literature and movies alike, with few of these portrayals corresponding to the historical reality of Captain Edward Teach, aka Blackbeard. Teach was a pirate who terrorized the Spanish Main and the Eastern coast of the United States from 1716 until his death in 1718. His reign of terror was short, but during his tenure Teach gained a reputation as a ruthless villain acquiring the more fitting name of Blackbeard. Stories either directly or indirectly referencing Blackbeard's appearance and personality began to surface as early as the 1880's and have continued to entertain the masses to this day. Within these different characterizations, including some which are only loosely based on his character, Blackbeard has been portrayed as everything from a swashbuckling pirate, to a portly, troublemaking buffoon. It is only in Disney's latest installment of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* series that Blackbeard has been accurately depicted as the monster that he was. This essay will trace the evolution of Blackbeard's character in literature and film and seek to show how contemporary society has come to finally expose his true evil colors.

Most of what we know about the actual Blackbeard comes from the 18th Century work *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates* by Capt. Charles Johnson,¹ a pen-name attributed to the famed novelist Daniel Defoe. Defoe details Teach's entire career, from his early days under the pirate Captain Benjamin Hornigold to his decisive and fatal battle with Lieutenant Robert Maynard. Throughout his account, Defoe's portrayal of Blackbeard's nature as a brutalevil man remains the same. As Defoe explains, Blackbeard was an example of "what a pitch of wickedness human nature may arrive."² However, while

¹ Capt. Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 2010).

² Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders*, p. 55.



Capture of the Pirate, Blackbeard, 1718.

Defoe's descriptions of Blackbeard's physical attributes and his actions are commonly referenced in later depictions of this notorious pirate, Defoe's overall negative characterization of Captain Teach as an abhorrent individual became diluted in the many literary and film adaptations of his character.

In addition to Defoe, two stories from the folklore of the Virgin Islands illustrate Blackbeard's evil nature. The first of these stories describes how Blackbeard would "cross his arms with a pistol in each hand and fire to make [his wives] dodge the shots. He would take a wife to his treasure vault and lock her in to die."¹ While the actions described in this story cannot be verified by any historical source, the view of Teach as a truly heinous individual is clearly presented in the legends of how he treated his wives. The second tale describes Teach committing other reprehensible acts such as robbing a shipwrecked man and engaging in the slave trade.² Whether or not the details of these folktales are true, they display a Blackbeard monster akin to the man described by Defoe. The Virgin Islands' folklore thereby helps further define the evil character of Captain Blackbeard.

Robert Louis Stevenson first represented Blackbeard's character in literary form his fictional novel *Treasure Island* where he draws directly from Defoe's description of Blackbeard to form his own pirate characters. The first of these characters that may have underpinnings of Blackbeard is the pirate Long John Silver. Although Long John Silver's appearance is clearly not based on Blackbeard, writer Angus Konstam asserts that "Stevenson relied heavily on [Defoe's] description of Blackbeard when he conjured up his pirate villain Long John Silver."³ It seems that Konstam may believe that Silver is in some ways inspired by Defoe's Blackbeard because of Silver's incessantly devious and brutal nature.

However, Stevenson's Silver is a much more complicated character than Blackbeard: at times, it seems that Silver actually has a shred of compassion for the young Jim Hawkins. Defoe's description of Blackbeard is of a wholly evil man who even ran his own ship aground in order to

secure himself a larger portion of the loot.⁴ Additionally there are those such as John Robert Moore who point out that Silver is actually based on a different person entirely claiming, "the original of Long John Silver is Captain Dampier..."⁵ It would seem that, although Long John Silver does have a certain wicked cunning, his character was not entirely based on Defoe's vision of Captain Blackbeard.

Even though Long John Silver does not quite match up with Defoe's Blackbeard, *Treasure Island* may still have a Blackbeard match in the character of Captain Flint. As a matter of fact, Stevenson even uses Blackbeard to describe Flint as he writes, "He was the bloodthirstiest buccaneer that sailed. Blackbeard was a child to Flint."⁶ While this does not prove Flint was directly based on Blackbeard, it shows that Stevenson was clearly thinking of Blackbeard when he created the character. Furthermore, Flint's character and actions do emulate those of Blackbeard. Throughout *Treasure Island*, Flint is portrayed as having been heartless and completely demonic, similar to the way Defoe describes Blackbeard. Additionally, Flint is described as burying his treasure with the help of six men and then returning alone.⁷ A comparable account is told of Blackbeard,

A great iron chest was buried the first night Blackbeard was ashore. The chest was supposed to have held the bride's portion of the booty. All six men who helped Blackbeard bury his chest disappeared within the week. The pirate himself is known to have killed two of them with no apparent provocation.⁸

The similarities between the story of Flint burying treasure with six men who all ended up dead and this story of Blackbeard are hard to ignore. Based on Stevenson's descriptions of Flint's character and the parallel stories of buried treasure, it is certainly possible that Stevenson's Flint was loosely based on the character of Blackbeard.

In addition to hinting at Blackbeard in *Treasure Island*, Stevenson makes a direct reference to the famed pirate in his work *The Master of Ballantrae*. Although the so-called narrator of *The Master of Ballantrae* adds a note that,

⁴ Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders*, p. 45.

⁵ John Robert Moore, "Defoe, Stevenson, and the Pirates." *ELH*, v.10 no.1 (1943), p. 39.

⁶ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*. (New York: Scholastic Inc., 2001), p. 29.

⁷ Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, p. 77.

⁸ Gerard T. Hurley, "Buried Treasure Tales in America." *Western Folklore*, v.10 no.3 (1951), p. 209.

¹ Florence O. Meade, "Folk Tales from the Virgin Islands." *The Journal of American Folklore* v. 45 no. 177 (1932), p. 368.

² *Ibid* p. 368-369.

³ Angus Konstam, *Blackbeard: America's Most Notorious Pirate*. (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2006) Kindle Location 3714.

"This Teach of the *Sarah* must not be confused with the celebrated *Blackbeard*. The dates and facts by no means tally,"⁹ historian Moore believes there can be no question as to Teach's identity, as he writes,

In *The Master of Ballantrae* the knowledge of piracy begins where that of *Treasure Island* left off... Blackbeard is no longer disguised as Captain Flint; he appears in his own person and is called a "most notorious pirate" in the very language of Defoe's title page. As in the *History*, he curls his hair and his beard in ringlets, chews glass, burns sulphur, calls his ship a hell, and pretends that he is a devil.¹⁰

From this description of the physical similarities between the two pirates, there can be little doubt that the character of Teach in *The Master of Ballantrae* is referring to none other than Defoe's ruthless pirate known as Blackbeard.

While the argument that Stevenson's Teach in *The Master of Ballantrae* is indeed Blackbeard is very convincing based solely on the physical appearances of both characters, Moore takes it one step further by equating the acts of Stevenson's fictitious Teach with the events described by Defoe. Moore notes, "As in the *History*, Blackbeard attempts to cheat his crew by absconding with the treasure, and his ship is run into an inlet on the Georgia-Carolina coast..."¹¹ Moore is referring to an incident recorded in Defoe's account where Blackbeard intentionally ran his ship aground off the Carolina coast.¹² As Moore points out, the Teach character in *The Master of Ballantrae* embarks on a similar venture with the intention of robbing his crew of the treasure they had accrued. The similarity of the two stories makes it clear that Stevenson used Defoe's Blackbeard as the basis for Teach's actions.

In addition to Teach's attempt to cheat his crew, Stevenson borrows another tale from Defoe. In this instance, Stevenson describes Teach setting fires in his cabin and screaming "Hell, hell!"¹³ This scene is similar to an incident described by Defoe in which Blackbeard locked himself and a few

of his crew in a hold and lit fires to make it feel like hell.¹⁴ While Stevenson's portrayal of the event is much more pathetic than the description given by Defoe, the details of the pirates lighting fires and making references to hell are too unique for the two stories to be unrelated. From looking at their outward appearances to the events that befell them, it is very obvious that the real historical Blackbeard and Stevenson's fictional Teach are indeed one and the same.

Still, although there are many similarities between Defoe's Captain Blackbeard and Stevenson's Captain Teach, like *Treasure Island's* Long John Silver, the character of Captain Teach can be seen to have a more dual personality. While Teach does display many of the evil characteristics of Blackbeard, he is also portrayed as a weak and pitiful man. As Moore asserts, "...from his first appearance Teach has been two different characters - notorious pirate and neurotic weakling...we find [Stevenson] bringing in one of the most terrible characters in history only to present him as a coward and a fool."¹⁵ By describing Teach as a pathetic character, Stevenson breaks from Defoe's historical depiction of Blackbeard as a strong and terrifying pirate. Unfortunately, Stevenson's Teach becomes the basis for many nonrealistic portrayals of Blackbeard, and as Angus Konstam writes, is "...the start of [Blackbeard's] slide from historical pirate figure into cartoonlike pirate buffoon."¹⁶

One version of the Blackbeard character that echoes the depiction of Captain Teach in *The Master of Ballantrae* is Robert Newton's Blackbeard from the 1952 film *Blackbeard the Pirate*. Newton does a very good job of portraying an evil brute that adheres to Defoe's description, as Konstam states, "[Newton] portrayed Blackbeard as a larger-than-life character full of bravado and menace, a figure drawn straight from the pages of [Defoe]."¹⁷ However, as Konstam also notes, Newton's overacting and coining of such phrases as "Yo ho heave ho" and "Shiver me timbers" detracts from the evil of Blackbeard and presents the audience with a more comical and inaccurate Blackbeard character akin to Stevenson's Captain Teach.¹⁸

⁹ Moore, "Defoe, Stevenson, and the Pirates," p. 56.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 55.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders* p. 45.

¹³ Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae*. (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1996), Kindle location 524.

¹⁴ Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders*, p. 55.

¹⁵ Moore, "Defoe, Stevenson, and the Pirates," p. 56.

¹⁶ Konstam, Kindle location 3717.

¹⁷ Konstam, Kindle location 3723.

¹⁸ Ibid.

While Newton's Blackbeard was similar to Stevenson's Teach in that he was equal parts brute and buffoon, Peter Ustinov's interpretation of Blackbeard in the 1968 Disney movie *Blackbeard's Ghost* is wholly buffoon. Ustinov portrays Blackbeard as a portly, fun-loving troublemaker who attempts to redeem his soul by performing one act of kindness. It seems that the premise that Blackbeard could not do anything good is based on the more historical vision of Blackbeard. However, Ustinov's character doesn't even look remotely fearsome. His beard is trimmed, his clothes are neat, and he gives off the air of 'Santa Claus gone prankster.' It is very difficult to see Ustinov's Blackbeard as the kind of man who would terrorize anybody. In this case, it seems that Disney took Stevenson's notion of turning Blackbeard into a pitiful character way too far creating a completely ahistorical image of a bumbling, clown-like Blackbeard.

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Apart from looking like Defoe's Captain Teach, McShane's Blackbeard is every bit as awful in personality as Defoe makes him out to be. He tricks most of his crew into conscripting, burns a member of his crew to death, ties a priest to his mast, threatens to shoot his own daughter, and eventually chooses to save his own life instead of his daughter's. Furthermore, McShane's Blackbeard displays the brilliant deviousness that Defoe attributes to Teach when he devises and executes a terrible plan to get a mermaid to cry in order to complete the ritual at the Fountain of Youth and attain eternal life. McShane's Blackbeard relies so heavily on Defoe's descriptions of Teach that one of his lines is taken almost word for word from Defoe.

When Blackbeard's daughter tries to convince him to show mercy for Sparrow after Sparrow orchestrates a mutiny, Blackbeard responds "If I don't kill a man every now and then, they forget who I am." This is almost identical to a line in Defoe describing Blackbeard's reasoning for shooting Israel Hands: "Being asked the meaning of [shooting Hands], he only answered, by damning them, that if he did not now and then kill one of them, they would forget who he was."²³ It is to Disney's credit that when they tried for the second time to create a Blackbeard character they went back to the main credible source of information about Blackbeard and put together the most accurate representation to date of one of history's most notorious pirates.

Even though Disney based most of the Blackbeard character on Defoe's realistic descriptions, they did throw in a bit of fiction by giving Blackbeard a magical sword that can bring a ship to life. This was clearly done for entertainment value, yet also furthers the impression of Blackbeard as purely evil. While this may have been taking Defoe's impression of Blackbeard as a devil figure a little too far, Disney's second attempt at a Blackbeard character has no trace of the pathetic nature or historical inaccuracies that made their first portrayal of the infamous pirate an utter disaster.

Beginning with Stevenson's Teach in *The Master of Ballantrae*, the true demonic nature of Captain Edward Teach, aka Blackbeard, was hidden behind a veil of inaccurate and laughable depictions of one of history's most abhorrent individuals. However, when Disney decided to add a Blackbeard character to one of their most successful franchises, they examined the actual history of Blackbeard instead of relying on other

secondary literary or film depictions, and created a character that captured the true evil nature of Edward Teach. Hopefully this has begun a trend within the realm of the Blackbeard story that will continue to showcase this great historical figure as one of the most morally reprehensible men that ever roamed the seven seas.

⁵⁰ Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders*, p. 54.

Toward a More Meaningful Blue Helmet: The Development of UN Peacekeeping Policy and the Unique Impact of the Rwanda Genocide

Charles Kopel

The United Nations was born in San Francisco on October 24, 1945 with the grandest of ambitions. Reflecting on the horrific destruction of World War II, the drafters of the UN Charter set their sights on fixing the greatest evils of mankind by establishing a new cooperative order in international affairs. "...To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights...to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom...to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours..."¹ – nothing short of absolute messianic salvation seemed to escape the dreams of the UN's founding thinkers. And, for some of the UN's more Biblically inclined supporters, even the Messiah was not too farfetched; an inscription on a giant stone façade opposite the UN headquarters plaza in New York City proclaims the words of the prophet Isaiah, "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."²

But disappointment often follows high expectations. An essential part of the UN's mission, as it was originally conceived, was to employ active military force for the sake of maintaining peace among its member states. This notion evolved over six and a half decades from a theoretical commitment of all member states to contribute troops to a standing UN military, explicitly required in Chapter VII, Article 43 of the Charter, to the hodgepodge of small volunteer forces with narrow mandates that came to be known as UN Peacekeeping Operations. The forces' achievements have fallen far short of the mark; instead of world peace, bloody wars and acts of ethnic cleansing all over the world have occurred every year since 1945 – on the UN's watch.

¹ Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, available on the UN webpage at www.un.org/en/documents/charter/preamble.shtml.

² King James translation of Isaiah 2:4.



United Nations Peacekeeping on the African Continent,

A great deal of blame can, and has been, assigned for the general failure of peacekeeping. The notoriously divisive politics of the Cold War years prevented the Security Council (the UN's primary legislative body) from acting decisively on the Organization's noble commitments. Lofty aspirations for the future of UN Peacekeeping followed the end of the Cold War and its politics, but the blue-helmeted international forces proved incapable of facing the new wave of postcolonial ethnic conflicts in the 1990s and 2000s, stunted by new political concerns and an apparent lack of international will.

A full-scale genocide of ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus by radical Hutu masses in 1994 Rwanda posed perhaps the most crucial test of UN Peacekeeping effectiveness in the post-Cold War era, and the UN's failure to stop the killings represented a severe negation of the Charter's mission and wrought irreparable damage to the UN's image in the region. In the words of former Secretary General (executive chief of the UN) Kofi Annan, "...the failure of the international community, including the United Nations, to intervene and prevent genocide in Rwanda...has had especially profound consequences in Africa. Throughout the continent, the perception of a near indifference on the part of the international community has left a poisonous legacy that continues to undermine confidence in the Organization."¹

This essay will consider the complicated development of UN Peacekeeping policy from 1945 to the present, emphasizing the unique factors that existed at different stages in history. Particular attention will be given to the 1994 tragedy of the Rwanda genocide and its consequences for Peacekeeping policy. In its current state, UN Peacekeeping still appears weak and inadequate, and even its future prospects remain quite bleak. However, I believe that historical signs have been generally positive, albeit slow, and that the attainability of world peace will continue to grow more feasible as more armed conflicts will be successfully subdued. To borrow an expression from Theodore Parker, famously quoted by Martin Luther King, Jr., I believe that the arc of UN Peacekeeping history is long, but it bends toward effectiveness.² Concrete developments in twenty-first

¹ Report of the UN Secretary-General (Annan, Kofi A.), "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (United Nations archives, 1998), available online at <http://www.un.org/en/africarenewal/sgreport/report.htm>.

² Dr. King remarked many times that "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends

century world affairs support this contention.

At the foundation of the UN's role as a military player in world affairs is the prohibition of the use of force, codified as international law in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter: "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations."³ This clause gets at the heart of the UN's goals by expressly forbidding the practice of aggressive war.

Defensive war, however, is a different issue altogether. The Charter's primary exception to its novel prohibition of the use of force is the age-old principle of self-defense, described in Article 51 as an inherent right of sovereign states to defend themselves in the face of armed attack.⁴ States' claim to this right is therefore protected in international law much as the claim of private individuals to this right is protected in most independent western systems of law.⁵

These new parameters for independent states' military rights relate fundamentally to the UN's goal of direct engagement in enforcing world peace. According to Christine Gray, "The aim of the drafters of the UN Charter was not only to prohibit the unilateral use of force by states in Article 2(4) but also to centralize control of the use of force in the Security Council under Chapter VII."⁶ Essentially and explicitly, the UN Charter sought to grant the Security Council a complete monopoly on the legitimate use of force throughout the world.

The purpose of this monopoly was not left ambiguous; rather, UN policy on the use of military of force was spelled out and enshrined in

towards justice," echoing the sentiments of nineteenth-century American Unitarian minister Theodore Parker, who wrote in a sermon titled "Of Justice and the Conscience" (1853): "I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one... And from what I can see I am sure it bends towards justice." My contention borrows the form of Parker's original expression for use in a historical context, but also relates to its substance: Whereas the goal of UN Peacekeeping is a higher order of global justice, the arc of the moral universe bends toward this goal.

³ Charter of the United Nations, Chapter I, Article 2, Section 4, UN webpage, Ibid.

⁴ Charter, Chapter VII, Article 51, UN webpage, Ibid.

⁵ For more on the principle of self-defense in western law, see, generally, Catherine L. Carpenter, "Of the Enemy Within, the Castle Doctrine, and Self-Defense," 86 Marquette Law Review 653 (2003).

⁶ Christine Gray, *International Law and the Use of Force*, Foundations of Public International Law Series (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 144.

Chapter VII of the Charter, titled "Action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression."⁷ The clauses of this chapter include the right of the Security Council to identify threats to the peace and institute provisional measures to respond to these threats (Article 39), the responsibility of the concerned parties to comply with these measures (Article 40),⁸ the right of the Security Council to apply sanctions or resort to military actions against aggressor nations (Articles 41-42), and Chapter VII's crown jewel - the obligation of all member states to contribute "armed forces, assistance, and facilities" to the cause of constructing a UN military body capable of enforcing and maintaining world peace (Article 43).⁹ Chapter VII's central importance in the new world order was underscored in Article 2(7) of the Charter, which qualifies that the UN's general commitment not to interfere in its member states' domestic jurisdiction does not extend to "the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII."¹⁰ For the singular issue of military force, foremost jurisdiction belongs only to the UN Security Council.

But history has borne out a reality very different than the one intended by the drafters of the UN Charter. Immediately following World War II, the Cold War between the democratic West and the communist East quickly came to dominate international affairs, rendering decisive Security Council action impossible. In the words of William J. Durch, "During the Cold War, the United Nations could not do the job for which it was created. Global collective security, the organizing precept of its Charter, was impossible in a world divided into hostile blocs."¹¹ The root of this difficulty lay in the organizational infrastructure of the United Nations Security Council.

Article 23(1) of the Charter establishes that the Security Council will always include fifteen members, ten of whom are elected by the General Assembly (a lower UN body in which every member state has permanent representation) to two-year terms, and the other five of whom are

⁷ Charter, Chapter VII, UN webpage, *Ibid*.

⁸ For more on the significance of Article 40 in international law, see, generally, Hitoshi Nasu, *International Law on Peacekeeping: A Study of Article 40 of the UN Charter* (Leiden, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009).

⁹ Charter, Chapter VII, UN webpage, *Ibid*.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, Chapter I, Article 2, Section 7.

¹¹ William J. Durch, *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis* (New York: Henry L. Stimson Center, 1993), 1.

permanent members - The Republic of China (as of 1971, this position was transferred to the People's Republic of China), France, the Soviet Union (as of the Union's dissolution in 1991, this position was transferred to Russia), the United Kingdom, and the United States.¹² These five governments, representing the victorious side of World War II that founded the United Nations, are granted a special implicit veto power; Article 27(3) affirms that a decision requires nine Security Council votes to pass, including "the concurring votes of the five permanent members."¹³ In other words, a single contrary vote among them automatically kills a measure. This special provision became particularly significant with the rise of the Cold War-era blocs - one following the lead of the United States and the other following the Soviet Union. Since both of these world powers maintained veto privilege, neither could ever successfully pass measures detrimental to the interests of the other. And, beyond that, since the spread of world communism forced governments everywhere to align themselves with one side or the other, all international conflicts became tinged with Cold War undertones, and no conclusive measures regarding any significant threats to world peace could successfully pass the Security Council. The organization that had been the basis for so much hope was now toothless to respond to the Soviet blockade of West Berlin in 1948-1949, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1979, the Teheran hostage crisis of 1980, and American military action against Central American nations in the 1980s, to name just a few important instances. All told, between 1946 and 1985, the permanent member veto power was utilized 279 times (mainly by the Soviet Union from 1946 until 1970 and by the United States from 1970 to 1985), and just the threat of veto successfully blocked decisive measures in countless more instances.¹⁴

However, Durch clarifies, these abject political circumstances did not render Chapter VII entirely irrelevant. "As a 'neutral' organization, [the UN] could sometimes help to bring smaller conflicts to an end, keep them

¹² Charter, Chapter V, Article 23, Section 1.

¹³ *Ibid*, Chapter V, Article 27, Section 3.

¹⁴ Gray, 145. For more on the ineffectiveness of UNSC (United Nations Security Council) during the Cold War, see Gray, 145-153, and Durch, 7-9. For more on the history of the permanent members' veto power, see, generally, Sally Morphet, "Resolutions and vetoes in the UN Security Council: their relevance and significance," in *Review of International Studies* 16 (Cambridge University Press, 1990): 341-359.

from flaring anew, and keep them from leading to a direct and potentially catastrophic clash of US and Soviet arms. Thus, the UN came to be associated over the years with more modest but, under the circumstances, more realistic objectives: the mediation of isolated and idiosyncratic conflicts, the monitoring of cease-fire arrangements, and the separation of hostile armed forces."¹⁵ These missions initiated the long history of UN Peacekeeping, though the formal conglomerate Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) was created in 1992 in one of the first decisions of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt.¹⁶

There have been sixty-seven Peacekeeping operations worldwide since 1948, among them UNEF I in the Sinai from 1956-1957 (the first armed Peacekeeping mission, charged with separating Israeli and Egyptian troops), ONUC in the Congo from 1960-1964 (charged with restoring civil order), and UNMOGIP in Jammu and Kashmir from 1949 until the present (the longest-standing Peacekeeping mission, charged with monitoring the Indian-Pakistani ceasefire.) Hundreds of thousands of military and other personnel from over 120 countries have served under the UN flag in Peacekeeping operations, and more than 2,980 have died serving on missions.¹⁷ To date, there are seventeen Peacekeeping operations deployed throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and the Caribbean.¹⁸ The many operations have met widely varied results, and "United Nations Peacekeeping Forces" was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988 for its work around the world.¹⁹

Over the first four decades of Peacekeeping, political considerations of the Cold War blocs guided the evolution of UN policy until a coherent set of principles for military action took form, with no basis at all in the UN Charter. These principles dictated that UN Peacekeeping forces must remain impartial, bear light arms and use them only for purposes of self-

¹⁵ Durch, 1.

¹⁶ UN Peacekeeping webpage, "About us" section, available online at www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/about/dpko/.

¹⁷ Ibid., "Peacekeeping operations" section, available online at www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/peacekeeping.shtml. It is worthwhile to note that Durch (on p. 8) counts UNSCOB, a mission in the Balkans from 1947-1951, among Peacekeeping operations, but the UN Peacekeeping webpage does not.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Official webpage of the Nobel Prize, available at www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1988/press.html.

defense, act only with the consent of the host government, and should not include troops from permanent member states of the Security Council or from states with a political interest in the conflict region.²⁰ This doctrine represents a marked departure from the Chapter VII model of UN military power. But then the sudden fall of communist governments and the end of the Cold War precipitated major changes in UN Peacekeeping policy.

As a new era of post-colonial ethnic conflicts erupted on the international community, optimistic theorists envisioned a more active enforcing role for UN Peacekeeping, founded upon the principles of Chapter VII.²¹ A particularly encouraging sign was the Security Council's swift and decisive response to the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein's Iraqi regime. After the failure of harsh economic sanctions to force Iraq's withdrawal, the Security Council authorized a coalition of thirty-four nations to take military action against Iraqi forces in what became known as Operation Desert Storm. Though the coalition was led by independent governments and did not officially unite under the UN flag, its successful mobilization was a promising sign of post-Cold War unity in the Security Council.²²

Building upon this confidence, Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali presented his ambitious *Agenda for Peace* in June 1992, aimed at reversing the stagnation of Cold War politics:

In these past months a conviction has grown, among nations large and small, that an opportunity has been regained to achieve the great objectives of the Charter - a United Nations capable of maintaining international peace and

²⁰ Gray, 165. See also UN Peacekeeping webpage, "Peacekeeping operations" section, which limits this precedent to "three basic principles: Consent of the parties, Impartiality, and Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate." Gray evidently feels that this official UN statement leaves out some fundamental, yet unofficial principles, and that the formal allowance of use of force "in defence of the mandate" is not to be taken seriously (when not concerned with self-defense).

²¹ Durch, 2. See, for instance, John M. Lee, Robert von Pagenhardt, and Timothy W. Stanley, *Strengthening United Nations Peacekeeping and Peacemaking: A Summary* (Washington, D.C.: International Economic Studies Institute, 1992); and United Nations Association-National Capital Area, *The Common Defense: Peace and Security in a Changing World* (Washington, D.C.: UNA-USA, 1992).

²² See Gray, 154.

security, of securing justice and human rights... the immense ideological barrier that for decades gave rise to distrust and hostility – and the terrible tools of destruction that were their inseparable companions – has collapsed... Under Article 42 of the Charter, the Security Council has the authority to take military action to maintain or restore international peace and security... This will require bringing into being, through negotiations, the special agreements foreseen in Article 43 of the Charter, whereby Member States undertake to make armed forces, assistance and facilities available to the Security Council for the purposes stated in Article 42, not only on an ad hoc basis but on a permanent basis. Under the political circumstances that now exist for the first time since the Charter was adopted, the long-standing obstacles to the conclusion of such special agreements should no longer prevail.²³

The bar for UN achievement thus once again set high, horrible disappointment was soon to follow.

One problem was that the UN Peacekeeping establishment was simply not equipped to take on enforcement missions. Operations commanders did not have the financial resources or infrastructure to fulfill their mandates as it was, and the end of the Cold War suddenly produced a sharp rise in demand for Peacekeepers. As is to be expected, the troops supply did not rise nearly as quickly as did the demand.²⁴ And then the newly-established DPKO experimented too quickly. Peacemaking missions sent to protect populations from civil wars in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia in 1992 saw their mandates quickly expanded to goals of peace enforcement. The missions soon collapsed under the difficulties of enforcing military aims without taking sides. Still bound by the old UN principles of impartiality and host government consent, Peacemaking forces were subject to dismissal by local authorities as soon as they began to take serious action pursuant to their mandates of peace enforcement.²⁵

This essay will not expound further on the complex subject of international military involvement in Somalia and Yugoslavia (which included both UN and NATO missions). Rather, due emphasis shall be given to the concurrent catastrophe in Central Africa that most clearly

²³ Report of the UN Secretary-General (Boutros-Ghali, Boutros), "An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping" (United Nations archives, 1992), available at www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html.

²⁴ Durch, 2.

²⁵ Gray, 165-174.

demonstrated the fundamental ineffectiveness of UN Peacemaking policy.

The Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups clashed in Rwanda for many decades, ever since a Tutsi monarchy rose to dominate the nation in the mid-nineteenth century and was fostered under German, and then Belgian, colonial rule. Belgium maintained control over Rwanda after World War II as a UN Trust Territory, and continued to favor Tutsi supremacy. A Hutu emancipation movement then fought back through the 1950s, and persistent ethnic conflict resulted in the 1959 Rwandan Revolution, in which Hutu forces murdered tens of thousands of Tutsi and created a massive Tutsi refugee crisis over the Ugandan border. The Belgian overlords facilitated a national referendum in 1962 in which the people voted to abolish the monarchy, separate Rwanda from Burundi, and establish a new republic led by the majority Hutu (approximately 85% of the population). From that point, systematic persecution of the Tutsi population became the norm, and the new Rwandan regime faced periodic border clashes with groups of Tutsi refugees from Uganda and elsewhere.²⁶

In 1990, a Tutsi rebel group called the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) invaded Rwanda from Uganda and instigated a civil war. In response to the new violence, the Security Council authorized a Peacekeeping observer mission called UNOMUR (United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda) in July 1993 to monitor the borders. In August, the government and the RPF signed a power-sharing agreement known as the Arusha Accords, and a weak peace process took shape. UN forces then agreed to help implement the fledgling peace. In October, the Security Council replaced the UNOMUR observers with UNAMIR (United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda) – a 2,500-troop force under the command of Canadian Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire, charged with implementing regional demilitarization and maintaining the government-RPF ceasefire.²⁷

Lieutenant-General Dallaire saw the catastrophe coming. In early 1994, Dallaire received a letter from an anonymous Hutu informant in the Rwandan government that revealed details of ongoing training of the

²⁶ For a detailed account of the Rwanda genocide's historical background, see, generally, René Lemarchand, "Disconnecting the Threads: Rwanda and the Holocaust Reconsidered," in *Idea* 7.1 (2002), available at www.ideajournal.com/articles.php?sup=11; and Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York: Picador, 2000).

²⁷ Gray, 175.

Interhamwe militia to exterminate Tutsi, as well as the location of massive arms caches prepared for this goal throughout the country. A terrified Dallaire faxed this information back to UN Headquarters in New York and urgently requested the personnel and resources necessary to prevent imminent genocide. His message was rebuffed; the DPKO command reminded him that he was sent to fulfill a UN mandate, not a NATO one.²⁸

In April, an airplane carrying the Hutu presidents of both Rwanda and Burundi was shot down and everyone on board was killed. In response, Hutu militias and extremist propaganda radio stations began mobilizing the Hutu population to kill all the Tutsi and their moderate Hutu allies. For three months, machete-armed militias wrought horrific devastation throughout Rwanda while government forces protected and facilitated their murderous activities. All told, between 500,000 and one million people lost their lives in the genocide. Dallaire could, indeed, have stopped it. In the words of Shashi Tharoor, "Had the UN's General Romeo Dallaire had 5000 reinforcements within days of the shooting down of the Presidential aircraft that unleashed the carnage in Rwanda, he might have been able to save more than 500,000 lives; but none was forthcoming..."²⁹

On the second day of the killing, Rwandan Presidential Guard seized control of the Kigali building in which moderate Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana was to deliver a calming national message on the radio, and they brutally murdered Uwilingiyimana and ten Belgian Peacekeeping soldiers posted there to protect her. In response, the Belgian government carried out what was apparently the political intention of the murderers and unilaterally withdrew its contingent of 1,000 soldiers, leaving the UNAMIR force at a pathetic 1,500.³⁰ Full-scale massacres began, and UNAMIR was quickly running out of food and supplies. The Secretary-General posed three options to the Security Council: immediate deployment of a large Chapter VII strike force to enforce peace; scaling back of the UNAMIR force to 270 personnel to act as non-forceful intermediaries for the peace process

²⁸ Samantha Power, "A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide (New York: Harper Perennial, 2002), 343.

²⁹ Shashi Tharoor, "The Future of Peacekeeping" in *After Rwanda: The Coordination of United Nations Humanitarian Assistance*, ed. Jim Whitman and David Pocock (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1996), 23-24.

³⁰ See Power, *Ibid.*, for indication that Dallaire had been expressly warned of this plan, and had conveyed it in his fax to New York.

and humanitarian services; or total withdrawal. The Security Council chose the second option and left Dallaire to sit and watch the holocaust around him with little to do about it.³¹

DPKO Director Kofi Annan (later to become UN secretary-general) and his deputy, Iqbal Riza, rejected urgent pleas from Dallaire for a serious preventive UN action. Ten years later, Secretary-General Annan voiced regret for his failure to act: "I believed at that time that I was doing my best, but I realised after the genocide that there was more that I could and should have done to sound the alarm and rally support."³²

The UN Peacekeeping effort utterly failed Rwanda. The RPF military victory in July ended the genocide, and international help had not yet even arrived. Foreign presence in Rwanda was only bolstered in October, when DPKO deployments brought UNAMIR to its full strength of 5,500 military personnel. Even the extensive humanitarian campaign that followed could not make up for the hundreds of thousands of lost lives. And to what gain did the UN continue to ignore the killings once they had begun? In the words of Neill Wright, explaining what should be all too obvious to the DPKO leadership, "the key lesson from Rwanda... must be that preventive political action, and where that fails action to remove the causes that make humanitarian aid necessary, is likely to be much less expensive, and save more lives, than even the best-coordinated humanitarian operation."³³

To borrow Wright's terms, has the UN learned, by now, the "lesson of Rwanda?" The historical answer seems rather ambiguous, if not entirely negative. First, The UN has reacted in word and taken ownership its past failures publicly. In 2004, Secretary-General Annan appointed Argentinean human rights lawyer Juan Mendez as UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, a brand-new position explicitly cast as a response to "genocidal violence in Rwanda and the Balkans."³⁴ Thus initiating a course of proactivity, the UN proceeded to define, for the very first time, criteria for humanitarian intervention. At the 2005 UN World Summit, delegates

³¹ Gray, 176.

³² Quote from "UN chief's Rwanda genocide regret," BBC News, 26 March, 2004, available at news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3573229.stm.

³³ Neill Wright, "The Hidden Costs of Better Coordination" in *After Rwanda: The Coordination of United Nations Humanitarian Assistance*, 58.

³⁴ Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide webpage, available at <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/index.shtml>.

embraced the “responsibility to protect” (R2P) norm first proposed in 2001 by the Canadian government-sponsored International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty and used it to frame a new legal norm. The UN version of the norm is based on three principles: 1) A sovereign government has the responsibility to protect its people from mass atrocities; 2) If the government is unable to do so, the international community has a responsibility to assist it; and 3) If the government fails to protect its civilians, the international community has a responsibility to intervene through economic sanctions and even military force, if necessary.¹

The delegates included this norm in the Summit Outcome document, and, in April, 2006, the Security Council formalized that clause of the document into official UN policy in Resolution 1674.² But not all that much has come of it. To date, the only significant implementation of R2P was the passage of Security Council Resolution 1973 on March 19, 2011, as Muammar al-Qadhafi’s Libyan regime brutally repressed protests and killed 10,000 Libyans over the course of an eight-month bloody civil war. The resolution reiterated the responsibility of Qadhafi’s Libyan regime to protect its subject population, enacted economic sanctions against the Libyan government, and imposed no-fly zone over the country’s airspace.³ Ultimately, the war ended with a rebel victory, aided by a NATO bombing campaign. Though the UN seems to have played only a small role in the Libya affair, the “international community” acted according to its R2P guidelines.

In other instances, however, the UN and the larger international community have failed to protect civilians from mass atrocity. A brutal civil war erupted in the Darfur region of Sudan in 2003, creating a massive humanitarian crisis involving possible acts of genocide. The civilian population of Darfur endured the effects of war crimes and forced displacement for seven years, and the death toll has been estimated in the hundreds of thousands.⁴ UNAMID (African Union-United Nations Hybrid

¹ Ibid.

² Text of the resolution available on the UN online archives at www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions06.htm.

³ Text of the resolution available on the UN online archives at www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions11.htm.

⁴ For more on the history of the Darfur conflict, see, generally, Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: a new history of a long war* (London: Zed Books, 2008).

Operation in Darfur) arrived in 2007, authorized by Security Council Resolution 1706 to be the largest UN Peacekeeping operation in history.⁵

But the operation arrived four years late, stalled by the delayed consent of the Sudanese regime in Khartoum. After this, Sudan went even further in its obstruction, delaying essential military supplies in customs at Port Sudan, failing to provide the necessary land for UN forces to set up bases and humanitarian relief areas, withholding airspace rights from the force’s aircraft, and even, shockingly, assaulting UN troops in more than one instance.⁶ Despite the innovative “responsibility” formulations of R2P and the broad powers of Chapter VII, the UN has failed to work around its principle of obtaining host government consent and cooperation for the sake of protecting the Darfurian people. (One is easily reminded of the way UN Peacekeeping obediently abandoned its Sinai positions in 1967 at President Nasser’s request, clearly aware of his intention to initiate war.)⁷

An ongoing UN Peacekeeping failure is the lack of serious response to Bashar al-Assad’s violent repression of popular uprising in Syria – a gruesome chapter of the Arab Spring. According to the widely recognized website *Syrian Martyrs*, 551 days of fighting have claimed over 32,000 lives to date – September 19, 2012.⁸ A February vote in the Security Council sought to provide official UN support for an Arab League-backed peace plan and was vetoed by Russia and China, both of which are regimes friendly to Assad’s Syria.⁹ A more recent ceasefire initiative proposed by none other than Mr. Kofi Annan, on behalf of both the United Nations and the Arab League, officially was launched in April and was all but ruined by early June.¹⁰ Annan resigned on August 2, blaming an ineffective Security

⁵ Text of the resolution available on the UN online archive at www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sc8821.doc.htm.

⁶ Jerry Fowler and John Prendergast, “The International Community Must Ensure the Success of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Darfur” in *Current Controversies: Darfur*, ed. Debra A. Miller (Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2009), 153-163.

⁷ See UN Peacekeeping webpage, available at www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/uneff1backgr2.html.

⁸ Available at www.syrianshuhada.com.

⁹ Neil MacFarquhar and Anthony Shadid, “Russia and China Block U.N. Action on Crisis in Syria,” *The New York Times*, 4 February, 2012, available at www.nytimes.com/2012/02/05/world/middleeast/syria-homs-death-toll-said-to-rise.html?pagewanted=all.

¹⁰ “Free Syrian Army rebels abandon Annan ceasefire,” *BBC News*, 4 June, 2012, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18325949>.

Council,¹¹ and *Syrian Martyrs* reports that nearly 13,000 have died in the months since his peace plan, under the stewardship of unarmed monitors, was first implemented.¹² The effectiveness of UN Peacekeeping has once again been fatally curtailed by traditional principles – this time, by permanent members' veto power and the strict standards of Peacekeepers' non-engagement.

The Rwanda Genocide of 1994 irredeemably marred the UN era of global affairs. That human destruction of such a horrific scale transpired unchecked in the final years of the twentieth century shocked the international community to its core and awakened world leaders to the severe deficiencies of the new global order. The UN system did indeed acknowledge the lessons of Rwanda and put them down on paper, and this fact is to the credit of UN leaders and reflects positively on the potential of Peacekeeping policy to truly improve.

Still, the continued failure to overcome political challenges and old difficulties in the UN system is not acceptable. With R2P affirmed as law and Chapter VII still in the Charter, the Security Council should be capable of working around uncooperative host governments, pressuring recalcitrant permanent members not to use their veto power against essential humanitarian actions, and reforming the ineffective rules of Peacekeeping forces' engagement. All that it takes is serious determination from the international community to pursue the true original objectives of the United Nations.

¹¹ Ian Black, "Kofi Annan resigns as Syria envoy," *The Guardian*, 2 August, 2012, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/aug/02/kofi-annan-resigns-syria-envoy>.

¹² See note 44.

Zodiac, Helios, and the Ongoing Debate over Rabbinic Power

Uri Schneider

Many Orthodox Jews believe that the rabbis have always had sole power over determining Jewish life. Although no educated Orthodox Jew is bold enough to deny that throughout history certain Jewish sects including the Sadducees, Karaites, Frankists, and Reform movements have challenged rabbinic Judaism, most Orthodox Jews view these sects as illegitimate contenders to mainstream Judaism. However, with regard to deference to rabbinical authority they claim observant Jews have never acted differently than observant Jews do today: rabbis have always been leaders in communities and have always set the line between prohibited and permissible.

Evidence of the zodiac, Helios, and other pagan symbols in numerous 4th-6th centuries CE Byzantine synagogues in Palestine implicitly question how much authority rabbinic figures really had. Helios, a Greek personification of the sun god, and the zodiac, celestial powers of different months, seem to be clear violations of the commandment not to worship other gods. If the contemporary rabbis had power, how could these mosaics breach the walls of synagogues and defile a holy place? Or perhaps, the mosaics have no pagan motifs and were welcomed by the rabbinic figures of that time. There is no clear answer to the issue at hand. Nonetheless, the differing conclusions of historians as to the meaning behind these mosaics may have ramifications towards our modern understanding of normative Judaism.

The Hammath-Tiberias synagogue is the first of the Byzantine Palestine synagogues to display one of these possibly-idolatrous mosaics.¹ Professor Sternberg thinks that the Hammath-Tiberias synagogue should be dated near the time of the fixed calendar with Hillel II.² Although there is some dispute over the exact time the synagogue was built, the most accurate date

¹ Hershel Shanks, "Synagogue excavation reveals stunning mosaic of zodiac and Torah ark," *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Washington, DC. V.10, No. 3 (May 1984), p. 37.

² Rina Talgam, *From Dura to Sepphoris: Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity: Similarities and differences between synagogue and church mosaics in Palestine during the Byzantine and Umayyad periods*, (Portsmouth, RI: 2000), p. 101.



Beit Alpha Synagogue Mosaic, Israel, 517 C.E.

seems to be around mid-end 4th century CE.³ The synagogue had mosaics on each side of the ark including a *lulav*, *etrog*, *menorah*, and other symbols that one might see in a modern-day synagogue. Seemingly out of place, however, is that the main panel featured a mosaic of the Greek god Helios surrounded by a zodiac, in which Helios is riding on four horses soaring over the clouds, and holding a whip and a celestial globe in his hands. Surrounding the picture of Helios are the 12 months of the Zodiac with the name of the each zodiac written in Hebrew. There are also portraits of women, representing the four seasons of the zodiac in the four spandrels.

There are many issues with the scene at hand. Firstly, how is it possible that mosaics of religious objects are placed next to a mosaic of zodiac and Helios? The *Talmud*⁴ in *Shabbos* (156a) discusses whether Jews believe in planetary influence, and indeed one sage, Rabbi Chanina, argues they do. Rabbi Yochanan, however, argues that they do not.⁵ Since we rule like the opinion of Rabbi Yochanan over his colleagues, the zodiac should be seen as a violation of owning idolatrous objects.

The issue of the zodiac and Helios becomes more problematic after the following passage in the *Yerushalmi*.⁶

In the days of Rabbi Yohanan they began to depict [figural images] on the walls, and he did not protest. In the days of Rabbi Abun they began to depict [figural images] on the mosaics and he did not protest. (*Yerushalmi Avodah Zarah* 3, 42d)

Why did Rabbi Yochanan decide not to protest against the images that were being placed on walls? It may be that he believed that these images were not *halakhically* problematic. However, based on the passage in *Shabbos* that reveals Rabbi Yochanan thought celestial figures were a

³ Hershel Shanks, "Synagogue excavation reveals stunning mosaic of zodiac and Torah ark," *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Washington, DC. V.10, No. 3 (May 1984), p. 37.

⁴ All references in this article to the Talmud are referring to the Talmud Bavli. Quotations from the Talmud Yerushalmi will just be called Yerushalmi.

⁵ Lucille Alice Roussin, *Archaeology and the Galilee: texts and contexts in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods; The zodiac in synagogue decoration*, (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press McCollough, 1997), p. 83.

⁶ David Levine, *Jewish identities in antiquity: Between leadership and marginality: models for evaluating the role of the rabbis in the early centuries CE*, (Edited by Lee I. Levine and Daniel R. Schwartz: 2009), p. 201.

violation of the Torah, it seems more likely that he did not protest against the figural images because he did not think people would listen to him. Since Rabbi Yochanan lived around the same time as the Hammath-Tiberias synagogue, it is possible that his hesitation reflected a marginalized role for the rabbinate in general.⁷ Perhaps Judaism in those days was not centered on rabbinic authority, and therefore, the congregations did not heed the rulings of their rabbinic leaders.

There is another possible explanation of the *Yerushalmi*, which states only that the images were being placed on "walls," and mentions nothing about these images being placed in synagogues. Perhaps Judaism finds it permissible to place pagan-like images in houses for aesthetic purposes, while it is impermissible to place them in synagogues. This, in fact, is what Urbach believes: Rabbi Yochanan did not protest because he thought that these images were put up for aesthetic purposes, which is permissible.⁸ The problem of having pagan motifs painted on walls is only when it is done for non-aesthetic purposes.⁹

Urbach does not suggest this approach haphazardly; rather he backs it up with two interesting sources from *Chazal*. The first source is a *Mishnah* in *Avodah Zarah* about the statue of Aphrodite that was in the public bath house at Acre where Rabban Gamliel went to bathe.¹⁰ The *Mishnah* states

Proklos, son of Plophos asked Rabban Gamliel a question in Akko, where he was washing in Aphrodite's bathhouse. He said to [Rabban Gamliel], "Isn't it written in your Torah (Deut. 13:18), 'do not allow any banned items [from idol worshippers] to stick to your hand'? How then do you bathe in Aphrodite's bathhouse?" He replied, "One does not respond [to religious questions] in the bath." Once he exited, [Rabban Gamliel] said to him, "I did not enter her domain, but she entered mine. [Further], people don't say, 'let's make a bath as a decoration for Aphrodite.' Rather, they say, 'let's make a statue of Aphrodite as a decoration for our bath.'" (*Avodah Zarah* 3:4)

⁷ Lucille Alice Roussin, *Archaeology and the Galilee: texts and contexts in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods; The zodiac in synagogue decoration*, (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press McCollough, 1997), p. 84.

⁸ Asher Ovadiah, *Ancient synagogues Vol 2: Art of the ancient synagogues in Israel* (1995), p. 309.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

The *Mishnah* seems to be a clear indication that being in the proximity of idolatrous images is only a problem if the idol was placed there for religious purpose. However, if one owns a pagan image for aesthetic purposes it may not pose a *halakhic* issue.

The above source only indicates that it is permissible for a Jew to enter a building owned by non-Jews with an aesthetically placed pagan image. The *Talmud* in *Avodah Zarah* (43b) expands this leniency to buildings owned by Jews.¹¹ The *Talmud* states

Behold in the synagogue of Shaph-weyathib in Nehardea a statue was set up; yet Samuel's father and Levi entered it and prayed there without worrying about the possibility of suspicion.

Even more shocking about this source is the statues placement in a synagogue. Michael Klein adds another source from the Palestinian *Targum* that also gives this approach. The *Targum* (Leviticus 26:1) states¹²

And you shall not place a figure stone in your land, upon which to bow down; however, you may place a mosaic pavement impressed with figures and images in the floors of your sanctuaries-but not for kneeling to it.

Based on the above sources, one could claim that the Zodiac and Helios are outright pagan images. However, the Jews of that time considered these mosaics to be aesthetically pleasing. Furthermore, the rabbis seem to approve of having pagan images placed in synagogues if it will enhance the beauty of the building. Therefore, it is plausible to say that the rabbis living in Palestine during the Byzantine era were well aware of the zodiac and Helios images in synagogues. These mosaics were aesthetically pleasing and therefore welcomed by *halakhic* authorities.

Urbach's and Klein's interpretation of the above passages is not surprising. They, along with Michael Avi-Yonah, Ze'ev Weiss, Steven Fine and many other historians believe that these questionable mosaics had

¹¹ Asher Ovadiah, *Ancient synagogues Vol 2: Art of the ancient synagogues in Israel* (1995), p. 308.

¹² Michael L. Klein, "Palestinian Targum and synagogue mosaics," *Immanuel*, No. 11 (Fall 1980), p. 44.

approval from the rabbinate.¹³ In no way did Byzantine-Palestine Jews ever disregard rabbinic authority. These historians interpret rabbinic sources in such a way that makes clear the rabbis were controlling Jewish life. Their agenda is to interpret the sources on these Byzantine-Palestine synagogues as an affirmation of rabbinic authority during that time period.

On the other side of the coin are historians that believe these mosaics had no *halakhic* approval. Edwin Goodenough, Morton Smith, Shaya Cohen, and Lee I. Levine are representative of this approach.¹⁴ They claim these mosaics present evidence that proves there never was a normative Judaism. Jews two thousand years ago fought against the rabbinate and built synagogues according to their own approval.

Historians fiercely debate the issue of mosaics in synagogues and discuss the possibility of a non-normative Judaism because it may allow for leeway within modern-day Judaism. If historically the Jewish religion was content with not listening to rabbinic thought, then why should today's Jews listen to modern-day rabbis? The issue is so contentious that Fine furiously writes against Goodenough and his followers for undermining Judaism.¹⁵ The two differing approaches are clearly seen in their interpretations of ancient and historic synagogues.

The Sepphoris synagogue is one of the more intriguing of the Byzantine-Palestine synagogues. It was discovered by chance in 1993 near the Sepphoris National Park.¹⁶ It is 20.7m by 8m and seems to have been in

use from the first half of the 5th century CE until it was destroyed at the end of the Byzantine period.¹⁷ The synagogue's floor is constructed of fourteen panels split into seven unequal horizontal bands with some sub bands and a zodiac in the center.¹⁸ There is the image of a *menorah* and several other Jewish symbols on the panel. The Four Species are depicted near the *menorah*, and a *shofar* is depicted as well. Additionally, many biblical scenes are depicted for the first time in the Sepphoris synagogue, including Aaron the priest with tongs and incense shovels to perform a sacrificial service.¹⁹

The fifth band on the floor contains the zodiac in 3.3m by 3.3m with the seasons at the four spandrels.²⁰ It seems that the Sepphoris synagogue has almost the same arrangement as the Hammath-Tibberias synagogue. There are, however, a couple of major differences between the two. In the Sepphoris mosaics, the sun is in the middle of the zodiac panel instead of the usual depiction of Helios. Furthermore, the months are personified by youths dressed in tunics while some are undressed. It seems very strange that a synagogue would have nude paintings of uncircumcised men and dress with others in Greek clothing.

What is one to make of the sun replacing Helios the sun god? Did the Jews of Hammath-Tiberias, Beth-Alpah, Na'aran, and other synagogues with controversial mosaics have a different understanding of permissible images? To complicate the matter there is a *Mishnah* in *Avodah Zarah* (3:1) which states²¹

If one finds a vessel and on it a drawing of the sun or a drawing of the moon, or a drawing of a dragon, he should cast them into the Salt Sea. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says; if they are treated with honor, they are forbidden, if they are treated disparagingly, they are permitted. Rabbi Yose says; one should grind it (the vessel) to powder and disperse it among the wind, or hurl it into the sea.

study, (Portsmouth, RI: 2000), p. 15.

¹⁷ Ze'ev Weiss, *From Dura to Sepphoris; Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity*. The Sepphoris synagogue mosaic and the rôle of talmudic literature in its iconographical study, (Portsmouth, RI: 2000), p. 20.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²¹ Lee I. Levine, *Ancient Synagogue : The First Thousand Years*, (Yale University press: 2000), p. 602.

¹³ Asher Ovadiah, *Ancient synagogues Vol 2: Art of the ancient synagogues in Israel* (1995), p. 316.

Lee I. Levine, *Ancient Synagogue : The First Thousand Years*, (Yale University press: 2000), p. 600.

Lucille Alice Roussin, *Archaeology and the Galilee : texts and contexts in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods; The zodiac in synagogue decoration*, (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press McCollough, 1997), p. 86.

Steven Fine, *Art and Judaism in the Greco-Roman World: Toward a New Jewish Archaeology*, (Cambridge UP: 2005), p. 200.

¹⁴ Steven Fine, *Art and Judaism in the Greco-Roman World: Toward a New Jewish Archaeology*, (Cambridge UP: 2005), p. 199.

Lee I. Levine, *Ancient Synagogue : The First Thousand Years*, (Yale University press: 2000), p. 600.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.187.

Ze'ev Weiss, *From Dura to Sepphoris; Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity*. The Sepphoris synagogue mosaic and the rôle of talmudic literature in its iconographical

cycles and the connection between priests and the zodiac may signify time, nonetheless, his theory seems to not have enough proof behind it. An additional issue with this theory is that the seasons and the zodiac do not correspond in the mosaics. If the purpose of displaying the zodiac was to demonstrate the importance of time then one would expect time to be portrayed accurately in the mosaics.

Steven Fine agrees with Avi-Yonah's premise that the rabbis were the sole religious leaders of the Byzantine-Palestine communities.⁶ However, Fine believes that the zodiac is compatible with Jewish ideology and therefore an acceptable artistic design in synagogues. The image of the zodiac is a convenient and relatable technique to relay the importance Judaism attributes to time. Only later, when Jews became westernized, did rabbis reject the zodiac as antithetical to Jewish beliefs.

The debate over whether the zodiac mosaics represent a normative Judaism may be further clarified by determining the ethnicity of the artisans. Moshe Dothan, one of the principal excavators of the Hammath-Tiberias synagogue, believed that the mosaics were made by gentiles.⁷ His chief proof is that in some of the synagogues the zodiac images of Libra and Gemini are nude and uncircumcised. He believes that it is improbable that Jews would design such vulgar mosaics in their house of worship.

Ze'ev Weiss disagrees and thinks that the mosaics were built by Jews.⁸ Dothan's opinion on the nude and uncircumcised men, he claims, does not alleviate any of the problems behind the presence of these mosaics in synagogues. Even if the non-Jews created the mosaics, it was still placed in a synagogue and Jews must have had a voice in what decorations were used in synagogues. Additionally, the zodiac descriptions are written in both Hebrew and Greek, yet gentiles did not know Hebrew. Lastly, only two pavements with Helios surrounded by the zodiac have been found outside of Israel,⁹ one in a villa in Avenches, Switzerland, dating around

250 CE, and another in a villa near Mainz, dating back to the mid-3rd century.¹⁰ It seems gentiles did not utilize zodiac mosaics. Only Jews used them as a form of art in their synagogues.

But whether or not the mosaics were made by a gentile may not give us any idea as to rabbinic authority during this time period.¹¹ Even if the mosaics were somehow made by gentile workers without the knowledge of the congregants, one can only derive information about the gentile workers and their opinions on the zodiac. If Jews sponsored the projects, perhaps the wealthiest members of the synagogue were the only ones who had a say. And if the entire community determined whether to place the mosaics in their synagogue, can we really bring conclusive evidence that Judaism approved of the zodiac? Zodiac images may have had different meanings for different Jews.

In attempting to clarify rabbinic authority in the first five centuries of the common era, Shaya Cohen admits that understanding the rabbi—who he was, the extent of his authority, his relationship to his congregants—and the society in which he lived in is an impossible task.¹² There is too much information and too many conflicting sources. Cohen suggests that in order to obtain an understanding of rabbinic authority, one has to rely on rabbinic texts since non-rabbinic texts do not tell us anything about the rabbinic movement.¹³

One such text is in the *Yerushalmi Megillah* (3, 74a):¹⁴

R. Hiyya and R. Yisa would be received [as boarders] in the synagogue. R. Immri ordered the teachers [of school children within the synagogue], "If a learned person comes to you, welcome him with his donkeys, and his clothes." R. Berachia went to the synagogue of Bet Shean and saw a person

¹⁰ Ze'ev Weiss, *From Dura to Sepphoris; Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity. The Sepphoris synagogue mosaic and the rôle of talmudic literature in its iconographical study*, (Portsmouth, RI: 2000), p. 30.

¹¹ Lee I. Levine, *Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years*, (Yale University press: 2000), p. 598.

¹² Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Cambridge history of Judaism Vol 3, The early Roman period: The rabbi in second-century Jewish society*. (Cambridge UP: 1999), p. 922.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 923.

¹⁴ Stuart S. Miller, "Epigraphical rabbis, helios, and psalm 19: were the synagogues of archaeology and the synagogues of the sages one and the same," *Jewish Quarterly Review* ns. 94, no. 1 (Winter 2004), p. 35.

⁶ Steven Fine, *Art and Judaism in the Greco-Roman World: Toward a New Jewish Archaeology*, (Cambridge UP: 2005), p. 202.

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 198.

⁸ Ze'ev Weiss, *From Dura to Sepphoris; Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity. The Sepphoris synagogue mosaic and the rôle of talmudic literature in its iconographical study*, (Portsmouth, RI: 2000), p. 30.

⁹ Lucille Alice Roussin, *Archaeology and the Galilee: texts and contexts in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods; The zodiac in synagogue decoration*, (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press McCollough, 1997), p. 85.

washing his hands and feet at the stone bath [there]. He [R. Berachia] said to him, "It is prohibited!" The next day [the man] saw him [R. Berachia] washing his hands and feet at the stone bath. He said to him, "Rabbi, for you it is permitted but for me it is prohibited?" [R. Berachia] said, "That's right." [to which the other responded] "Why?" He [R. Berachia] responded, "Thus R. Joshua ben Levi said, 'synagogues and *batei midrashoth* are for the sages and their disciples."

The *Yerushalmi* indicates that places of prayer and Torah study were primarily established for sages. Furthermore, it seems that Byzantine-Palestine Jews treated the rabbis with fervor as seen by R. Immri's order to the teachers to give special privileges to the rabbis. The synagogues mentioned in the above source probably also include synagogues that contained mosaics of the zodiac and Helios. In fact, the *Yerushalmi* was written in Tiberias around the same time as the Hammath-Tiberias synagogue. The rabbis of the *Yerushalmi* must have known about a local synagogue and if they were the leaders of synagogues, the mosaics may have gotten their approval.

The *Yerushalmi Peah* (8,21b) indicates that rabbis had little spiritual say over synagogue activity.¹⁵

An incident: R. Hama bar Hanina and R. Hoshaya were walking among those synagogues of Lod. R. Hama bar Hanina said to R. Hoshaya, "How much money my fathers [i.e. ancestors] invested here." He replied to him, "How many souls have your fathers invested here? Were there no people studying Torah?"

R. Hoshaya seems to bemoan the lack of rabbinic influence on the masses. He tells R. Hama that although his ancestors have financially supported synagogues they have not had any religious influence on the unlearned people of Lod.

T. Zahavy interprets the conflicting sources and the dearth of literature on synagogues as proof that rabbis had little power over religious life.¹⁶ Lee I. Levine also concurs with the assessment stating "the rabbis were far

¹⁵ Stuart S. Miller, "Epigraphical rabbis, helios, and psalm 19: were the synagogues of archaeology and the synagogues of the sages one and the same," *Jewish Quarterly Review* ns. 94, no. 1 (Winter 2004), p. 36.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

from being in control of this [synagogue] institution".¹⁷ Their opinions are strange since there are plenty of sources that discuss synagogue and rabbinic life. The problem is that there are conflicting sources which historians are unsure of how to interpret.

Shaya Cohen thinks that the rabbis referred to as the sages were not the same rabbis in control of synagogue and Jewish life.¹⁸ His assertion is primarily based on epigraphical rabbis that appear in inscriptions found in synagogues. Few of these rabbis are found in rabbinic literature. His opinion leads him to believe that modern-day Jews should be more accepting of a wide array of rabbis, including those who are less learned and more open to compromises within *halakhah*.

Cohen's belief in Conservative Judaism and his bias towards a more open Judaism taints his analysis on the matter of rabbinic authority in Byzantine-Palestine. His proof about epigraphical rabbis is unappealing because it does not account for the possibility that a rabbi could be a sage despite not being mentioned in the Mishnah or Talmud. Furthermore, the epigraphs do include famous rabbinic names such as Gamliel, Chanina, Shimon, and Elazar Hakapar.¹⁹ It is likely that these rabbis could be the ones listed in the Mishnah.

Miller believes that the conflicting sources on rabbinic authority show that rabbis had some sort of power.²⁰ Whether rabbis had sole *control* over religious life, however, is not what historians should be investigating since there is no clear-cut answer. The appearance of the zodiac and Helios in synagogues does not provide conclusive evidence about rabbinic authority since it is unclear whether the mosaics had *halakhahic* backing. The matter that needs clarification is whether rabbis had *influence* on synagogues and Jews.²¹ David Levine concurs with Miller. One should not ask questions with absolute values such as, "were the rabbis of the *Mishnah* and the Talmud social and cultural leaders, or were they intellectuals secluded

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁸ Shaya J. D. Cohen, *Cambridge history of Judaism Vol 3, The early Roman period: The rabbi in second-century Jewish society.* (Cambridge UP: 1999), p. 925.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²⁰ Stuart S. Miller, "Epigraphical rabbis, helios, and psalm 19: were the synagogues of archaeology and the synagogues of the sages one and the same," *Jewish Quarterly Review* ns. 94, no. 1 (Winter 2004), p. 44.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

in their *batei midrash*, religious virtuosi involved in their inner worlds."²² Rather, one should ask who constituted the leadership of Jewish societies and how did the rabbis fit in. Were there different forms of religious expression and did the world of study halls fit into this diversity?

The verse in Deuteronomy (32:7) famously states, "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations." The permissibility of mosaics and paintings in synagogues remains a fiercely debated topic among rabbinic authorities.²³ This modern-day debate seems to trace back to the zodiac mosaics.

Rabbi Elyakim ben Joseph of Mainz of 12th-century Spain told the Jews of Cologne that painting snakes and lions on stained-glass windows is prohibited.²⁴ He proves his position from the (2 Kings 18:3-4) in which Ezekiel burns the serpents that Moses built after the Jews began worshipping these images. Rabbi Elyakim did not think that Spanish Jews were going to pray to the paintings, but speculated from the *Navi* that these images were not permissible.

R' Eliezer Waldenburg (known as the Tzitz Eliezer, 1917-2006) also rules stringently on having paintings of animals on synagogue windows, but does not demand that synagogues take them down.²⁵ If paintings of images were really forbidden, R' Waldenburg would have demanded that the images be destroyed. R' Herzog, the first chief rabbi of Israel, urged against putting images in synagogues, but never explicitly stated that it was a violation of having idolatrous images in one's possession.²⁶ R' Ovadiah Yosef disapproves of putting images of lions above the ark; however, he never expressed discontent with other objects in other parts of the synagogue.²⁷

Contemporary sources show that from the 12th century and on rabbis have been discussing the permissibility of mosaics in synagogues. Most

²² David Levine, *Jewish identities in antiquity: Between leadership and marginality: models for evaluating the role of the rabbis in the early centuries CE*, (Edited by Lee I. Levine and Daniel R. Schwartz: 2009), p. 196.

²³ Stuart S. Miller, "Epigraphical rabbis, helios, and psalm 19: were the synagogues of archaeology and the synagogues of the sages one and the same," *Jewish Quarterly Review* ns. 94, no. 1 (Winter 2004), p. 28.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 29.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 28.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 29.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 30.

rabbis seem to be against these works of art, but none give an unequivocal position. It is likely that rabbis from the time of the Mishnah also debated about mosaics, and had many different opinions on the matter. As the historian Jas Elias once said, "People relate to works of art in different ways, depending upon different contexts and at different times."²⁸ A westernized perception has likely led most modern scholars to lean towards avoiding these paintings.²⁹

No conclusion can be made as to rabbinic authority during Byzantine-Palestine. Sources on the matter are abundant and conflicting. It seems from many sources and responsa on this topic that rabbis were somewhat involved in determining the permissibility of mosaics and paintings in synagogues. Rabbis probably had some influence on Jewish life during Byzantine-Palestine. The real answer as to the extent of their power remains a mystery.

²⁸ Lee I. Levine, *Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years*, (Yale University press: 2000), p. 597.

²⁹ Steven Fine, *Art and Judaism in the Greco-Roman World: Toward a New Jewish Archaeology*, (Cambridge UP: 2005), p. 202.

Privateering in the American Revolution: A Profit-Driven Patriotic Venture

Meirah Shedlo

During the American Revolution, both the colonies and Continental Congress authorized civilian privateers to attack British shipping. The privateers enjoyed great success, and contributed significantly to the war effort. They had a variety of motivations for joining the war, including patriotism and the lure of adventure; however, the greatest motivation was monetary, as privateering was a high-risk, high-reward venture that could make a man instantly wealthy. The Continental Congress also had fiscal motivations for commissioning privateers, although they would find that these men proved a mixed blessing. The relationship between the privateers and the British government reveals the economic threat they posed to the British and the great impact this would have on the outcome of the war.

Although privateering had originally taken place in peacetime as a means of compensating for taken goods, it had evolved by the 18th century into a means of waging war.¹ A privateer was a civilian authorized by the colony or Congress by a letter of marque and reprisal to attack enemy shipping in war; the term can also be applied to a ship used during privateering. There were usually a number of investors supporting each voyage, as some would be in charge of posting the bond to ensure obedience to the regulations, and others would need to confirm that the privateer would not turn pirate.² Upon capturing a prize, the privateers might ransom it, allowing the vessel to purchase its freedom and simplifying the process for the privateer.³ The majority of prizes would be condemned in admiralty courts if the privateer had adhered to regulation. The cargo could then be sold at auction, where the proceeds were divided among the owners and crew of the privateer. Privateers primarily traveled in light schooners,

¹ Donald A. Petrie, *The Prize Game: Lawful Looting on the High Seas in the Days of Fighting Sail*. (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1999), p. 3.

² James M. Volo, *Blue Water Patriots: The American Revolution Afloat* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006), p. 45.

³ Larry J. Sechrest, "Privateering and National Defense: Naval Warfare for Private Profit," *The Independent Institute, Working Paper Number 41* (September 2001), p. 18.

which were ideal for speed and maneuverability; although they would not be able to withstand a well-armed British naval vessel, they were built for attacking lightly-armed merchant shipping.⁴

American privateering in the Revolution was necessary due to the fledging naval force's lack of adequate resources to fund the war effort. Citizens were encouraged to harass British shipping, risking their lives in the process, in pursuit of their patriotic duty and financial gain. A writer of the day remarked, "The people have gone mad a-privateering," noting that both the British and Americans had begun to freely authorize privateers.⁵ The process first began on the colonial level, with many privateers setting out from the New England area, including Rhode Island and Maryland. For example, 224 letters of marque were issued to privateers from the thriving port city of Baltimore, Maryland.⁶ The Continental Congress formally began granting commissions to privateers on March 23, 1776, and these commissions were more popular as they were felt to grant greater legitimacy.⁷ George Washington, commander-in-chief of the army, had been the first to authorize vessels to chase British shipping; while these are sometimes erroneously referred to as privateers, they were under army command though not officially part of the navy.⁸

The crews that served as privateers came from a range of social classes, drawn to the service for a variety of motivations. Skilled sailors joined the ranks, as well as captains who had served in previous wars. One such captain was Abraham Whipple, who would serve in the Rhode Island Navy and the Continental Navy.⁹ Even ordinary "landsmen" served as privateers. In fact, clauses were incorporated into the letters of marque and reprisal stating that at least one third of the crew were required to be

⁴ Kendall F. Haven, *Voices of the American Revolution: Stories of Men, Women, and Children Who Forged our Nation* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2000), p. 201.

⁵ Edgar Stanton Maclay, *A History of American Privateers* (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Co., 1900), 69-70

⁶ Bernard C. Steiner, "Maryland Privateers in the American Revolution," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 3 No. 2 (1908), p. 99.

⁷ Donald Barr Chidsey, *The American Privateers* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1962), p. 53.

⁸ James L. Nelson, *George Washington's Secret Navy: How the American Revolution Went to Sea* (US: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2008), p. 328.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

landsmen, perhaps trying to protect the navy from losing too many of its seamen to privateers.¹⁰ "Gentlemen sailors" from upper class families even joined privateers in pursuit of greater wealth.¹¹

It is often noted that the main motivations for this wide range of people to join the privateering venture were patriotism and profit. As author Robert Patton remarked, "The enterprise combined service and self-interest in a fluid balance whose shifts and moral accommodations constitute a basic theme of American life both today and in 1776."¹² In fact, the same self-interest and sense of loyalty that prompted the war in the first place motivated privateers to join. An advertisement issued to encourage men to join the privateer *Deane* announced "An invitation to all brave seamen and marines who have an inclination to serve their country and make their fortunes;" it was country and fortune that formed the appeal to serve.¹³

The motivation of patriotism was a strong inducement to participate in the war effort as a privateer. Many privateers took unpaid risks to obtain information, goods, and even prisoners for the government during the war.¹⁴ They also faced great dangers in the war against Britain, including imprisonment, loss of limb, and even death. There were many instances when privateers braved the perils of the sea in difficult conditions even when the potential for prize money was limited or lacking.¹⁵ A few privateers were known to confront enemy warships even though their usual tactic would be to flee, and strove to destroy these ships without the potential for monetary gain.¹⁶ Supporting the privateers through investment could also be considered patriotic, much like buying war bonds.¹⁷

¹⁰ Jack Coggins, *Ships and Seamen of the American Revolution* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1969), 65; Chidsey, *American Privateers*, p. 54.

¹¹ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 7-8.a

¹² Robert H. Patton, *Patriot Pirates: The Privateer War for Freedom and Fortune in the American Revolution* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2008), p. xxi.

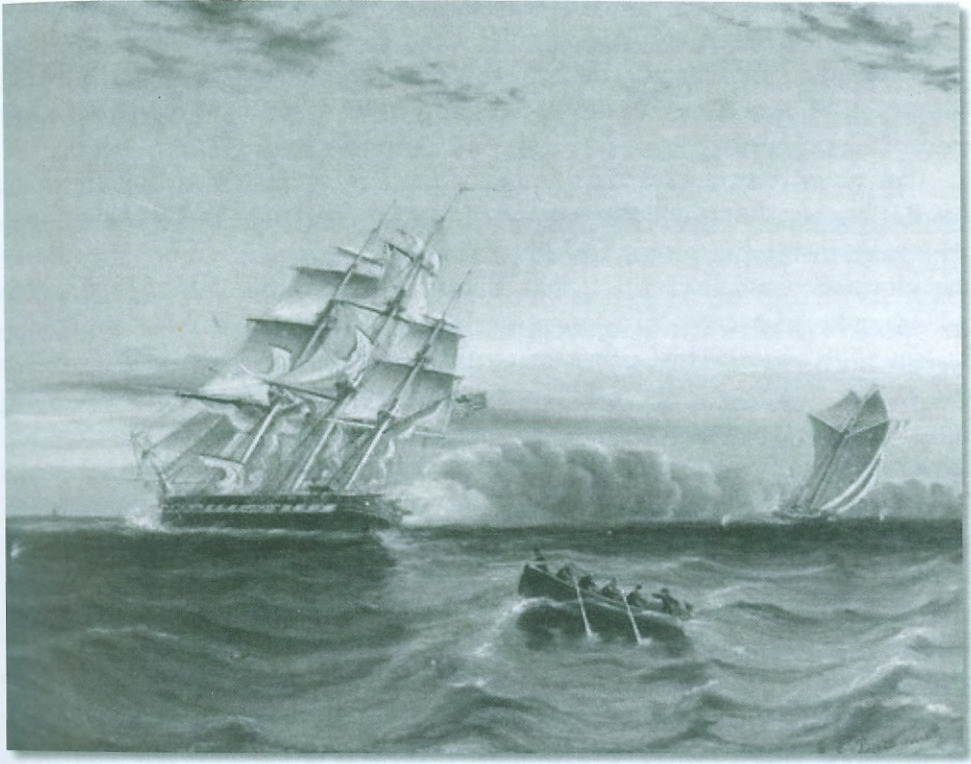
¹³ Michael Lee Lanning, *The American Revolution 100: The People, Battles, and Events of the American War for Independence, Ranked by Their Significance* (Naperville, Illinois: Sourcebooks, Inc., 2008), p. 221.

¹⁴ Chidsey, *American Privateers*, p. 53.

¹⁵ Coggins, *Ships and Seamen*, p. 75.

¹⁶ Sechrest, "National Defense", p. 8.

¹⁷ "Revolutionary Privateering," *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society*, Harvard College, Vol. 7, No. 3 (May 1933), p. 8.



US Frigate And Privateer, 1852

Many privateers would go on to become distinguished naval captains in later years, and would recall their former privateering careers with pride. Privateering served as a "training school" for the young navy; sixty privateers would later become naval captains, including Lieutenant Joshua Barney, who would go on to serve as a distinguished Baltimore commodore in the War of 1812.¹⁸ Privateering efforts gave the patriots military confidence, and fostered a feeling of unity and pride within and among the colonies.¹⁹

The naval battle of the privateer *Pickering* against the British ship *Achilles* further illustrates the patriotic tenacity displayed by the American privateers in their exploits. In 1780, the captain of the *Pickering*, Jonathan Haraden, successfully bluffed the British privateer the *Golden Eagle* into believing he was captaining a much larger ship that would completely destroy their vessel. The British were mortified when they realized the true size of the *Pickering*. When the British privateer *Achilles* caught up with the pair and recaptured the *Golden Eagle*, the *Pickering* fired a broadside, damaging the *Achilles* so that it retreated after a few hours. The American government was proud of the ingenuity and resourcefulness demonstrated by such privateers, as much about the clever ruse as the actual strength displayed.²⁰ A witness to the battle said of Captain Haraden, "He fought with such a determination that seemed superhuman, and that, although in the most exposed position, where the shot flew around him, he was all the while as calm and steady as amidst a shower of snowflakes."²¹

Another draw of privateering was the chance to perform these patriotic duties under better conditions than those of the naval forces. Life aboard a privateer was an easier voyage with far less harsh discipline and need to fight with enemy warships, as well as greater freedom.²² Furthermore, there were better provisions of food and drink than aboard naval vessels, and the lure of the division of spoils rather than set wages as in the navy.

The spirit of adventure also encouraged men to join privateering

crews. The danger inherent in sea warfare attracted the enterprising and adventurous, and the high-risk, high-reward nature of privateering in particular only added to the appeal. While the high risk was about the same as serving on a naval ship, the reward could be immensely greater.²³ It was almost a necessity to be bold and daring as a privateer, as returning from the cruise with no riches to show for it was one of the worst sins of the occupation.²⁴

While the above motivations certainly factored into the decision of countless men to become privateers, the lure of instant wealth was perhaps strongest. Historian James Volo goes so far as to claim that the patriotic motivation is a myth and privateers were motivated purely by economic self-interest.²⁵ While it is likely that many men were in fact driven by a combination of both motives, far more privateers were driven chiefly by the desire for quick riches. Richard Pares observed "So far, then, as the privateers helped their country, it was by helping themselves; and perhaps they did not help their country quite so much as they helped themselves."²⁶ Many believed that if they were among the first privateers to attack, they could make a fortune; a variety of sources described the haste as a "gold rush" or a dash toward the "pot of gold."²⁷

Many individual privateers enjoyed great monetary success in the Revolution. John R. Livingston of New York unabashedly called the war "my means of making a fortune." He worried that the war might be over too soon, and that "If it takes place without a proper warning, it may ruin us."²⁸ The fortunes John Brown made from privateering survive to this day, as he helped construct the buildings and founded Rhode Island College in Providence, today known as Brown University.²⁹ Another privateer, Israel Trask, who had signed on as a young man to support his family when his father fell ill, returned home with a fortune of almost \$20,000 in gold and commodities and lived in comfort the rest of his life.³⁰

¹⁸ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 79.

¹⁹ James G. Lydon, *Pirates, Privateers, and Profits* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: The Gregg Press, Inc., 1970), p. 262-3.

²⁰ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 141.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

²² Gardner Weld Allen, *A Naval History of the American Revolution, Volume I* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913), p. 49

²³ Lydon, *Privateers and Profits*, p. 185.

²⁴ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 12.

²⁵ Volo, *Blue Water Patriots*, p. 45.

²⁶ Richard Pares, *Colonial Blockade and Neutral Rights, 1739-1763* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1938), p. 33.

²⁷ Chidsey, *American Privateers*, p. 44-5; Coggins, *Ships and Seamen*, p. 66.

²⁸ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p. 109.

²⁹ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p. 14.

³⁰ Haven, *Voices of the American Revolution*, p. 202.

The privateer the *Holker* proved a real menace to the British as well as a great boon to its owner, Blair McClenachan, who considered the vessel the most profitable of the ships he employed in the Revolution.³¹ One British newspaper referred to her as "that mischievous American, the *Holker*."³² At one point, the privateer took sixteen prizes over the course of six weeks; one prize included cargo such as "Sugar in hogsheads and barrels, Rum in hogsheads, Coffee in bags, and a few boxes of Chocolate."³³ Even though the commander Lawler had many successful captures, McClenachan had him replaced as captain since he had not made enough profit to the owner's satisfaction. By the end of the *Holker's* four year reign, it had taken about seventy prizes, allowing McClenachan to return to his native Ireland a very wealthy man.³⁴

A few men originally objected to privateering on moral grounds, but were eventually unable to withstand the temptation of possible riches. Robert Morris, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, disdained the enterprise in a 1776 letter to Silas Deane, a representative from Connecticut: "Those who have been engaged in privateering are making large fortunes in a most rapid manner. I have not meddled in this business which I confess does not square with my principles."³⁵ While he did not originally participate out of loyalty to his former British business partners, he eventually caved and became an investor. Young general Nathanael Greene believed that serving in the army was a more honorable path, although he lamented his choice not to serve as a privateer, commenting wistfully, "Were I at liberty, I think I could make a fortune for my family."³⁶ In the end, he rationalized his decision to become a privateer, deciding that it in fact served the "the public good."³⁷

Even a single privateering voyage was enough to make a man wealthy. A cabin boy could earn more over the course of a single cruise than he

³¹ William Bell Clark, "The Mischievous *Holker*: The Story of a Privateer", *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (January 1995), p. 27.

³² *Ibid.*, Quoted from an Antigua newspaper in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, Jan. 10, 1782.

³³ *Pennsylvania Packet*, Mar. 14, 1780.

³⁴ Clark, "Holker", p. 210.

³⁵ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p. 47.

³⁶ Nathanael Greene to Jacob Greene, *Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, RI, Vol. 1, October 3, 1775, p. 191.

³⁷ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p. 87.

could in months of work on land.³⁸ Privateers in the Revolution might experience annual rates of return of 130-140%, meaning that taking only four prizes could result in great profit.³⁹ As a gambling venture, many times privateering did not pay off well at all, but many felt it was worth the risk for the prospect of instant riches. Solomon Drowe, a surgeon on the privateer *Hope*, commented on the prizes the ship took. "The brig, with only two guns, her prize from England, taken at eight o'clock this morning. Captain Fosdick says her cargo amounted to twenty thousand pounds sterling" he wrote, and of another capture, "we hardly know what to do with the prize."⁴⁰

The drive for profit was sometimes criticized. Continental Navy officer John Paul Jones commented to Robert Morris, "The common class of mankind are actuated by no nobler principle than that of self-interest. This and this only determines all adventurers in privateers, the owners as well as those whom they employ."⁴¹ However, Jones himself would be tempted by the prospect of investment as well. Furthermore, some of the profits went to the privateers themselves rather than to support the war; in fact, they sold some of the cargoes in Europe, where the British could buy back their own goods.⁴² Samuel Warren was dismayed by the materialism that overtook those men made wealthy by privateering: "Fellows who would have cleaned my shoes five years ago have amassed fortunes and are riding in chariots."⁴³ Historian Barbara Tuchman also disparaged the venture, noting "equivalent to a policeman giving his kind permission to a burglar, the theory was one of the happy hypocrisies that men fashion so ably when they want to combine law and greed."⁴⁴

Public opinion was not as sympathetic to privateers as to naval officers. People often felt that the privateers were trying to get rich too quickly, not through honest labor. Therefore, while they might sympathize with a naval officer for loss of limb and declare him a hero, a privateer, in his greed,

³⁸ Coggins, *Ships and Seamen*, p. 65.

³⁹ Sechrest, "National Defense", p. 21.

⁴⁰ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 171-3.

⁴¹ John Paul Jones to Robert Morris, *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC, Vol. 6, Oct. 17, 1776, p. 1302.

⁴² Lanning, *Revolution 100*, p. 222.

⁴³ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p. 234.

⁴⁴ Barbara W. Tuchman, *The First Salute* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1988), p. 47.

would have brought such a loss upon himself.⁴⁵ However, Edgar Maclay emphasized that, while sometimes criticized by the public, the privateers served an important role in the Revolution: "They went to sea, it is true, for mere pelf, but in many instances they performed services of national importance."⁴⁶

The monetary motivation was mainly why Congress authorized the privateers in the first place. While privateering would prove to be a mixed blessing, as the system was in some ways detrimental to the naval service, it was highly necessary for the government to employ privateers chiefly for financial reasons. Remembering the privateering successes of the French and Indian War, the government commissioned privateers mainly as a free navy; there had been no standing navy, and there were limited funds to furnish one. This would require no expenditure on the part of the government, either in outfitting ships or providing wages to the seamen.⁴⁷ The bulk of the patriot maritime force was therefore made up of privateers.⁴⁸ The privateers were successful in harassing British shipping and disrupting the flow of British goods and supplies, as well as capturing prisoners, all at no cost to the cash-strapped government. Benjamin Franklin, for instance, outfitted privateers specifically to capture prisoners that could be exchanged to redeem "our poor Countrymen." "The Prisoners to exchange for Americans," he wrote, "are all the advantage I have for my trouble."⁴⁹

The American government benefited from the profits taken in by privateers. Goods intended for the British that were seized could then be used for American troops.⁵⁰ General Washington himself praised the Boston community for "the valuable prizes that have been lately brought into your port. We stand in need of all your activity to increase our supplies by these means."⁵¹ The privateers protected the coastal trade routes and transported money and weapons across the Atlantic. They aided communications between the colonies and the outside world, and this is how France heard

⁴⁵ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 22.

⁴⁶ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 23.

⁴⁷ "Revolutionary Privateering", *Business Historical Society*, p. 8.

⁴⁸ Dorothy Deneen Volo and James M. Volo, *Daily Life During the American Revolution* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), p. 309.

⁴⁹ William Bell Clark, *Ben Franklin's Privateers: A Naval Epic of the American Revolution* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), p. v.

⁵⁰ "Revolutionary Privateering", *Business Historical Society*, p. 7.

⁵¹ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p.107.

of American victories and lent their own support. The French permitted American privateers into coastal ports to take revenge against Britain for the French and Indian War, and the privateers benefited greatly from French supplies and markets.⁵² The privateers were even occasionally acknowledged to be more effective than the public navy, contributing far more to the harm inflicted upon the enemy.⁵³

Prominent political figures showed strong support for the privateering enterprise. John Adams was very enthusiastic about the privateering contribution to the war effort, noting "It was always a measure that my heart was much engaged in."⁵⁴ He remarked in a September 1780 letter to the President of Congress that "This is a short, easy, and infallible method of humbling the English, preventing the effusion of an ocean of blood, and bringing the war to a conclusion... it is by cutting off supplies, not by attacks, sieges, or assaults, that I expect deliverance from enemies."⁵⁵ Thomas Jefferson also praised the courage and boldness of the privateers: "The New Englanders are fitting out light vessels of war, by which it is hoped we shall...distress the British trade in every part of the world. The adventurous genius and intrepidity of those people is amazing."⁵⁶

However, privateering also drew some criticism among government officials, as well as the aforementioned naval officers and public. Some considered privateering to be unpatriotic, coarse and demeaning. Even Dr. Solomon Drowne, the privateer surgeon, admitted that the venture was distinctly disagreeable: "however agreeable to and supportable by the rights of war, when individuals come to thus despoil individuals of their property 'tis hard; the cruelty then appears, however political."⁵⁷

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, many chose privateering over naval service, resulting in competition for the navy to secure enough men to serve. The lack of discipline aboard privateering vessels was one of the draws of privateering, but this was a disadvantage impacting, to an extent, their usefulness to the government. A few years later during the War of

⁵² Chidsey, *American Privateers*, p. 55.

⁵³ Gary M. Anderson and Adam Gifford, Jr., "Privateering and the Private Production of Naval Power", *Cato Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 1991), p. 101.

⁵⁴ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p. 42.

⁵⁵ Allen, *Naval History*, p. 49.

⁵⁶ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, opening page.

⁵⁷ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 171.

1812, which included many of these same men serving as privateers, record books and privateer memoirs included multiple examples of insubordination, infighting, and drunkenness that plagued their efforts.⁵⁸ There was a general concern that the activity encouraged social unruliness. They were criticized since much of the profit they made went to the investors, and not enough into the Continental treasury. Also, privateers were not under any obligation to fight any vessel they did not care to fight; while this allowed them to minimize their risks, it limited their usefulness and the extent of governmental authority over the enterprise.⁵⁹

At times, privateers caused trouble for Congress by capturing neutral vessels. In fact, this was temporarily curbed by a privateer embargo.⁶⁰ There was a concern that after the war, the privateers might turn pirate and become the next enemy. This fear, at least, generally did not come to pass; after the war, many privateers returned home to enjoy their newfound wealth and did not return to sea until the next war. In effect, these complaints were generally viewed by the government as relatively minor, especially given the many financial and military benefits they received from the activities of the privateers.

The reaction of the British to what they viewed as the scourge of privateering demonstrates the great success of the privateers. To a great extent, Britain was also motivated by economic concerns, as the privateers attacked their merchant shipping more than their warships. The privateers fueled war weariness among the English population, and most of all among the mercantile class.⁶¹ An Englishman from Grenada wrote in 1777, "From sixty vessels that departed from Ireland not above twenty-five arrived in this and neighboring islands, the others it is thought, being all taken by American privateers. God knows, if this American war continues much longer we shall all die of hunger."⁶² A British newspaper lamented, "These islands swarm with those vermin of American privateers. A day does not pass but they take some vessel."⁶³ At the outbreak of the War of 1812, the

British merchants remembered the harm inflicted in this war and feared the disastrous effects that could come from another war with America.⁶⁴

The British attempted a variety of largely unsuccessful strategies to reduce the effectiveness of the privateering menace. In 1782, for example, the British no longer allowed any ship flying the British flag to be ransomed, hoping it would reduce the monetary incentive of the privateers to capture those ships as prizes.⁶⁵ The British ships were also instructed to travel in convoys to make it more difficult for a privateer to attack any individual merchant vessel. However, the privateers would simply follow along behind the convoy waiting to prey upon the stragglers. They might even attempt to lure a ship out of the pack to capture it.⁶⁶ American agents in England had plenty of time to inform the privateers when a fleet was setting out, allowing them ample time to construct a strategy of attack.

Under British law, the privateers were considered, like the rest of the American patriots, traitorous to the crown. The letters of marque and reprisal granted by the colonies and Congress were not accepted as legitimate by the maritime power, and so the privateers were considered no more than pirates.⁶⁷ They received very harsh treatment upon capture, although, significantly, they were not liable to be hanged outright. However, the British government emphasized that although they did not specifically punish American privateers as pirates, they still considered them, legally, to be pirates, serving as they did a government the British ultimately did not recognize.⁶⁸ As such, the British enforced extraordinarily severe punishment on prisoners of war, and opened two new prisons to contain them.

When King George III decreed that any American vessel seized during the rebellion would bring great reward to its captors, British sympathizers in colonies including New York launched privateers of their own to take advantage of this promise of remuneration.⁶⁹ Britain officially recognized anti-American privateering in 1777; this had not occurred sooner because Parliament had not wanted to seem to acknowledge America as a legitimate

⁵⁸ Stephen Budiansky, *Perilous Fight: America's Intrepid War with Britain on the High Seas, 1812-1815* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, Inc., 2010), p. 291.

⁵⁹ Nelson, *Washington's Navy*, p. 285.

⁶⁰ Allen, *Naval History*, p. 49.

⁶¹ Volo, *Daily Life*, p. 311.

⁶² "Revolutionary Privateering", *Business Historical Society*, p. 7.

⁶³ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p.135.

⁶⁴ "Revolutionary Privateering", *Business Historical Society*, p. 7-8.

⁶⁵ Sechrest, "National Defense", p. 18.

⁶⁶ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. 17.

⁶⁷ Coggins, *Ships and Seamen*, p. 66.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 66.

⁶⁹ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p. 40.

state. George III also threatened punishment to any Briton found serving aboard a foreign vessel, with both a monetary reward and a one-year reprieve from naval impressment for those who reported lawbreakers. Tellingly, American privateers were described in Prime Minister North's infamous Pirate Act of 1777 as "Traitors and Pirates and Felons! Whose necks they do wish to destine to the cord!"⁷⁰

During the American Revolution, 1697 letters of marque and reprisal were issued to American privateers. It is estimated that they captured over 600 British vessels over the course of the war, taking prize money valued at about \$18 million in the dollars of the day, and worth what would be about \$300 million today.⁷¹ Privateers captured at least triple the amount of ships than did the navy, and overall enjoyed great success in their exploits. The men who accomplished these feats were driven to do so chiefly by monetary considerations, and the governments that both authorized and fought them were at least in part motivated by the same financial issues. While monetary motivations drove the actions of both the privateers and governments, patriotic results serving the American national interest transpired to great effect, as the privateers helped secure victory. The dual aims of enterprise and patriotism were successfully realized.

⁷⁰ Patton, *Patriot Pirates*, p. 142.

⁷¹ Maclay, *History of American Privateers*, p. viii; Lanning, *Revolution 100*, p. 221; Volo, *Daily Life*, p. 311.

Fulfilling Divine Will? An Analysis of the Fourth Crusade's Diversion to Constantinople

Mark Weingarten

Members of the Fourth Crusade gathered in Venice at the commencement of the 13th century with the intention of hiring a Venetian fleet to transport them to the Middle East. They sought to gain remission for their sins by securing the Holy Land for Christendom. Pope Innocent III sanctioned the crusade and attempted to use it as a moral and political tool to enhance papal strength. An amalgam of lesser royals and nobles were assigned to lead this multinational endeavor. However, the Fourth Crusade never reached its prized destination. Short of funds and in danger of renegeing on their agreement with the Venetians, the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade first participated in the conquest of the city of Zara, and ultimately in the sack of Constantinople.¹ Regardless of the crusade's cause, they invested in the conquest of Constantinople with the same zeal and crusading spirit that had characterized the expeditions of their predecessors. Rather than view the Byzantine campaign as a diversion en route to Jerusalem, they came to perceive it as an integral part of their crusading mission.

The underlying motive for the crusaders' participation in the conquest of Constantinople remains unclear. Some scholars insist that the journey to Constantinople was simply the result of happenstance. According to this theory, the directive against Constantinople was executed because of the dire need for funds and the need to keep the crusaders from disbanding before reaching the Holy Land. These factors coincided with the opportunity to restore Alexius IV, the rightful heir of Constantinople, to his usurped throne. Others argue that the leaders of the crusade had always planned to attack Constantinople. Thus, the Fourth Crusade can be viewed as the leaders' shrewd manipulation of the masses for economic as well as for political ends. Nevertheless, Geoffrey of Villehardouin's chronicle of the Fourth Crusade consistently casts the crusaders' endeavors in a positive

¹ Backman, Clifford R. *The Worlds of Medieval Europe*. Second ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2009. 332-35. Cox, George W. *The Crusades*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1893. 144-48.

light. His constant vilification of dissenters as well as those who defected from the army has led some scholars to question his veracity as a historian.² However, Villehardouin's attitudes reflected those of the crusade's leaders.

It is essential to note that crusades were primarily the political tool of the papacy. Popes generally directed crusaders towards the Holy Land. However, with the accession of Pope Innocent III, pilgrimage to Jerusalem and success in battle against Muslims were no longer absolute requirements to fulfill one's crusading vows. Rather, crusaders successfully obtained remission for their sins by advancing the goals of Christendom in any manner that the papacy saw fit. In her paper "Innocent III and the First Political Crusade," Elizabeth Keenan explores the papal precedent established by Pope Innocent III to use the power of crusade to forward the papacy's political ends.³ She explains how following the death of Henry VI of Germany, his former seneschal, Markward of Anweiler, sought to establish himself as the ruler of Sicily. Markward and his German followers were hostile to the papacy and represented a threat to papal security. Innocent feared that the Papal States would be completely surrounded by his German adversaries.⁴ Therefore, he issued a crusading indulgence in 1199 to all those who would oppose the Germans.⁵ Innocent's letters also reveal a threat to divert the main army of the fourth crusade, which was gathering at Venice, to Sicily in order to secure papal authority in the region. Thus, the potential diversion of the fourth crusade, which distinguished it from its predecessors, had its roots in the policy of the papacy itself.⁶ Innocent's reasoning behind this decision was sound. He believed that Latin Europe and the papacy should be free from danger before the Holy Land could be secured. Consequently, diverting the crusade through Europe would indirectly support the mission to the Holy Land.

It is remarkable to note that in this case, Innocent threatened to turn the crusade against fellow Christians (albeit heretical, excommunicated ones). Although the crusade was never actually diverted to fight the Germans,

² Queller, Donald E., Thomas K. Compton and Donald A. Campbell. "The Fourth Crusade: The Neglected Majority." *Speculum*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Jul., 1974): 441.

³ Kennan, Elizabeth. "Innocent III and the First Political Crusade: A Comment on the Limitations of Papal Power." *Traditio* 27 (1971): 231-49.

⁴ *Ibid.* 233-234.

⁵ *Ibid.* 231.

⁶ *Ibid.* 247.

the idea of using a crusade to fight Christians stemmed from **papal policy**. Keenan notes that there is no evidence to show that Innocent informed the leaders of the Fourth Crusade that they might be diverted to Sicily.⁷ However, Innocent's views illustrate that crusades were not limited to missions to the Holy Land or specifically directed against Islam. Rather, the impetus for a crusade could be merely a campaign to protect Christianity against its enemies.⁸ If any of the leaders of the Fourth Crusade or the papal representatives who accompanied them were aware of this perspective, it would have contributed to their resolve to attack Constantinople. This would be true whether such a mission was a means to provide economic support that would facilitate the Crusade's travel to Palestine, or an attempt to conquer a heretical and excommunicated branch of Christianity.

The perception that the crusade's diversion was an integral part of its mission is reflected in Robert of Clari's and Geoffrey of Villehardouin's accounts of the crusade. It is important to present both accounts because they reflect the views of radically different contingents within the crusading army. Robert of Clari was a common knight, whereas Geoffrey of Villehardouin ranked among the upper echelons of the crusade's leaders and was thus privy to many of their private meetings and conversations. The chroniclers both record the declaration of the clergy which validated the second siege of Constantinople on the grounds that the Byzantines were heretical and murderous Christians (especially following the Great Schism of 1054 and the Massacre of the Latins in 1182). Robert of Clari records the opinion of the bishops that to attack Constantinople "was not at all a sin, but rather a righteous deed...for they were the enemies of God."⁹ Villehardouin quotes the clerical statement that those who conquer Constantinople with the intent to return the vanquished territory to Roman Catholicism would receive the papal indulgence that they had planned to obtain by traveling to Palestine.¹⁰ These accounts address the qualms of the

⁷ Kennan, Elizabeth. "Innocent III and the First Political Crusade: A Comment on the Limitations of Papal Power." *Traditio* 27 (1971): 248.

⁸ Support for this idea is found in Madden, Thomas. "Outside and Inside the Fourth Crusade." *The International History Review* 17:4 (Nov. 1995): 726-727.

⁹ Robert of Clari. *The Conquest of Constantinople*. Trans. Edgar McNeal. New York: Octagon Books, 1968. 94

¹⁰ Joinville and Villehardouin. *Chronicles of the Crusades*. Trans. Caroline Smith. London: Penguin, 2008. 60.



Entry of the Crusaders in Constantinople, 1840

crusaders regarding the engagement of fellow Christians in battle. They also provide a reprieve for the crusaders' failure to fulfill their crusading vows by completing their pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The clergy lobbied in favor of the battle because the Greeks had broken away from the Roman Catholic Church. Furthermore, they accorded it the status of a Holy War against the "enemies of God," of equal import to battles in Palestine.

The crusaders' mass looting and destruction of Byzantine churches as well as their slaughter of Byzantine priests¹¹ are also indicative of the crusaders' conviction that their Greek counterparts were not fellow Christians but were subversive heretics. A Cistercian monk, Gunther von Pairis, records with great detail the Christian relics taken from Constantinople. The list includes a piece of the original cross, some of Jesus's blood, and various limbs of the apostles and saints.¹² The collection of relics en masse to adorn European churches also emphasizes the journey to Constantinople as a type of pilgrimage and as an important part of the crusaders' mission. This idea is reflected by Villehardouin, who constantly refers to the crusaders as "pilgrims."¹³

Despite the papal sanction, the promise of material reward, and the clearly associated religious mission to crush Christian heretics, many potential crusaders never joined the expedition in Venice. Others later defected from the crusading army upon its decisions to attack Zara and Constantinople. Those who remained loyal to the army's mission throughout were in fact a minority of the army's original members.¹⁴ This fact calls into question the aforementioned conviction of the crusade's leaders that their endeavor was in fact a holy one. If they were correct in their belief, why did the majority of the army fail to support their initiative? Donald Queller and his peers address this question in their article "The Fourth Crusade: The Neglected Majority."¹⁵ This article elucidates the

¹¹ Nicetas Choniates. *The Sack of Constantinople*. Trans. Dana C. Munro. Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History, Series 1, Vol 3:1. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1896. 15-16.

¹² Gunther von Pairis. *Historia Constantinopolitana*. Trans. Dana C. Munro. Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History, Series 1, Vol 3:1. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1896. 18-19.

¹³ See, for example, Joinville and Villehardouin. *Chronicles of the Crusades*. Trans. Caroline Smith. London: Penguin, 2008. 16, 24, 33, 48, 51.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 18-19, 31.

¹⁵ Queller, Donald E., Thomas K. Compton and Donald A. Campbell. "The Fourth Cru-

variety of reasons for which crusaders never joined the main army, defected from it at a later point, or expressed disagreement with its actions. Queller notes that many simply avoided joining the army at Venice in order to find a cheaper means of transportation to the Holy Land.¹⁶ Others left the army before it left Venice because of the selection of Egypt as the crusade's immediate destination. Crusaders who took their crusading vows literally were obliged to go to the Holy Land. They believed that failure to do so in order to fight against the church's enemies was insufficient to achieve their redemption.¹⁷

This philosophy also played a crucial role in determining the perspective of those who defected from the army prior to its campaign against Zara or Constantinople. These directives were not merely wars against Christians. They were also deemed irrelevant to the crusaders' pilgrimage and to their ultimate destination. Their irrelevance to the greater goal was the underlying factor in the defectors' decision to leave the army because the pilgrimage to Palestine was viewed as an absolute necessity to procure absolution for their sins. In fact, Queller's article indicates that many crusaders who went to Palestine bore no qualms about fighting Christians there!¹⁸ This gives credence to the argument that strict interpretation of the means to fill one's crusading vows, and not the potential battle against other Christians, was the primary concern of the crusaders. Queller and his peers argue that Villehardouin and the leaders of the crusade also sought to fulfill their crusading vows. However, they had a broader interpretation of those vows that allowed them to be more practical in their approach.¹⁹ The crusade's leaders understood that they lacked the finances to launch a successful, extended campaign in Palestine.²⁰ Their economic impetus influenced their decision to detour to Constantinople regardless of the other religious and political factors involved.

The question then arises as to why the crusaders chose to go to Constantinople, rather than another, perhaps non-Christian city, to accrue

sade: The Neglected Majority." *Speculum*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Jul., 1974): 441-465.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 445.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 464.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 456.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 465.

²⁰ See Robert of Clari. *The Conquest of Constantinople*. Trans. Edgar McNeal. New York: Octagon Books, 1968. 45.

the necessary resources to launch their campaign in Palestine. Thomas Madden presents two explanations for the detour to Constantinople in his article "Outside and Inside the Fourth Crusade." One interpretation places the attack on Constantinople in its historical context. This view posits that the Great Schism of 1054, the Massacre of the Latins in 1182, and the trade restrictions that the Byzantines placed on the Venetians all contributed to the crusade's decision to attack Constantinople.²¹ Such an expedition would also be in accordance with the Augustine "Just-War" theory. That theory permits wars that attempt to restore universal harmony by avenging wrongs that have been committed.²² Moreover, the weakened state of the Byzantine church and political leadership of the time increased Constantinople's vulnerability to invasion.²³ The Fourth Crusade's role as the outcome of tensions between Latin Europe and Byzantium supports the notion that its leaders viewed the conquest of Constantinople as an end in itself as well as a quintessential part of their mission as crusaders.

A second scholarly explanation of the crusade, promoted by the historian Donald Queller among others, posits that the detour to Constantinople did not result from the rifts between Byzantium and Western Europe. Rather, a series of unforeseeable events led the crusaders to embrace the opportunity to restore Alexius IV as emperor of Constantinople.²⁴ They viewed this prospect as a righteous deed that would simultaneously provide them with the necessary funds to eliminate their debt to the Venetians. It would also financially enable them to reach Palestine.²⁵ According to this theory, the diversion to Constantinople was not originally meant as an integral part of the crusade. However, the detour was deemed worthy according to Catholic principles. It was also an economic necessity to the crusaders' quest to reach the Holy Land. Thus, the crusade's leaders would not have viewed the Byzantine enterprise as a necessary evil, but as an inherent

²¹ Madden, Thomas. "Outside and Inside the Fourth Crusade." *The International History Review* 17:4 (Nov. 1995): 727-729.

²² Schmandt, Raymond. "The Fourth Crusade and the Just-War Theory." *The Catholic Historical Review* 61:2 (April 1975): 191-221.

²³ Angold, Michael. "The road to 1204: The Byzantine Background to the Fourth Crusade." *Journal of Medieval History* 25:3 (1999): 257-278.

²⁴ Madden, Thomas. "Outside and Inside the Fourth Crusade." *The International History Review* 17:4 (Nov. 1995): 733-734.

²⁵ See Joinville and Villehardouin. *Chronicles of the Crusades*. Trans. Caroline Smith. London: Penguin, 2008. 26.

productive and vital act.

Queller buttresses his aforementioned view of the Fourth Crusade with an elaborate defense of the Venetians, who have long been castigated as the villains in planning its diversion on the way to the Holy Land. He rebuts accusations that the Venetians were solely driven by economic motives to support the Fourth Crusade. Rather, Queller argues that the Venetians were just as pious as the northern crusaders. While some also sought fiefs of land or ancient relics in Palestine as by-products of their crusading mission, there were those Venetians who aimed to acquire commercial advantages.²⁶ However, their religious zeal and commitment to the crusade were no less than that of the other crusaders. This is verified by Villehardouin's description of the Venetians' positive reaction to the request for their aid in the crusade.²⁷

The crusade's diversion, first to Zara, and then to Constantinople, was not specifically an attempt by the Venetians to benefit at the crusaders' expense. Rather, it was merely accidental. The Venetians had invested heavily in the crusade. They abstained from trade for a year and a half in order to prepare the crusading fleet and conscripted half of their citizens into the crusading army.²⁸ Thus, when the crusaders were unable to pay their debt, the Venetians needed to minimize their losses. The conquest of Zara was an inevitable outcome of this dilemma. Furthermore, this conquest was a way for the Venetians to eliminate the constant threat posed to the security of their city by the crusading army.²⁹ Critics of the Venetians point to the conquest of Zara as indicative of the Venetians' willingness to manipulate the beleaguered crusading army for their own designs. However, Queller argues that it was quite common for crusading armies to attack enemies along the route to Palestine.³⁰ Villehardouin also records other similar extracurricular excursions of the Fourth Crusade en route to

Constantinople.³¹ In addition, Queller proves that the conquest of Egypt would have been more economically advantageous to the Venetians than an attack on the weakened Constantinople.³² Therefore, even though they subsequently profited from the expedition, the detour to Constantinople was not initially in the Venetians' best interests. This analysis strengthens the theory that the diversion to Constantinople was not planned from the crusade's onset.

An understanding of the varied and disparate motivations underlying the Fourth Crusade as well as the various theories behind its diversion to Constantinople is critical to the assessment of Villehardouin's reliability as a chronicler. His description of the events that led to the conquest of Constantinople, and of the various arguments regarding the decision to attack the city, is verified by Robert of Clari's account. Furthermore, the two chroniclers have similar perspectives regarding the Venetians and their respect for Dandolo, the doge of Venice.³³ They differ in their description of the papal reaction to the proposed attack of Zara. Both chronicles record that the crusade's leaders sent a request for a papal pardon after the conquest of Zara. However, Villehardouin differs from Robert of Clari in that he fails to mention the letter from Pope Innocent III that excommunicated anyone who attacked Zara.³⁴ In addition, Villehardouin's recurring theme of criticizing those who abandoned the army is omitted in Robert of Clari's account. Villehardouin appears to be a relatively truthful historian. Nevertheless, he was inherently biased because of his attempt to cast the crusade and its leaders in a positive light.

It is plausible that Villehardouin viewed the possibility of excommunication and the dissent within the army as a challenge to the crusade's entire legitimacy. Therefore, his account may have sought to mitigate the potentially negative judgment that readers would pass upon his peers by only recording their reconciliation with the papacy, and his

²⁶ Queller, Donald E., and Gerald Day. "Some Arguments in Defense of the Venetians on the Fourth Crusade." *The American Historical Review* 81:4 (October 1976): 719.

²⁷ See Joinville and Villehardouin. *Chronicles of the Crusades*. Trans. Caroline Smith. London: Penguin, 2008. 10.

²⁸ Robert of Clari. *The Conquest of Constantinople*. Trans. Edgar McNeal. New York: Octagon Books, 1968. 39-40.

²⁹ Queller, Donald E., and Gerald Day. "Some Arguments in Defense of the Venetians on the Fourth Crusade." *The American Historical Review* 81:4 (October 1976): 727.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 727.

³¹ Joinville and Villehardouin. *Chronicles of the Crusades*. Trans. Caroline Smith. London: Penguin, 2008. 33.

³² Queller, Donald E., and Gerald Day. "Some Arguments in Defense of the Venetians on the Fourth Crusade." *The American Historical Review* 81:4 (October 1976): 728-730.

³³ Madden, Thomas. "Outside and Inside the Fourth Crusade." *The International History Review* 17:4 (Nov. 1995): 732.

³⁴ Robert of Clari. *The Conquest of Constantinople*. Trans. Edgar McNeal. New York: Octagon Books, 1968. 43.

their initial excommunication. Villehardouin's account is replete with a plethora of examples that illustrate the failure of the defectors from the crusade, and of those who never joined the main crusading army, to achieve any significant gains in the Holy Land. He states "some of them died as a result of the sickly climate in Syria and others went back to their own countries. None of them achieved anything noteworthy or useful in the lands they visited."³⁵ This substantiates Villehardouin's claim that dire necessity motivated the detour to Constantinople, and that the army would have been unable to stage a successful campaign had it gone straight to Palestine (or Syria). In addition, Villehardouin's argument that the army's mission to Constantinople, whether as an end in its own right or as a means to Palestine, was divinely sanctioned is supported by the ultimate successes of the crusaders and the failure of the defectors.

The diversion to Byzantium may have been a predetermined campaign against Christian heretics to avenge previous wrongs committed by the Greeks and to reconcile the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Alternatively, it was possibly an unintended trip necessary to economically fuel the Fourth Crusade. The papacy's changing definition of crusade made the validity of the Fourth Crusade's mission to Constantinople amenable to individual interpretation. Those who defected from the crusade did so primarily because of a strict understanding of their crusading vows that necessitated a pilgrimage to Palestine. However, the crusade's leaders justified the conquest of Constantinople as a "just war" and a vital part of their crusading mission. If the crusades are to be interpreted as an endeavor to forward the goals of the papacy, the members of the Fourth Crusade were arguably more successful in this objective by conquering Constantinople and reconciling the Catholic and Orthodox churches than were their contemporaries and predecessors who actually reached the Holy Land yet came back relatively empty handed.

³⁵ Joinville and Villehardouin. *Chronicles of the Crusades*. Trans. Caroline Smith. London: Penguin, 2008. 61.

The Jews Went Marching Off to War, Hara Hara!

Gila Yarmush

Polish Jewry most commonly evokes images of men in fur hats, white knee socks, black coats, beards, and long sidelocks. Indeed, the Jewish-Polish community these men belonged to adhered to a strict policy of isolationism from the Christian world in which they lived. But the Jewish-Polish community did not always adhere to such a way of life; Poland produced the first modern Orthodox Jew. Modern Orthodoxy is a branch within orthodox Judaism whose adherents believe they should be both integrated in the culture in which they live, and completely observant of their religion.¹ Between the Second and Third Partitions of Poland, a man named Berek Joselewicz formed a solely Jewish Cavalry Unit within the Polish army, earned the rank of colonel, and did so without betraying his religious observance.² Being loyal to both Poland and orthodox Judaism, qualifies Berek Joselewicz's as the first modern Orthodox Jew.³

Joselswicz created the unit because of the Partitions of Poland and the resulting surge of Polish patriotism following the Second Partition. Between the years 1772-1795 Poland was partitioned three times.⁴ The First Partition of Poland resulted from a combination of internal weakness on the part of the Polish government and the external political manipulation of Fredrick II of Prussia. In 1768 a number of shlakhta, Polish nobles, convened in Bar⁵ to create the Confederacy of Bar. The Confederacy opposed the

¹ Ronald L. Eisenberg, *Dictionary of Jewish Terms: A Guide to the Language of Judaism* (Rockville, Maryland: Schreiber Publishing, 2008), p. 299.

² Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography* (Cracow: The Judaica Foundation Center for Jewish Culture, 2008), p. 90.

³ *Ibid*, p. 97. Janion quotes Isaac Bashevis Singer who describes Joselewicz as "the first modern Jew." Singer wrote his essay on Joselewicz in 1939, around the time that the Modern Orthodox Movement was taking off. Had Singer written his essay several years later he might have used the term "Modern Orthodox" to describe Joselewicz. This thesis, therefore, could be read as an agreement with Singer's claim or a variation of it.

⁴ "Partitions of Poland," *Encyclopedia Britannica: Academic Edition Online*, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/466910/Partitions-of-Poland> (accessed May 8, 2011).

⁵ Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, *A Concise History of Poland* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 111-129 specifically, however to place the partitions into the larger context of Polish history read pages 83-132.



Berek Joselewicz Defending Prague's Warsaw Unit, 2009

new laws enacted by the Russian-controlled Polish government⁶ and consequently called for the abdication of the King and fought militarily against the Russians. The Confederacy gained the support of many Poles as well as Austria,⁷ France, and the Ottoman Empire. Despite domestic and international support, Poland was unable to defeat the Russians or accomplish its other goals. Rather, the Confederacy of Bar divided the country and exhausted Poland's resources, rendering Poland powerless to resist its partition by Austria, Prussia, and Russia.⁸

Coupled with the Confederacy's ineffectiveness, external forces contributed to the First Partition, and eventually, to the rise in Polish nationalism. Frederick II took advantage of Russia's wars, frightening Catherine the Great into believing a continental war would break out should she try to fight Poland. He effectively forced Catherine the Great to negotiate with Prussia, and Austria and on August 5, 1772 Poland was partitioned between the three countries and the Polish Sejm, or legislature, was forced to accept.⁹

Following the First Partition, the Poles became extremely patriotic and the Four Year Sejm greatly reformed the Polish government in its attempt to strengthen what remained of the sovereign Polish Kingdom. Simultaneously, Russia at war with both Sweden and Turkey, was, therefore, distracted from the patriotic transformation transpiring within Poland. When Russia eventually realized the extent of the Polish patriotism, and hence Polish defiance of Russia taking place in Poland, it sent in troops; the Second Partition of Poland between Prussia and Russia took place on January 23, 1793. The Second Partition, which again Poland was forced to accept, degraded what remained of the kingdom of Poland. It was after

⁶ Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day* Vol. I, trans. I Friedlaender (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), p. 183.

⁷ "Confederation of Bar." *Encyclopedia Britannica: Academic Edition Online*, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/52446/Confederation-of-Bar> (accessed May 8, 2011) and Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, *A Concise History of Poland*, p. 117.

⁸ "Confederation of Bar." *Encyclopedia Britannica: Academic Edition Online*. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/52446/Confederation-of-Bar> (accessed May 8, 2011)

⁹ Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, *A Concise History of Poland*, p. 111-129 specifically, however to place the Partitions into the larger context of Polish history read pages p. 83-132

the Second Partition that one final attempt was made to revitalize the Kingdom – Kościuszko's Revolt.¹⁰

The Kościuszko Revolt is named for Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a Pole born in Mereczowiszczyna, Poland in 1746 to a family of noble origin. Kościuszko attended the military academy in Warsaw and studied military and civil architecture in Paris. Being a military man, Polish patriot, and an Enlightenment thinker, he fought for Poland's liberty and independence. He had come to prominence as a division commander during the Battle of Dubienka in the war between Russia and Poland between the First and Second Partition, and led the Polish nation in their final war, Kościuszko's Revolt, for liberty and independence against Russia.¹¹

Fighting against Russia within the Polish Army was a unit created by and comprised solely of Jews: the Jewish Cavalry Unit. The two initiators of the Jewish Cavalry Unit were Berek Joselewicz and Józef Aronowicz. Joselewicz and Aronowicz approached Kościuszko and asked if they could create a solely Jewish Cavalry Unit to fight alongside the Polish army. Kościuszko, as an Enlightenment thinker, detested inequality and was sympathetic to those who suffered from it¹² – Jews included.¹³ Kościuszko embraced Joselewicz, Aronowicz and their idea, and commissioned the unit "as a tribute to 'the land where they were born' and a conviction that 'by liberating the land, alongside others, they will enjoy available benefits.'"¹⁴ Subsequently, the Supreme Council gave Joselewicz 3,000 zlotys from the national treasury to "help recruit and supply volunteers."¹⁵

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 111-129 specifically, however to place the Partitions into the larger context of Polish history read pages p. 83-132.

¹¹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, s. v. "Tadeusz Kościuszko," accessed December 08, 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322659/Tadeusz-Kosciuszko>. Kościuszko also fought in the American Revolution on the side of the colonists.

¹² Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution*, p. 16.

¹³ Ibid, p. 136.

¹⁴ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, 110-111.

¹⁵ Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution*, 201. Despite Aronowicz's contribution to the creation of the Jewish Unit, minimal information can be found about him. Surprisingly, the *Encyclopedia Judaica* does not have an entry dedicated to him. There is, however, information on his co-creator of the Unit, Berek Joselewicz. While a majority of the sources are in Polish and Yiddish, making it impossible to utilize for this paper, there are some sources in English. The information about Joselewicz that follows is derived solely from the English sources.

Joselewicz was wholly dedicated to Polish sovereignty and Jewish religious observance. He believed that Jews should work side-by-side with their Polish compatriots. He also believed that Jews should not abandon their religious observance. Joselewicz's beliefs, the convergence of his traditional Jewish education and exposure to Enlightenment, manifested themselves in his desire to create a solely Jewish Unit and the Unit's culture.

Berek Joselewicz was born sometime between 1760-1770¹⁶ in a shtetl in Kretynga, Lithuania.¹⁷ He went to cheder, the traditional Eastern European Hebrew school,¹⁸ and, not surprisingly, had a great affinity for war games.¹⁹ Around 1788,²⁰ he married a woman named Rebekah.²¹ It is known that Joselewicz had at least two children. His daughter, not named in the sources, eventually married an innkeeper and lived with Joselewicz and Rebekah in Kretyngna.²² His son, Józef Berkowicz, born in 1789, became a military man, like his father.²³ He fought with Joselewicz in Napoleon's Polish Legion for which he was awarded two crosses for valor.²⁴

Sometime before 1788²⁵ Joselewicz worked for a nobleman by the name of Ignacy Massalski, with whom he traveled to France on numerous occasions. These travels contributed to Joselewicz's desire to form a solely

¹⁶ Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day* Vol.1, 293, Nathan Michael Gelber, "Joselewicz, Berek," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 10, ed. Cecil Roth (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House), 201, and Amnon Teitelbaum, "To Love Poland Like a Pole," *Pol-Lan-Yah: Here Dwelled God: One Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Poland*, vol. 3, episode 5, (Jerusalem: Israel Film Service, 2001), VHS. Each of these three sources give a different date, but all within the years of 1760-1770.

¹⁷ Nathan Michael Gelber, "Joselewicz, Berek," 201 and Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 93.

¹⁸ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 89.

¹⁹ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 93-4.

²⁰ Guesnet, François. 2010. Joselewicz, Berek. *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Joselewicz_Berek (accessed May 8, 2011).

²¹ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, 96.

²² Ibid, p. 96.

²³ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, 97 and Editorial Staff, "Berkowicz, Joseph," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 4, ed. Cecil Roth (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House), p. 634.

²⁴ Editorial Staff, "Berkowicz, Joseph," p. 634.

²⁵ Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day* Vol. I, p. 294.

Jewish Cavalry Unit.²⁶ Joselewicz, during his numerous travels abroad with Massalski, usually to Paris, learned French,²⁷ but more consequentially, was exposed to the ideas of freedom and equality that saturated France just prior to the French Revolution.²⁸ His commitment to religious practice, Polish nationalism, and newly acquired Enlightenment ideas, contributed to Joselewicz's belief that the Jews of Poland should assist the Poles in their revolt against the Russians.²⁹ The idea of a solely Jewish Unit was born.

Joselewicz's and Aronowicz's idea of a solely Jewish Cavalry Unit within the Polish Army was embraced by Kościuszko and he promoted Joselewicz to the rank of Colonel.³⁰ The Jewish community of Praga, however, did not share Kościuszko's sentiment.³¹ The Jews were hesitant to fight for a country that did not give them the same rights as every other Polish citizen.³² The Jews of Poland were prohibited from living in Warsaw,³³ forced to pay a poll tax on every family member, and had a higher chimney tax.³⁴ In it is not unexpected that the Jewish community was highly skeptical of Joselewicz's vision for an integrated Jewish unit within a larger Polish army.

On October 1, 1794 Joselewicz made a public appeal to the Jewish community.³⁵ Joselewicz asked the Jews to "[a]wake then, and help rescue oppressed Poland. Faithful brethren, let us fight for our country as long

as a drop of blood is left in us!"³⁶ This statement exemplifies the Modern Orthodox ideology, manifesting the desire and belief to be a part of Polish culture and society, not an entity apart. Joselewicz described Poles as his "brethren"³⁷ and Poland as "our country,"³⁸ and advocated for Polish nationalism without compromising his religious observance.³⁹ Joselewicz was successful in his attempt, and within a month the Unit numbered 500 men.⁴⁰ Joselewicz's dream for a solely Jewish Unit within the Polish Army was now realized.

The first to join the unit were Marek Jakubowicz, Mayer Herszkowicz, Chiam Judkiewicz, Mordko Wolfowicz, Josel Abrahamowicz, Jacob Epstein, and Herszek Lewkowicz,⁴¹ most of whom were cart drivers, butchers, and young idealistic men⁴² who had never held a gun before.⁴³ Joselewicz had to teach the men in the Unit how "to fire guns and fight with swords on horseback."⁴⁴ While Joselewicz was teaching these men how to fight, he also enabled and allowed their Jewish religious observance, he allowed and enabled them to be Modern Orthodox.

The purpose of the solely Jewish Unit was to ensure and enable the men to practice their religious observance, while being patriotic. None of the men shaved on par with religious instructions, and hence the Unit was nicknamed the "bearded unit."⁴⁵ The men of the Unit did conduct guard duty on Shabbat,⁴⁶ as it most likely fell under the category of "ensuring a life," a commandment which supersedes all other commandments,

²⁶ Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day* Vol. I, 294, Daniel Stone, "Knowledge of Foreign Languages among Eighteenth-Century Polish Jews," in Polin: *Studies in Polish Jewry* Volume 10: *Jews in Early Modern Poland*, ed. Gershon David Hundert (Portland, Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1997), p. 204.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 294.

²⁸ Nathan Michael Gelber, "Joselewicz, Berek," 201, Daniel Stone, "Knowledge of Foreign Languages among Eighteenth-Century Polish Jews," 204, and Amnon Teitelbaum, "To Love Poland Like a Pole," *Pol-Lan-Yah: Here Dwelled God: One Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Poland*, vol. 3, episode 5.

²⁹ Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day* Vol. I, p. 294.

³⁰ Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia: 1350 to 1881* Vol. I (Portland, Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010), p. 220.

³¹ Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution*, p. 203.

³² *Ibid.*, p.136, p. 139.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

³⁵ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p.116.

³⁶ Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day* Vol. I, p. 295.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 90.

⁴⁰ Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution*, p. 203 and Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p.120.

⁴¹ Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution*, p.203.

⁴² Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 120-121.

⁴³ Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day* Vol. I, p. 296.

⁴⁴ Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution*, p. 203.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 121.

including the observance of the shabbat. The soldiers also prayed daily and donned prayer shawls and phylacteries as seen in the following passage from Maria Janion's *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography* excerpted from Isaac Bashevis Singer's essay on Joselewicz:

"[t]wice a day, Berek led his people to the synagogue in Praga; the prayer house then filled with soldiers who for a moment cast aside rifles, pikes and sabers, and put on tallisim and phylacteries. Engrossed in prayer, they swung back and forth reading the holy texts. Then, the soldiers would strap on their sabers, pick up their rifles and pikes, and return to their barracks. Shabbat was different from other days only in that they did not strap on their weapons."⁴⁷

The Jewish Unit not only prayed daily, but also ate only Kosher food, which was provided for them by the Jewish community of Praga. If they were unable to obtain the kosher food, as such was the case during the final battle against the Russians, the men fought hungry.⁴⁸ This was the first time in history that Jewish men were able to fully adhere to their religious observance while fighting within a Christian army. Being a Polish patriot and religious Jew, being Modern-Orthodox, had become a reality.

The Unit fought with and within the Polish army for the independence of Poland against the Russians until the battle of Praga in which they were defeated by the Russian Army.⁴⁹ On November 4, 1794, almost the entire Jewish Unit was obliterated in the battle.⁵⁰ This battle was not only the end of the Jewish Cavalry Unit, but of Kościuszko's Revolt,⁵¹ and Poland itself.⁵² Fortunately, Joselewicz survived the defeat and went to France.⁵³

⁴⁷ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 121.

⁴⁸ *Ibid* p. 125-126.

⁴⁹ Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, *A Concise History of Poland*, 131 and Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day* Vol. I, p. 296.

⁵⁰ Polonsky, Antony. *The Jews in Poland and Russia: 1350 to 1881* Vol. I, 220 and Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 123.

⁵¹ Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, *A Concise History of Poland* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.131.

⁵² Isaac Lewin, "One Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Poland," in *The Jewish Community in Poland: Historical Essays* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1985), p. 25.

⁵³ Amnon Teitelbaum, "To Love Poland Like a Pole," *Pol-Lan-Yah: Here Dwelled God: One Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Poland*, vol. 3, episode 5.

After his defeat in Poland, Joselewicz did not enter into a quiet life of religious observance, but rather continued, and never ceased to be, both an observant Jew and Polish patriot, in other words, Modern-Orthodox. After being in France for a time, Joselewicz travelled to Italy and joined General Dubrowski's Polish Legion which was a part of Napoleon's Army based in Italy⁵⁴ fighting for Polish independence. Joselewicz returned to the land of Poland, now called the Duchy of Warsaw, where he fought as an army officer in the Napoleonic Wars.⁵⁵

On May 5, 1809 Joselewicz was killed fighting the Austrians in the fields of his homeland near Kock.⁵⁶ During his lifetime Joselewicz, not only formed the first solely Jewish Unit within a Christian army, but also fought in the battles of Hohenlinde, Salzburg, Tczew, Gdansk, Friedland⁵⁷ and earned the *Virtuti Militari* and Legion of Honor.⁵⁸ Joselewicz died an accomplished military man and observant Jew, he died a Modern-Orthodox Jew.

⁵⁴ Amnon Teitelbaum, "To Love Poland Like a Pole," *Pol-Lan-Yah: Here Dwelled God: One Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Poland*, vol. 3, episode 5.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*.

⁵⁶ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, 142 and Amnon Teitelbaum, "To Love Poland Like a Pole," *Pol-Lan-Yah: Here Dwelled God: One Thousand Years of Jewish Life in Poland*, vol. 3, episode 5.

⁵⁷ Maria Janion, *The Jewish Colonel: A Romantic and Non-Romantic Biography*, p. 141.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 97, p. 141.

Only Nazi Games? Berlin 1936: The Olympic Games Between Sports and Politics¹

Mario Kessler

At the 29th session of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1931, delegates met in Barcelona, Spain to determine the location of the 11th Olympic Summer Games. One month later the IOC awarded the 1936 Olympic Games to Berlin. While in 1925 the Locarno Treaty had signaled the return of Germany to the community of states (and the Olympic family in 1928), this award clearly established the Weimar Republic as a trustworthy partner despite all of its problems. However, by the time the Games took place from 1-16 August 1936, Hitler had been in power for three years and German democracy lay in ruins. Nazi anti-Semitism, particularly with the introduction of the Nuremberg "race laws" in September 1935, led to broad international discussions about the appropriateness of holding Olympic Games in a country that had so clearly violated the humanitarian principles underlying the Games.

This subject has been amply documented. The standard works on the subject—from Arnd Krüger's pioneering study to David Clay Large's most recent book—show how the Hitler regime sought to use the Games as an opportunity to increase its popularity inside the country while at the same time to disguise the true nature of the regime abroad.² The Hitler regime subsequently interpreted the failed international campaign to boycott the Games—which also involved the working class sports movement—as a sign of success for the Nazi leadership.

This review ties into these scholarly debates. In general, it analyzes

¹ The original German version of this essay was published under the title: "Berlin 1936 - nur Spiele der Nazis? Olympia zwischen Sport und Politik" in *Jahrbuch für Forschungen zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung*, p.10, No. 2 (2011), pp. 5-24. An extended English translation was published in *Socialism and Democracy*, 25, No. 2 (2011), pp. 125-43. Special thanks go to Eleanor Yadin of the Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library for helping to obtain sources.

² Arnd Krüger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936 und die Weltmeinung: Ihre außenpolitische Bedeutung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der USA* (Berlin etc.: Bartels & Wernitz, 1972); David Clay Large, *Nazi Games: The Olympics of 1936* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007).

whether the Berlin Games were simply "Nazi Games" (a view shared by the working class movement), or if additional characterizations might emerge from a broad historical analysis perspective. In doing so, it in turn examines the IOC reactions once it became clear that the Nazis sought to instrumentalize the Games for their own purposes; the efforts of the boycott movement, including that of the working class sports movement; the non-participation of Jewish athletes, a group whose size has long been underestimated; the impact on the instrumentalization of the Games; and finally the successes of Jewish and African-American athletes at the Games, and what the presence of these two groups (whose common humanity was categorically denied by the Nazis) played in the historical assessment of the Berlin Games?

Questions about the successes of African-Americans in Berlin have been explored for some time now.³ Any discussions about Jews, on the other hand, have until recently focused entirely on the extent of their participation in the international boycott movement. It has only been in the last decade that Paul Yogi Mayer and Paul Taylor studied the possible effects of Jewish Olympic victories on the collective consciousness of a social minority.⁴

The IOC and Nazi Sports Policies

The Nazi rise to power initially led the IOC to pose some critical questions. After the Nazi regime announced its "Jewish Boycott" on 1 April 1933 IOC President Henri de Baillet-Latour asked the German government for a written guarantee that it would honor the values established in the Olympic Charter: that all Game participants are equal. This meant specifically that Jewish or Black athletes would not be mistreated in public. At the IOC's annual meeting in Vienna in June 1933 it was noted that the Games may be moved to another location should the German government be unwilling to issue such a guarantee. Concerned about its international reputation, the Hitler regime committed itself to a full implementation

³ See, e.g., Arthur R. Ashe Jr., *A Hard Road to Glory: The African-American Athlete in Track and Field* (New York: Warner Books, 1993).

⁴ Paul Yogi Mayer, *Jews and the Olympic Games: A Springboard for Minorities* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2004); Paul Taylor, *Jews and the Olympic Games: The Clash between Sports and Politics* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2004).



Proposed participant's badge for the 1936 Olympics.

of Olympic rules. This public commitment satisfied the IOC and it subsequently awarded the fourth Winter Games in 1936 to Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany.⁵

The decision was not uncontested. Prior to the June 1933 meeting, the American Jewish Congress (AJC) spoke out against holding the Games in Germany. Among other things, it highlighted the negative impact on the United States and other countries if Jewish athletes were prevented from participating in the 1936 Summer Games.⁶ In October 1933, AJC President Bernhard S. Deutsch pointed out that the situation for Jews and Jewish athletes in Germany had deteriorated further since the IOC affirmed the Berlin Games in Vienna.⁷ In response to these challenges, IOC member Charles Sherill stated that the Committee would assure that Olympic principles were protected, and that the Berlin Games' Organization Committee (OC) would work independently of politics.⁸ The OC's president, Theodor Lewald, who had been appointed by the Weimar Republic, was himself of "mixed race" according to the new racial categories, a fact that did not prevent the regime from using his international connections and his loyalty to the Olympic cause for their own purposes.

Prior to 1933 enthusiasm for the Olympic Games was decidedly limited among the National Socialists. However, after January 1933 the Games' possible propaganda value outweighed their circumspect views about international cooperation. The Nazis wanted to present the image of a "healthy" new Germany, and the Games provided a unique showcase. The president of the Reichsbund für Leibesübungen, the German Sports Association, Hans von Tschammer und Osten, was tasked with integrating the Olympic campaign into official ideology. Carl Diem, General Secretary of the OC, played a key role in the planning and execution of the Games. Diem, although not a member of the Nazi Party, shared many of the regime's guidelines towards nationalism and anti-Semitism.

Avery Brundage, President of the US Olympic Committee (USOC), traveled to Germany at the end of August 1934 to investigate the state of preparation of the Games. Von Tschammer und Osten, who was fluent in

⁵ See Allen Guttman, *The Games Must Go On: Avery Brundage and the Olympic Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 65.

⁶ "Protests Olympic Games," *The New York Times* (NYT), 31 May 1933.

⁷ "Olympics Unit Here Reopens Nazi Row," *Ibid*, 9 October 1933.

⁸ See A. Krüger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936*, pp. 49-53.

English, succeeded in winning Brundage's support for the Nazi's athletic leadership.⁹ After his return Brundage expressed deep satisfaction about the quality of his talks with German sports functionaries and his conviction that the Games would take place without any trouble. He further expressed his sense that reports about discrimination against Jews were exaggerated in the US.¹⁰

After his trip to Berlin in October 1934 Charles Sherill reported that the German foreign minister Konstantin von Neurath had provided assurances that Jewish athletes would have equal opportunities on the German teams. Sherill also warned his Jewish friends that a boycott movement would only cause a wave of anti-Semitism and he wrote: "Many prominent Jews with whom I have talked here and abroad feel the same way: that it would be overplaying the Jewish hand in America as it was overplayed in Germany before the present suppression and expulsion of the Jews were undertaken."¹¹ Brundage and Sherill agreed that American participation "and the unhindered continuance of the Olympic movement were more important than the German-Jewish situation."¹²

In the end, IOC President Baillet-Latour overcame his initial hesitancy and committed to keeping the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin. Baillet-Latour was especially convinced after the USOC and Brundage accepted Berlin's invitation over the opposition of one of its members, Charles L. Ornstein. As a result Baillet-Latour decisively influenced the direction taken in IOC deliberations, in particular by removing Ernest Lee Jahncke, an American supporter of the boycott, from the Executive Committee. Jahncke's position was clear after he publicly exposed the ongoing

⁹ See Duff Hart-Davis, *Hitler's Games: The 1936 Olympics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), pp. 64-65.

¹⁰ Arnd Krüger, "'Once the Olympics are through, we will beat up the Jew': German-Jewish Sport 1898-1938 and the Anti-Semitic Discourse," *Journal of Sport History*, 26, No. 2 (1999), p. 358.

¹¹ "Sherill Rebuffs Olympic Ban Plea," *NYT*, October 22, 1934. After talks with Hitler at the end of 1935 both Sherill and Baillet-Latour accepted assurances that anti-Semitic propaganda would not be visible in either Berlin or Garmisch. However, they were unable to extract binding assurances that Jewish athletes would be able to participate with their German teams. See A. Krüger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936*, pp. 108, 137-38.

¹² Stephen R. Wenn, "Talks of Two Diplomats: George S. Messersmith and Charles R. Sherill on Proposed American Participation in the Berlin Olympics," *Journal of Sport History*, 16, No. 1 (1989), p. 36.

discrimination against Jews as well as their removal from German sports clubs.¹³ He was replaced by Brundage, who worked especially closely with Sweden's Sigfrid Edström as well as with Karl Ritter von Halt, President of the OC for the Olympic Winter Games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. This trio would serve as the primary guarantors that the IOC would not oppose Nazi sports policies.¹⁴

Against Hitler's Games: The Boycott Movement and Its Failure

By the mid-1930s Boycott movements emerged in an effort to prevent the Games from taking place in Berlin. The Comité international pour le respect de l'esprit olympique was founded in Paris in 1935. It had members in Great Britain, France, The Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, and Belgium, including the president of the Labour and Socialist International, Emile Vandervelde. In June 1936 the Comité held a conference in Paris in defense of the Olympic ideals, at which the writer Heinrich Mann spoke. The conference supported a counter Olympics in Barcelona, an idea that was initiated among others by Léo Lagrange, Secretary for Sports at the French Ministry of Education.¹⁵

The idea of boycotting the Berlin Games was not popular in Great Britain. However, boycott supporters included the Labour Party politician and future Nobel Peace Prize winner Philip Noel-Baker, who had won a silver medal at the 1920 Olympics in the 1500-meter race. The House of Commons deliberated the issue on 23 March 1936 and confirmed the traditional

¹³ Jahncke summarized his views in an urgent letter to Baillet-Latour dated 25 November 1935. See Robert H. Abzug, *America Views the Holocaust, 1933-1945: A Brief Documentary History* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999), pp. 63-66.

¹⁴ Wendy Gray and Robert Knight Barney, "Devotion to Whom?: German-American Loyalty on the Issue of Participation in the 1936 Olympic Games," *Journal of Sport History*, 17, No. 2 (1990), pp. 214-31. As no government funds were available the travel costs for the US Olympic Team were covered by donations amounting to roughly \$350,000. See "Trials and Tryouts," *Time*, July 20, 1936, pp. 53-54.

¹⁵ See, inter alia, Karl Heinz Jahnke, *Gegen den Mißbrauch der olympischen Idee 1936. Sportler im antifaschistischen Widerstand* (Frankfurt: Röderberg, 1972), pp. 19-20, 83-84; Fabrice Abgrall and François Thomazeau, *1936. La France à l'épreuve des Jeux Olympiques de Berlin* (Paris: Alvik, 2006), pp. 41-53; André Gounot, "Barcelona gegen Berlin: Das Projekt der Volksolympiade 1936," Michael Krüger, ed., *Der deutsche Sport auf dem Weg in die Moderne* (Berlin: LIT, 2009), pp. 119-30.

view that government could not forbid athletes from participating in the Berlin Games. The Amateur Athletic Association likewise supported the participation of a British team in Berlin, arguing that a boycott of the Summer Olympics made little sense given that the team had already competed at the Winter Olympics in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.¹⁶

On the other hand, influential sports functionaries and sports journalists in France demanded the relocation of the Games and ultimately for its boycott. Among them were Jules Rimet, president of the World Soccer Association, Jacques Goddet, editor of the sports magazine *L'Auto*, and Gaston Bénac of *Paris-Soir*. The voices of opposition intensified after the German occupation of the Rhineland in March 1936. Nevertheless on 19 June 1936 French Prime Minister Léon Blum allowed a French team to participate in the Berlin Games despite communist votes against such participation. A subsequent parliamentary vote on 9 July was a mere formality.¹⁷

On behalf of the Germans in exile the *Pariser Tageszeitung* attacked the "international sports leaders" who had deliberately "closed their eyes" in order to "present a victory to German propaganda."¹⁸ Another article argued, that "nobody appeared to have thought of declaring the leaders of modern sports to be in the vanguard of the intellectual progress of our times."¹⁹

The boycott movement was strongest in the United States, where the issue was actively debated. An early meeting protesting the Games, and organized among others by the American Federation of Labor (AFL), took place in New York on 7 March 1934.²⁰ A series of other events followed, but the creation of the Committee on Fair Play in Sports, (also known as the Fair Play Committee) headed by George Gordon Battle as president and William Chamberlain as general secretary, received the most international attention. The Committee was supported by a number of organizations and

¹⁶ Hart-Davis, *Hitler's Games*, New York 1986, pp. 110-11; Richard Holt, "Great Britain: The Amateur Tradition," A. Krüger and Murray, eds., *Nazi Olympics*, pp. 70-86.

¹⁷ Abgrall and Thomazeau, 1936, pp. 25-26; William Murray, "Liberty, Equality, and the Pursuit of Fraternity," A. Krüger and Murray eds., *Nazi Olympics*, pp. 98-99.

¹⁸ William Atkins, "Die Olympische Komödie in Berlin," *Pariser Tageszeitung*, 12 June 1936.

¹⁹ Manuel Humbert, "Plädoyer für die Olympiade," *Ibid*, 2 August 1936.

²⁰ See "Nazis 'Convicted of 'World Crime' by 20,000 in Rally," *NYT*, 8 March 1934.

individuals, including the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) as the umbrella organization for American amateur sports, the AFL, the Jewish Labor Committee, and politicians such as New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, former New York Governor Al Smith and Massachusetts Governor James Curley. Support also came from Christian circles including the Catholic *Commonweal* and Protestant *The Christian Century* magazines, and from athletes such as the 1932 Olympic gold medalists Helen Madison and James Bausch.²¹

Most German Americans supported the Berlin Games. The pro-Nazi German-American *Volksbund* carried out a broad campaign in support of participation. Even non-Nazis such as Dietrich Wortmann – who had participated in the 1904 Olympics on the American wrestling team – actively supported the Berlin Games. A native of Leipzig, Germany, Wortmann founded the American Olympic Fund Committee in order to raise money in support of the American Olympic team.²² These activities prompted the New York based *Aufbau*, to accuse Wortmann of having abandoned his democratic principles.²³ Wortmann's view that discrimination against Black Americans in the US might also disqualify US participation in the Olympics was overwhelmingly ignored in "white" America, with the notable exception of the working class movement.²⁴

Opinion within the African-American community was divided. Walter Francis White, executive secretary of the National Association for the advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the most important black civil rights organization, emphasized at an event sponsored by the Fair Play

²¹ A. Krüger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936*, pp. 109-31; Richard A. Swanson, "'Move the Olympics!', 'Germany must be Told!': Charles Clayton Morrison and Liberal Protestant Christianity's Support of the 1936 Olympic Boycott Effort," *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies*, 12 (2003), pp. 39-50; *Large, Nazi Games*, pp. 69-109. **The Jewish Makkabi Global Athletic Association and its president Selig Brodetsky did not demand a general boycott of the Games but recommended that Jewish athletes not to compete.**

²² See Gray and Robert Barney, "Devotion to Whom?," pp. 214-231. As no government funds were available the US Olympic team ultimately received donations amounting to roughly \$350,000. See "Trials and Tryouts," *Time*, 20 July 1936.

²³ See Eduard W. Jelenko, "Weltgewissen und Olympiade," *Aufbau*, 2, No. 1 (1935), pp. 1-2.

²⁴ Arnd Krüger, "United States of America: The Crucial Battle," A. Krüger and Murray, eds., *Nazi Olympics*, pp. 48-49.

Committee in New York on 3 December 1935 that black athletes could not in good conscience participate in Berlin. Such participation would run counter to all principles underlying the Olympic Games. Nevertheless several prominent athletes, among them Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalfe as well as High Jumper Cornelius Johnson announced that they would compete in Berlin.²⁵ Most African-American newspapers also supported the participation of Black athletes in Berlin, as their expected achievements would destroy ideas of the superiority of the "Aryan race."²⁶

The Roosevelt administration deliberately stayed out of the debate and left the question of participation to the AAU. The AAU annual convention was scheduled to take place in New York in December 1935, at which time US participation was to be decided. Various organizations and athletes made their opinions known ahead of the gathering. AAU president Jeremiah Mahoney advised against the participation of American athletes but did not support a formal boycott. Brundage, on the other hand, argued that if the AAU failed to fully support US participation in Berlin it would necessitate that supporters found their own organization in order to allow amateur athletes to participate. He further argued that the US Olympic Committee rather than the AAU had the sole authority to decide on the participation or non-participation of American athletes.

On 7 December 1935 a preliminary vote in the AAU's executive committee led to an even split.²⁷ Realizing that the AAU conference might well decide against participation, Brundage was able to postpone the vote to the following day. He phoned other delegates throughout the night, urging them to show up for the vote in New York. Those favoring participation in the Olympics won the deciding vote on 8 December 1935 by a final count of 58 to 56 against the Mahoney camp.²⁸

The pro-Berlin vote strengthened Brundage's position against mixing sports and politics. He saw himself as a strict opponent of any such mixing and denied the political character of any decision, even when one was patently obvious.

The decision would have significant impact on public opinion in the US.

²⁵ "Negro Athletes for Olympics," *NYT*, 4 December 1935.

²⁶ David K. Wiggins, "The 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin: The Response of America's Black Press," *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 54, No. 3 (1983), pp. 278-92.

²⁷ "Even Split in A.A.U. on Olympic Cause," *NYT*, 7 December 1935.

²⁸ Gutman, *The Games Must Go On*, p. 74.

To be sure, critical voices continued to be heard and Jewish and working class newspapers continued to call for a Berlin boycott. Other voices supported participation, noting that "not the smallest sign" of religious, political, or racist prejudice had been visible at the Olympic Winter Games, as though that were a particularly praiseworthy fact.²⁹ Just as with Berlin Games, any references to the discrimination against "non-Aryans" had been removed from public view at Garmisch-Partenkirchen—at least for the duration of the Games.³⁰

In the summer 1936 the Comité international pour le respect de l'esprit olympique and Dutch artists organized an exhibit in Amsterdam entitled "De olympiade onder dictatuur" (Olympics Under Dictatorship). The acronym of the exhibit motto, "D.O.O.D." is the Dutch word for death (dood). Local artists included the Dutch painter Peter Alma and the sculptor Hildo Krop, as well as the German émigré Karl Schwesig. Other participating artists included Max Ernst, Jacques Lipschitz and Ossip Zadkine, Otto Freundlich (who lived in France and was murdered in the Majdanek concentration camp in 1943), as well as the photographer Robert Capa. Noteworthy exhibits included John Heartfield's photo montage showing Goebbels pulling athletes on five Olympic nose rings (which became a frequently reprinted motif), and Christopher Nevinson portrait of Rodin's "Thinker" surrounded by bayonets, warplanes, canons and burning buildings.³¹

The Dutch government of Prime Minister Hendrikus Colijn was unsure how to act after Berlin protested against the supposedly anti-German exhibition. The Mayor of Amsterdam, Willem de Vlucht, criticized its sharply anti-Nazi tone and decreed that it would not be permissible to show the exhibition in public spaces. In the end space was found in the private Geelvinck Museum. This Dutch exhibition stood in stark contrast to the Olympic art competitions in Berlin at which Arno Breker exhibited his work, for example, and received a silver medal.

The German government was able to successfully defend itself and the Berlin Games by carefully recruiting supporters. Most prominent among these was Pierre de Coubertin. Plagued by financial difficulties in his old

²⁹ See, for example, "Games at Garmisch," *Time*, 17 February 1936.

³⁰ On the Winter Games see Large, *Nazi Games*, pp. 110-46.

³¹ See Dominik Bartmann, ed., *Die Olympiade unter der Diktatur: Rekonstruktion der Amsterdamer Kunstolympiade 1936* (Berlin: Stadtmuseum, 1936).

age, Coubertin had been promised a pension should he opt in favor of the Berlin Games. In fact, Hitler made an "honor gift" payment of 10,000 Reichsmark to him in May 1936. In addition the regime began a campaign to award Coubertin the Nobel Peace Prize retroactively for 1935. As is well known this plan failed, as the prize was awarded to Carl von Ossietzky. The Nazi plan nevertheless partially succeeded: Coubertin sent the Olympic Committee a laudatory greeting and declared at the conclusion of the Games that they had been the best to date. He also included Hitler in his praise.³²

In spring 1936 the communist Red Sport International and the Socialist Workers Sport International declared in a joint appeal that the Games planned in Berlin had "grown beyond a sports event... Those presently holding power in Germany are using the Olympics as a propaganda project for fascism... In fascist states sports do not serve peaceful competition among youths but rather the preparation for war."³³ Both organizations called for Worker Olympics to take place in Barcelona. This plan fell victim to the Spanish Civil War, however. A smaller Worker Sport Fest took place in Prague without much acclaim. Similarly, several well-known athletes who had not made the cut for the Berlin Olympic teams participated at the New York World Labor Athletics Carnival, among them the sprinter Eulace Peacock.³⁴

In retrospect, while active and successful on some fronts, the boycott movement never had a chance to succeed against the IOC, especially since it was insufficiently coordinated at the international level.

The Non-Participation of Athletes - Voluntary or Forced

In order to demonstrate their supposed loyalty to the Olympic principles the Nazi sports leadership maintained that German Jewish athletes, if qualified, would not be prevented from participating in the Berlin and

³² See, e.g., Hans Joachim Teichler, "Coubertin und das Dritte Reich: Zur Vorgeschichte eines unveröffentlichten Coubertin-Briefs an Hitler aus dem Jahre 1937," *Sportwissenschaft*, 12, No. 1(1982), pp. 18-55; W. J. Murray, "France, Coubertin and the Nazi Olympics: The Response," *Olympika*, 1 (1992), pp. 49-69; Abgrall and Thomazeau, 1936, pp. 137-43.

³³ The appeal is reprinted in Jahnke, *Mißbrauch*, pp. 87-88.

³⁴ See Edward S. Shapiro, "The World Labor Athletics Carnival of 1936," *American Jewish History*, 74, No. 3 (1985), pp. 255-73.

Garmisch-Partenkirchen Olympic Games. However, despite this and other overtures, Jews were successively prevented from training with "Aryan" athletes beginning in spring 1933 and had to resign from general athletic clubs. The establishment of the Reichsausschuss (Central Organization) of Jewish athletic clubs as well as the passage of government guidelines on 5 October 1934 for the athletic activities of Jews had conveyed a false sense of security. What became clear, however, is that the Jewish clubs (whose membership was limited to Jews) were in such poor material conditions that it was impossible to speak of equal opportunities between Jewish and non-Jewish athletes.³⁵

In June 1934 the Nazi sports leadership declared that it would invite five – and later even twenty-one – Jewish athletes to the Olympic training courses turned out to be simple deceptions to mislead world public opinion.³⁶ Ultimately, the leadership allowed one athlete to participate on one German team at the winter and summer Games who, as "half Jews" did not meet the Hitler regime's racial criteria. There were the ice hockey player Rudi Ball and the fencer Helene Mayer, one of the sports idols of her time. She was a student at Mills College in California but came to Berlin stating that it was an honor to fence for Germany. She won the silver medal in the foil fencing competition and showed the "Hitler greeting" at the award ceremony in the Olympic Stadium, probably in order to protect her remaining relatives in Germany who were suffering under Germany's racial laws.³⁷

Contrary to the long held view that only a few "individual Jews" decided against participating in Berlin in protest against the anti-Semitic policies of the "Third Reich", in fact a good number boycotted the Games.³⁸ Among them were the American sprinters and hurdlers Milton Green, Herman Neugass

³⁵ See Hajo Bernett, *Der jüdische Sport im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland 1933-1938* (Schorndorf: Hofmann, 1978), pp. 16-37.

³⁶ "Jewish Athletes Named," *NYT*, 9 June 1934; "Jews Propose 21 for German Team," *Ibid*, 19 June 1934; "Seeks Acceptance of Olympic Bid," *Ibid*, 22 June 1934.

³⁷ Milly Mogulof, *Foiled. Hitler's Jewish Olympian: The Helene Mayer Story* (Oakland, CA: RDR Books, 2002), pp. 167-68, 176. The "Hitler greeting" was mandatory for German medalists. Helene Mayer had not been raised in the Jewish tradition but was nevertheless considered a Jew in some of the Jewish media. See, for example, "Jüdische Olympiasieger," *Jüdische Revue*, 8, No. 8 (1936), p. 63.

³⁸ A. Krüger still argued this in "Wenn die Olympiade vorbei", p. 342. See also Large, *Nazi Games*, pp. 106-07.

and Norman Lee Cahners (who later became a well-known publisher); the discus thrower and 1932 Olympic champion Lilian Copeland; the sprinters Sybil ("Syd") Koff and Sybil Cooper; the boxer Louis Gevinson; and the basketball players Jules Bender, Benjamin Kramer, Leo Merson and William Schwartz. The Canadian boxers Yisrael ("Sammy") Luftspring and Normal Jack shunned the Berlin Games, as did the entire Canadian water polo team whose members were both Jewish and non-Jewish. Others who refused to participate were the middle distance runner Fred Feuermann from Czechoslovakia; his countryman and marathoner Oskar Hekš (one of the organizers of the failed Worker Olympics in Barcelona); the fencer Albert Wolff from France; the boxers Harry Cohen from Australia and Ben Brill from the Netherlands; the swimmers Judith Deutsch, Ruth Langer and Lucie Goldner from Austria; as well as the wrestler Abraham Kurland and the fencer Ivan Osier of Denmark. Likewise, Charlotte Epstein, who had coached the female US swim team from 1920 to 1928, refused to go to Berlin. The entire team representing the British mandate in Palestine withdrew its acceptance to participate. Before that, bobsledders Philippe de Rothschild and Jean Rheims from France had decided not to start at the Winter Games.

The boycott was not exclusive to Jewish athletes, as some non-Jewish athletes also decided against competing in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Berlin, including: the French figure skating couple Andrée and Pierre Brunet, who won gold at the 1928 and 1932 Olympics; the speed skaters and Olympic champions John Shea from the United States and Bernt Evensen from Norway; and the Dutch world record holding sprinter Tollien Schuurman.³⁹ Although each of these public rejections to participate at the Berlin Olympics was honorable, they failed to impress the IOC and even less the National Socialist sports leadership.

Despite earlier inquiries, the IOC failed to intervene on behalf of Jewish athletes who were expelled from their German Olympic teams. Thus the

³⁹ See Jahnke, *Mißbrauch*, 30-31; Allan Guttman, Heather Kestner, and George Eisen, "Jewish Athletes and the „Nazi Olympics“," Kay Schaffer and Sidonie Smith, eds., *The Olympics at the Millenium: Power, Politics, and the Games* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), pp. 51-62; Susan D. Bachrach, *The Nazi Olympics: Berlin 1936* (Boston, New York, and London: Little, Brown, and Co., 2000), pp. 61-70; Steve Lipman, "The Olympics and the Holocaust," *The Jewish Week*, Internet Edition, 13 August 2004, www.jewishfederations.org/page.aspx?id=70615 (viewed on 20 March 2010) as well as the obituaries of these athletes published on the Internet.

sprinter Werner Schattmann, the middle distance runner Franz Orgler, and weightlifter Max Seeligmann and finally the high jumper Gretel Bergmann were prevented from participating in the Berlin Games against their own wishes.¹ Gretel Bergmann's elimination from the team was not announced until immediately before the start of the Games, a fact that got lost in the general "media frenzy" and found little notice in world public opinion.²

Only Nazi Games?

Would a boycott of the 1936 Olympic Games have made political sense? Opinions continue to divide on this issue. Of course a boycott, particularly by the United States, would have constituted an important loss of image for the Hitler regime, exposing it as a pariah. The present author believes that a boycott would in no way have changed, nor ameliorated, the policies of the regime.³ Instead, the Games should have been relocated well before 1936. The fact that this did not happen can be laid at the feet of the top IOC functionaries as well as USOC president Avery Brundage. Ultimately each was untouched by the policies of the Nazi leadership. Karl Heinz Jahnke wrote about the "sympathy of the majority of the members of the International Olympic Committee vis-à-vis the policies of the Hitler regime," and Hans Joachim Teichler even refers to this as the "fascist era

¹ See, inter alia, Richard Mandell, *The Nazi Olympics* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 77-78; in more detail Hans Joachim Teichler, "Der Ausschluss der deutschen Juden von den Olympischen Spielen 1936," in: Manfred Lämmer ed.) *Die jüdische Turn- und Sportbewegung in Deutschland* (St. Augustin: Academia, 1989), pp. 45-64; Volker Boch, *Berlin 1936: Die Olympischen Spiele 1936 unter Berücksichtigung des jüdischen Sports*, Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 2002; Berno Bahro and Jutta Braun, *Berlin '36: Die unglaubliche Geschichte einer jüdischen Sportlerin im „Dritten Reich“* (Berlin: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 2009) (on Gretel Bergmann).

² A. Krüger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936*, p. 129. The USA withdrew two already nominated Jewish athletes, the sprinters Marty Glickman and Sam Stoller, officially for performance reasons. See for example, William J. Baker, *Jesse Owens: An American Life* (New York and London: Free Press/Collier-Macmillan, 1986), pp. 102-06. In his autobiography Glickman asserts a barely disguised anti-Semitism among American coaches and officials. See Marty Glickman, *The Fastest Kid on the Block* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1996), pp. 17-35.

³ Holding the Games actually gave German Jews, and especially their athletic movement, a "grace period" as the worst repressions were temporarily suspended or weakened ahead of the Games. See Bernett, *Der jüdische Sport*, pp. 86-89, 103-04.

of the IOC."⁴

According to Teichler the thesis that the Nazis abused the Olympic Games should not ignore the fact that important international athletic leaders were all too willing to tolerate or even to support this abuse. In return they received, according to Krüger, "the best organized, propagandistically best prepared, and the best attended Olympic Games up to that point in history."⁵ However, in the first large international show of the Nazis Olympic ideals became a "farce."⁶ According to Walters, Hitler "stole" the Olympic dream.⁷

But were the Berlin Games only Games that favored the National Socialist regime? If measured by the propaganda success this is largely, but not entirely, true. Many visitors were impressed by the monumental choreography, and the organizers did everything in their power to avoid mistakes. State and party organizations ordered their employees to show maximum courtesy to the guests—even when they were visibly recognizable as "non-Aryans." A circular distributed by the top echelon of the SA-leadership dated July 22, 1936 stated: "In these coming weeks of the Olympics we want to show foreigners that it is a lie spread abroad that the persecution of Jews is a daily occurrence in Germany."⁸ The rabidly propagandistic *Der Stürmer* was not distributed in Berlin during the Olympics. Outside Berlin, the "daily petty warfare against Jews was not reduced or even stopped for one moment," according to the *Deutschland-Berichte*, the illegal reports of the Social Democratic Party in exile.⁹

Hitler's domestic opponents rarely succeeded in showing the real nature of the regime to Olympic visitors, something that undoubtedly

⁴ Jahnke, *Mißbrauch*, p. 49; Hans Joachim Teichler, "Die faschistische Epoche des IOC," in: *Historical Social Research*, 32, No. 1 (2007), pp. 14-42.

⁵ A. Krüger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936*, p. 227.

⁶ Large, *Nazi Games*, p. 12.

⁷ Guy Walters, *Berlin Games: How Hitler Stole the Olympic Dream* (London: John Murray, 2006).

⁸ Quoted in A. Krüger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936*, 198. The African-American historian W.E.B. Du Bois was on a research stay in Germany during the time of the Olympics. As a fluent German speaker it seemed to him "that most Germans behaved far more correctly in public when encountering well-bred gentleman of a different color than white Americans." David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois, Vol. 2: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919-1963* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2000), p. 398.

⁹ *Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (Sopade) 1934-1940, Vol. 3* (Frankfurt: Zweitausendeins, 1980), p. 973.

contributed to the picture of the Nazi Olympics. Many attendees simply failed to look behind the shining façade. Germans, for their part, were willing to ignore the political problems because of the successes of "their" team, which earned 33 gold medals (to lead all countries in the medal count, and nine more than the United States, which had the second highest count). Furthermore the public was unaware of the "collection camp" established in Marzahn at which Berlin's Sinti and Roma population was interned ahead of the Games.¹⁰ The Games were still going on when the concentration camp Sachsenhausen opened up. At the same time the first units of the Condor Legion and the Italian *Corpo Truppe Volontarie* left for Spain in order to support the fellow fascist Francisco Franco. The social democratic journal *Neuer Vorwärts* characterized the Olympic peace of 1936 as a chimera, a "Burgfrieden" of the deceived that allowed Hitler free reign to implement his surreptitious policy of aggression.¹¹

Does the term Nazi Games fully capture reality, however? The foreign press particularly that of the United States, remained remarkably critical vis-à-vis the regime in its reporting during the Games.¹² Besides that, Olympic contestants from various nations formed athletic friendships, such as between Jesse Owens and Lutz Long, his rival from Leipzig in long jump. This clearly violated the ideology of National Socialism.

From a historical perspective it is more important, however, that Jewish and African-American athletes were able to leave their mark on the Games. This also could not have been desired by the Hitler regime. The successes of the athletes had different effects on their respective communities due to the strategies of Jewish and African-American leaders with regard to

¹⁰ Wolfgang Wippermann and Ute Brucker-Boroujerdi, "Nationalsozialistische Zwangslager in Berlin III. Das "Zigeunerlager" Marzahn," in: *Berlin-Forschungen II* (Berlin: Colloquium, 1987), pp. 189-201.

¹¹ "Der Burgfrieden der Betrogenen," *Neuer Vorwärts*, 26 July 1936.

¹² See A. Krüger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936*, pp. 142-51 206-12; Deborah Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust* (New York and London: Free Press, 1986), pp. 63-85; Ewald Grothe, "Die Olympischen Spiele von 1936 - Höhepunkt der NS-Propaganda?" *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 59, Nos. 5/6 (2008), 291-307. On foreign media reports and their assessment by the Nazis, see Jürgen Bellers, ed., *Die Olympiade Berlin 1936 im Spiegel der ausländischen Presse* (Münster: LIT, 1986); Hans Joachim Teichler, *Internationale Sportpolitik im Dritten Reich* (Schorn-dorf: Hofmann, 1991), pp. 163-84. Germans were not allowed to speak to foreign journalists without permission from the OC.

the social function of sports. Among Jews the most important function was advancing the self-image of "strong" Jews in order to overcome the stereotype of the "weak" Jew in light of a dramatically accelerating anti-Semitism. For African Americans the main concern was to improve their social status within US society via athletic achievements.

A total of nine male and female Jews won Olympic gold in Berlin. This was a close second to the eleven gold medals won by Jews at the 1928 Amsterdam Games. They were particularly successful in fencing. Gold medalists Ilona Elek from Hungary, Helene Mayer from Germany, and Ellen Preis from Austria were all either fully or "partially" Jewish. Endre Kabos won a gold medal in individual saber competition and also belonged to the victorious Hungarian saber team. Hungarian Jewish Olympic champions also included the high jumper Ibolya Csák, the water polo players György Bródy and Miklos Sárkány and the wrestlers Károly Kárpáti and Marton Lörincz. The weightlifter Robert Fein became Olympic champion for Austria. Samuel Balter belonged to the victorious US basketball team. Other Jewish participants were among the top competitors: Jadwiga Wajs from Poland won a silver medal in discus throwing, the Austrian Viktor Kalisch a silver medal in canoeing and the Canadian Irving Maretzky in basketball, Árpád Lengyel won a bronze medal with the Hungarian swim relay (4x200 meters free style), as did Gérard Blitz with the Belgian water polo team.¹³

Few Olympic visitors and athletes were aware of how many Jewish medalists there were at the Games. The successes of Jewish athletes were mainly registered "internally."¹⁴

In distinction to Jewish participants it was always easy to recognize African-Americans as such. For them participation in the Games symbolized a breakthrough in international recognition. This was the case particularly for the Olympic champions Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalfe in sprint and long jump, Cornelius Johnson in high jump, as well as Archie Williams and John Woodruff in 400 and 800 meters races.

The German public celebrated Jesse Owens, the hero of the Games. His outstanding achievements, which brought him four gold medals as

¹³ See Taylor, *Jews and the Olympic Games*, pp. 106-07 (plus supplements).

¹⁴ For a general discussion, see Gideon Reuveni and Michael Brenner, eds., *Emancipation Trough Muscles: Jews and Sport in Europe* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 2006). The Berlin Games are not discussed specifically, however.

a sprinter and long jumper, as well as his skin color rendered the Nazi "Aryan" ideal absurd. "Hitler declared Aryan supremacy by decree, ... but Jesse Owens is proving him a liar by degrees" reported the Washington Post in play on words.¹⁵ The anticipated presentation of "Nordic" beauty as expression of the National Socialist's idea of power was shown its limits in Owens's athletic dominance.

Further additions to the Olympic chronicle were Matthew ("Mack") Robinson, second in the 200-meter race (and brother of the baseball star Jackie Robinson); David Albritton, second in high jump; as well as James Lu Valle and Frederick Pollard, bronze medalists in 400 meter and 400 meter hurdle.¹⁶ Boxer Jack Wilson achieved the same with his silver medal in the bantamweight class. Overall, ten of the nineteen African-American competitors won fourteen medals, eight of them gold.¹⁷ In addition there was the Afro-Canadian physician, Dr. Philip Edwards, who won his fifth (!) bronze medal in the 800-meter race at the 1936 Games.¹⁸

The successes of black Olympic icons and also of the boxer Joe Louis did much to shake up race "theories", not only in Germany. Social reasons, and not supposed "Negroid" characteristics, motivated African Americans to such high achievements.¹⁹ Contemporary studies rightly argued that their concentration in track and field was due to the relatively low financial costs involved.²⁰

Several decades later John Woodruff stated that he could not remember any type of doors opening for Black athletes after their victories. "After the Olympics, we had a track meet to run at Annapolis, at the Naval Academy. Now here I am, an Olympic champion, and they told the coach that I couldn't run. I couldn't come. So I had to stay home, because of discrimination. That let me know just what the situation was. Things hadn't changed."²¹

¹⁵ Shirley Povich, "This Morning..." Washington Post, 5 August 1936.

¹⁶ As a renowned chemist, James Lu Valle became a member of the group of researchers that developed methods of producing color films at Kodak Company.

¹⁷ In 1924, African Americans won three medals, in 1928 none, and in 1932 five medals. See Ashe, *Hard Road to Glory*, p. 69.

¹⁸ Edwards became an expert in research of tropical diseases.

¹⁹ David K. Wiggins, "Great Speed But Little Stamina": The Historical Debate over Black Athletic Superiority," Pope, ed., *The New American Sport History*, pp. 312-38.

²⁰ See Maurice R. Davie, *Negroes in American Society* (New York, Toronto, and London: McGraw-Hill 1949), p. 380.

²¹ As quoted from the website exhibition in the US Holocaust Museum. Transcript under:

Even Olympic champions had a difficult time being accepted in the dominant society. Black commentators found only fleeting signs of recognition in the praise of "white" media and argued that African Americans needed to prove that they were competitive outside a sports stadium. However, black athletes were shown a great level of recognition outside of the United States.²² The successes of black athletes undoubtedly had a positive effect on the level of self-confidence among African Americans, as they grew increasingly aware that there was no need to be ashamed of their skin color or origin.²³

African-American athletes—as well as musicians such as Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington—laid the foundation for successive generations to take decisive steps forward and not to be content with symbolic successes.²⁴ Social equality was not tied to such outstanding individual achievements, but rather to the collective action necessary to force equal rights inside their own country. In the turbulent year 1968, black athletes and musicians protested both visually and audibly against the ongoing lack of equality. They thus became an important part of the civil rights movement, which finally achieved the formal equality of African Americans after years of struggle, even if their indirect social neglect continues to be an unresolved issue.

The important contributions of African Americans in culture, sports, as well as in the general life of American society were openly acknowledged in 1976. It was in that year that the US Congress elevated Black History Month from a private initiative to the rank of a public memorial month. The congressional representative who played a decisive role in this was a member of the Democratic Party from the State of Illinois, none other than

www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/olympics/detail.php?content=aa_athletes&lang=en (viewed on February 8, 2011).

²² Reports posted from Berlin by the African American (and Left) press made much of the fact that Black athletes were being celebrated there while they were not allowed to carry out joint competitions with Whites in the American South. See Wiggins, "The 1936 Olympic Games," p. 290.

²³ This assertion ultimately rests on the results of a large sociological study carried out by Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers 1944) with an explicit reference to Jesse Owens (and Joe Louis). See *Ibid.*, p. 734.

²⁴ This objective role of athletes and musicians is irrespective of the fact that Owens, for example, did not participate in the civil rights movement (until 1972).

Berlin Olympic Champion Ralph Metcalfe.

Long before the starting shot was fired in Berlin the Games stood at the intersection of politics and sports. They continue to be tied to an unparalleled instrumentalization by a racist regime, to the supporting role played by the international athletic leadership, to the failed boycott movement, and the non-participation of many Jewish athletes. All of these factors make the 1936 Summer Games unique.

These Games were undoubtedly Games of the Nazis. But they were more than just that, because they gave witness to the abilities even of a decimated Jewish sport. Even more so, they became a turning point in the collective consciousness of African Americans. They showed themselves to the world as winners and no longer in the previously assigned role as losers. It was thus that the Berlin Games, completely contrary to the will of their organizers, became a springboard for a minority on its long path to social emancipation.

Translated by Brigitte H. Schulz and Douglass Karl Hansen

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