

CHRONOS

The History Journal of
Yeshiva University

2020-2021

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

iv	Welcome Letter
1	Yonatan U. Kurz <i>A Linchpin of the Upper East Side: The Evolution of Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun and Its Surroundings</i>
14	Allie Matofsky <i>Who was Living at the Qumran Site?</i>
25	Zachary Ottenstein <i>The Boston Massacre in the American Collective Memory</i>
37	Natan Pittinsky <i>The Transformation of Porcelain in Pre-Revolutionary France</i>
44	Joshua Polster <i>Runic Alphabet: The History of Futhark</i>
52	Shoshana Rockoff <i>Leaving a Legacy: The Impact of Daring to be Different</i>
59	<i>Faculty Contribution</i> Professor Jeffrey Freedman <i>The Dangers Within: Fears of Imprisonment in Enlightenment France</i>
91	Picture Credits

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 edition of *Chronos: The History Journal of Yeshiva University*. For over a decade, *Chronos* has served as a forum dedicated to the dissemination of student research on a broad range of subjects within the realm of history.

A number of this edition's articles were submitted for publication in the 2019-2020 edition of *Chronos*; unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that edition never saw the light of day. We mention this only to leave a record for future readers that indeed, we live in historical times. As the COVID-19 pandemic tragically took millions of lives throughout the world, many were faced with a sense of despair in the face of "these unprecedented times." However, the study of history can serve as a source of comfort by teaching that these times are *not* unprecedented. Past pandemics, such as the Black Death in the fourteenth century and the Spanish Flu in 1918, were not only more deadly, but also spurred conversations that have continued to this day.

To give one example: at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDC and other public health organizations recommended against individuals wearing masks as a preventative measure, due in part to wide-spread face-mask shortages. Some public health officials even called the practice ineffective. But a century earlier, in the Spanish Flu pandemic, masks were recognized as an effective method of reducing disease transmission. The related question of whether health officials should focus their efforts on promoting mask-wearing, enforcing quarantine, or vaccine efforts sounds like a current public-policy question—but it was previously debated among doctors of the American Public Health Association in December 1918, as reported by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. When we learn the lessons of history, we do more than just save ourselves the trouble of repeating it. We gain a greater appreciation for the human experience.

We would like to extend our thanks to the authors of these papers. This issue's articles are fascinating, important, span the gamut of history, and are a testament to the high caliber of student scholarship at Yeshiva University. We would also like to thank Professor Jeffrey Freedman for once again gracing *Chronos* with his faculty contribution.

Additionally, we are grateful to the Dean's Office of Yeshiva University for their continued, enthusiastic financial and academic support of *Chronos*. We acknowledge the efforts of Meirah Shedlo, who shared valuable advice; Moshe Hecht, who coordinated photo credits; and Deborah Coopersmith, who assisted with copyediting. We thank our partners at Advanced Copy Center, Inc. Finally, we extend our sincere gratitude to Dr. Hadassah Kosak, our faculty advisor, for her unwavering support and guidance.

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

Sincerely,

David Tanner
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CHRONOS

A Linchpin of the Upper East Side: The Evolution of Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun and Its Surroundings

Yonatan U. Kurz

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, a group of citizens founded an Orthodox “chevra for divine worship,” forming a synagogue¹ in the neighborhood of Yorkville in 1872,² establishing it at 127 East 82nd Street near the division line between New York and Harlem Common, and calling it Anshe Jeshurun. Eventually, the synagogue was renamed Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun and moved to a larger building on East 85th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues in 1905, where it has continued to serve the Orthodox Jews of the Upper East Side for the past 115 years. Despite the rapid progression of culture and evolution of the Upper East Side over the last century and a half, the synagogue has not only remained among the most illustrious synagogues in North America as well as a paradigm of Modern Orthodox Judaism, but has also served as a reflection of the sociological and cultural development of one of the most prominent neighborhoods in America, cementing its status as a cornerstone of the neighborhood to this very day.

In the early days of Anshe Jeshurun, the synagogue was located in a mostly residential area with many houses of worship. An 1896 map of the region³ reveals that the building on East 82nd Street was surrounded by residential dumbbell tenements ranging from three to five stories high, the buildings mostly brick with an exception of a few constructions consisting of iron or at least

¹Jenna Weissman Joselit, “Modern Orthodox Jews and the Ordeal of Civility,” *American Jewish History* 74, no. 2 (1984): 136, accessed May 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23890463>.

² N. H. Society and K. T. Jackson, *The Encyclopedia of New York City: Second Edition*, vol. 2 (Yale University Press, 2010)

³ Sanborn Map Co., “Manhattan, V. 8, Double Page Plate No. 156 [Map bounded by E. 83rd St., 3rd Ave., E. 78th St., 5th Ave.],” Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library Digital Collections, 1896, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/94a5096f-b49a-99ac-e040-e00a18064df1>.



Men praying in the main sanctuary of Kehilath Jeshurun

iron frames. Down the street was a fire alarm box in case of emergencies and a livery stable, where horse owners would pay a weekly or monthly fee to keep their horses, serving as a parking garage of sorts. Within a two-block radius of the synagogue was an industrial home, two chapels and convents, an infirmary, an industrial home, and an Episcopal church called Church of the Holy Redeemer, complete with stone walls and a slate roof; clearly, there was a strong Christian presence in the area. Nonetheless, the Upper East Side became a coruscating hotspot for Jewish European immigrants eager to acculturate and scale the social ladder; with over 75,000 Jews, it had quickly turned into the home for what was considered to be “the highest economic class among the Russian Jewry of New York City, the bourgeoisie, the well-to-do and the distinctly Conservative.”⁴ Major stalwarts of New York Jewry took residence in the area, including Harry Fischel and the Jarmulowsky family, pushing the affluence of the community even further.

Times were rapidly changing, and the mostly-Eastern-European congregation of Anshe Jeshurun needed to change as well. The synagogue chose to “Americanize” their name, changing from “Anshe” to a more adaptive “Kehilath Jeshurun,” and constructed a massive complex in 1902 that could seat nine hundred people. The structure, which was designed by George F. Pelham and mixed Byzantine and Romanesque styles,⁵ was located between the famed Park and Lexington Avenues on East 85th Street; the relocation three years later was a symbolic manifestation of the burgeoning Upper East Side at the turn of the twentieth century, displaying both the opulence and observance of the local Jewish community.

⁴ Isaac Berkson, *Theories of Americanization* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1920), 1.

⁵ David W. Dunlap, “Damaged Synagogue is an Architectural Milestone Too,” *New York Times*, July 13, 2011, <https://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/13/damaged-synagogue-is-an-architectural-milestone-too/?mtrref=undefined&gwh=3751A4EB542F8DB044F830E8D8760B2A&gwt=pay&assetType=PAYWALL>.

Once the newly renamed Kehilath Jeshurun had made the transition to East 85th Street, they found themselves nestled in the heart of the Upper East Side, surrounded by a neighborhood of tremendous variety. According to a map from 1911,⁶ the synagogue was surrounded by a Girard-Perregaux⁷ watch store as well as a German Aschenbroedel Verein (a renaissance club of sorts),⁸ “Public School No. 6” and Yorkville’s local theater and bank. A notable local landmark of the neighborhood was the New York Turn Verein, a German-American club that devoted itself to German culture, physical culture, and liberal politics; however, it also held anti-Semitic sentiments, serving as “headquarters for the pro-Nazi German-American Bund” and often marching down the block,⁹ “shouting into megaphones about getting rid of the Jews.”¹⁰ The block of East 85th Street quickly evolved, with several three- and four-story buildings combining to form larger edifices, including the School Sisters of the Helpers of the Holy Souls and the Yorkville Talmud Torah School as their new next-door neighbors; these nearby buildings ranged from 58 to 98 feet elevation “over high water,” and one building even reached as high as six stories. The neighborhood evolved as well, transitioning from having a strong foundation of dumbbell tenements into having more rectangular structures in addition to the installation of the city’s first

⁶ G. W. Bromley & Co., “Plate 30: Bounded by Fifth Avenue, E. 97th Street, Second Avenue, and E.83rd Street, Pincus and Firyal Map Division, NYPL Digital Collections, 1911, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-0975-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>.

⁷ A luxury Swiss watch manufacturer, known as a top-tier Kering brand.

⁸ Jay Shockley, *New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Report*, November 17, 2009, <http://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/lp/2328.pdf>.

⁹ Jonathan Mark, “Rabbi Lookstein Remembers It Well,” *New York Jewish Week*, June 11, 2008, <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/rabbi-lookstein-remembers-it-well/>.

¹⁰ Benjamin Weiser and Noah Rosenberg, “100 Years of Staying Put,” *New York Times*, April 27, 2012, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/29/nyregion/east-84th-street-as-it-was-and-as-it-is.html>.

subway line,¹¹ upgrading physically and structurally as the rest of the neighborhood underwent a cultural modernization.

With such transitions, the people of Kehilath Jeshurun naturally wanted to modernize as well. Many proclaimed a public desire to provide “an enlightened orthodoxy, with a clean, decorous service”¹² and relatable clergymen to drive the adolescents and young adults out of the reform temples and into the Orthodox synagogues. This led to the firing of Rabbi Meyer Joshua Peikes, a traditional Yiddish-speaking rabbi who had been hired in 1885 but was ultimately considered “too Eastern European” for the congregation.¹³ To balance the demands of the younger demographic while also appeasing the elderly congregants, the synagogue hired a new graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary named Mordecai Kaplan to give English sermons and bridge the gap between religion and modernity, as well as Herbert Goldstein,¹⁴ a fellow JTS alum who had been ordained by the vice president of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis.¹⁵ However, both rabbis would eventually leave for more prominent roles, as Kaplan would have a short-lived stint as inaugural rabbi at the Jewish Center for three years and founder of the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, while Goldstein went on to create the West Side Institutional Synagogue.¹⁶ Kehilath Jeshurun also took on a Russian rabbi of strong European heritage named Rabbi Moses Z.

¹¹ Operated by the Interborough Rapid Transit Company.

¹² *Hebrew Standard*, May 9, 1902; *American Hebrew*, May 2 and 9, 1902; September 30, 1904.

¹³ Mel Scult, *Judaism Faces the Twentieth Century: A Biography of Mordecai M. Kaplan* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 66.

¹⁴ Aaron I. Reichel, “Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein: The Pioneering Rabbi Jewish Action,” *Jewish Action*, Fall 2013, <https://jewishaction.com/jewish-world/history/rabbi-herbert-s-goldstein-the-pioneering-rabbi/>.

¹⁵ Bernard L. Shientag, “Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein: A Character Study by a Congregant,” *Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun Diamond Jubilee* (New York: Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun, 1946), 53-57.

¹⁶ “WSIS History,” Website of the West Side Institutional Synagogue, accessed May 16, 2021, <https://www.wsisny.org/wsis-history.htm>.

Margolies to be the halakhic decisor and give the Yiddish sermons, which would target the senior demographic while preserving traditional Orthodox values. Margolies also demonstrated a willingness to collaborate with people of very different religious orientations, understanding the relative diversity of the neighborhood as a whole. As the Upper East Side lurched forward in all aspects into vogue contemporaneity, Kehilath Jeshurun strove to find its balance, which proved to not be a simple task. However, a major change would come in 1923, when a young twenty-one-year-old scaled the pulpit, marking the dawn of a new era at 117 East 85th Street.

At the beginning of the Roaring Twenties, Kehilath Jeshurun decided to hire Rabbi Margolies' grandson-in-law, Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein, to serve as the junior rabbi. Lookstein was the epitome of the "Modern Orthodox Dream": a graduate of City College with a Master's degree in sociology from Columbia, along with a Jewish education from Rabbi Jacob Joseph School and rabbinic ordination in 1926 from Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), he functioned as a seamless combination of Eastern European heritage, American education, and vigorous traditionalism. During his tenure both as a junior rabbi and then senior rabbi upon the death of Margolies in 1936, Lookstein reinstated a culture of staunch religiosity within the congregation by providing ushers and instituting major dress code requirements for both the clergy (homburgs and frock coats) and the congregants (a black yarmulke of silk, a tie, and a jacket). However, he also did his best to ensure that it would be an accommodating experience for the members by removing *piyutim* [liturgical poems] deemed long and obsolescent, as well as traditions like *shnuddering*,¹⁷ a common practice in synagogues where participants would loudly make a public donation during the service. Stuck with the decision of having his synagogue embrace modernity or Orthodoxy, Lookstein resolved to achieve both, adjusting to the zeitgeist

¹⁷ *Hebrew Standard*, December 29, 1905.

while simultaneously preserving the core religious tenets. He also proved to be a master of the art of sermons, becoming a homiletics professor in Yeshiva University while adopting techniques from an array of sources ranging from distinguished Christian preachers to the Union Theological Seminary. These homilies became the cornerstone of both his stature as well as that of the synagogue's, and the Kehilath Jeshurun pulpit continued to rise meteorically through the ranks of American synagogues.

As the 1920s and 1930s in New York City continued to roar on, with culture and social scenes standing at the forefront, Lookstein realized that the synagogue needed more programming to maintain a presence in a time dominated by flappers and speakeasies. He convinced the administration to develop separate clubs for the male and female members, in addition to an organization for the youth (and Boy Scouts and Girl Scout organizations¹⁸), an adult education institute, and celebrations for even American holidays, ushering the congregation into the Modern Age with a sense of sophistication and tradition. This allowed Kehilath Jeshurun to compete with Broadway for the attention of synagogue members, forming a social opportunity for all members and an ability to form a tight-knit community within the Upper East Side.

However, the biggest addition to the community during this era was Rabbi Lookstein's creation of the Ramaz Academy in the fall of 1937,¹⁹ using the initials of Rabbi Margolies (who had passed away the year before) as the namesake for the school. With multiple local middle and high schools, including Regis High School and Public School No. 37, it was only a matter of time before the Jewish community formed their own educational center, as there were other religious

¹⁸ *Kehilath Jeshurun Bulletin* (New York: Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun, January 27, 1939), 2, <https://digital.library.yu.edu/object/digital1761>.

¹⁹ *Kehilath Jeshurun Bulletin* (October 1, 1937), 3, <https://digital.library.yu.edu/object/digital1708>.

schools in the neighborhood, including St. Ignatius School on East 83rd Street between Madison and Park Avenues. Lookstein had expressed a strong discomfort with the schooling system in place, where Jewish studies were taught in the morning and public school teachers would teach secular studies late in the afternoon at the fifteen Jewish day schools in New York (mostly in poor neighborhoods),²⁰ and he provided his vision of a yeshiva day school that harmoniously synthesized a yeshiva education and an American one. While this conceptualization was initially met with discomfort and objections of people who had an aversion to the concept of a “religious school,” the congregation agreed to follow Rabbi Lookstein, with the synagogue housing the first class of only six children (including his son, Haskel). However, the school rapidly expanded, growing to seventy-one students the year after, forcing a lease and eventual purchase of the Central Jewish Institute building down the block that they had been renting rooms from. Eventually, a building near the corner of Madison Avenue and East 82nd Street was purchased to be used exclusively for the high school, proving Lookstein, now the senior rabbi of Kehilath Jeshurun, to be a visionary yet again.

By the mid-1950s, both Kehilath Jeshurun and the Upper East Side had undergone major changes. The tenement apartments and early-century structures along with the skinny three-story buildings had consolidated into much larger edifices; in fact, on East 85th Street, there were multiple instances of four different buildings combining into one large structure between the years of 1921 and 1956.²¹ One major example of a structural change with cultural significance was the transformation of the NY Railroads Co. into the Croydon, a luxury residential hotel that was built

²⁰ “Our History,” Website of the Ramaz School, accessed May 16, 2021, <https://www.ramaz.org/page.cfm?p=512>.

²¹ G. W. Bromley & Co., “Plate 114, Part of Section 5,” Pincus and Firyal Map Division, NYPL Digital Collections, 1955-1956, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/ede9d750-472d-0132-4b07-58d385a7b928>.

in 1932. Moreover, culture became a major focal point of the neighborhood, with a YMCA and a Proctors 86th Street theatre added together with the already existing Loews Orpheum Theatre, Yorkville Theater, and Rhinelander hotel. Due to the advancement of automobiles, numerous garages popped up throughout the Upper East Side, with fourteen of them being built in a three-block radius of Kehilath Jeshurun, as well as a full-on expansion of the FDR Drive²² into a full parkway spanning over 110 blocks of Manhattan.

The synagogue had made some major physical alterations as well, changing its address from 117 to 117-125 East 85th Street in the summer of 1945 (going on to change it to 125 in the fall of 1961 some fifteen years later). It also brought in a myriad of assistant rabbis to deliver sermons and services alongside Rabbi Lookstein, who had become head of the Rabbinical Council of America and the New York Board of Rabbis in addition to serving as a board member of an array of Jewish and Zionist organizations.²³ Some of these men, including Sol Roth and Norman Lamm, who would eventually go on to lead eminent New York City synagogues of their own, got their start as associates in Kehilath Jeshurun, which served as a major stepping stone for men aspiring to be in the pulpit and was quickly becoming the flagship synagogue of the city.

However, the most important assistant rabbi installed in the synagogue was a newly-ordained Rabbi Haskel Lookstein, who had just received RIETS ordination to accompany his bachelor's and master's degree from Columbia and Yeshiva University, respectively. The junior Lookstein had turned down the opportunity to take on pulpits in both Detroit and Cedarhurst in

²² "FDR Drive," Website of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, December 20, 2001, <https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/history/historical-signs/listings?id=12179>.

²³ Wolfgang Saxon, "Joseph H. Lookstein Dead at 76; A Rabbi and Orthodox Educator," *New York Times*, July 15, 1979, <https://www.nytimes.com/1979/07/15/archives/film-upcoming-shorts-from-9-independents.html#:~:text=Rabbi%20Joseph%20Hyman%20Lookstein%2C%20a,He%20was%2076%20years%20old>.

order to serve under his father and was proving to be an emerging star, serving as a leader on many local boards and taking on the forefront of several movements, including the Soviet Jewry coalition and the national Synagogue Council. He also demonstrated a penchant for tackling contemporary social issues and synthesizing them with Torah values; in fact, the *New York Times* even profiled a sermon of his connecting the Civil Rights Movement and Parshat *Behar*.²⁴ This was taken as a sign that the prodigious son was willing to bear the brunt of leading Orthodoxy in the modern world and guide his congregants in what proved to be a rapidly changing cultural landscape in the Upper East Side, which had lost none of its elegance or glamour over the years; nicknamed the “Silk Stocking District,” it continued to be a major cultural hub, attracting extravagant and sophisticated shoppers and visitors from across the Tri-State Area to shop and explore.

Towards the end of the 1970s, a significant transition took place, with Rabbi Haskel Lookstein taking over his father’s post upon the senior Rabbi Lookstein’s untimely passing in 1979. While there were major shoes to fill, the son showed no signs of discomfort in his role as senior rabbi, having already taken over as principal of the Ramaz School thirteen years earlier, which had reached an enrollment of over 800 students and was constructing a new building on East 78th Street. Immediately, Lookstein took note of issues within his congregation and ventured to address them most optimally. One such example was R. Haskel’s “intense promotion of fidelity to halakha”:²⁵ due to concern that the working men lacked a proper allotment of Torah, Rabbi Hershel Schachter was hired in the 1980s to give *shiurim* to both men and women on various tractates of Talmud, Parsha, and halakha. This initiative proved to be successful in bringing

²⁴ “Talmud Is Called Civil Rights Guide; Rabbi Cites Relevancy for Social Problems Today,” *New York Times*, May 15, 1966.

²⁵ Adam S. Ferziger, “The Lookstein Legacy: An American Orthodox Rabbinical Dynasty?,” *Jewish History*, 13, no. 1 (1999): 27–149, accessed May 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20101362>.

congregants together from a social aspect as well; in fact, a *shidduch* [arranged marriage] was made by an attendee for his daughter to another one of the attendees.²⁶ It also provided an alternative option for the congregants to spend the night, as opposed to the multitude of cultural centers nearby, including the posh boutique stores littered across Madison Avenue, the 92nd Street Y, the Guggenheim, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The younger Rabbi Lookstein also continued to promote political activism, urging KJ families and Ramaz students to rally in front of the Soviet embassy, and even getting arrested at one such demonstration by local police in 1985. He took on several other positions of leadership, including becoming president of the Synagogue Council of America, vice president of the Beth Din of America, and head of the national United Jewish Appeal Rabbinic Cabinet, among other roles. People would flock to Kehilath Jeshurun to hear his sermons, and it seemed to be the perfect match: a leading rabbi of great eminence, taking the pulpit of one of the most in vogue neighborhoods in the most popular city in the world.

As years passed, the Upper East Side and Kehilath Jeshurun remained incredibly popular, both from a cultural and social perspective. Dozens of books, movies, and television shows were set in the area, including *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Sex and the City*, and *American Psycho*, making it the epicenter of all the glamour and dazzle that New York City was known for across the world. While the buildings remained in place without much change, so did the level of grandeur in the neighborhood, with swanky apartments housing beautiful and spacious antique rooms at lofty prices. It was the place to be if you were well-to-do with a heightened sense of sophistication, and the synagogue was of excellent service to such a niche, combining exemplary programming along

²⁶ In March 2021, I spoke to Rabbi Hershel Schachter about his experiences in Kehilath Jeshurun.

with venerable scholars. The trend of prominent New York City clergymen getting their start in Kehilath Jeshurun continued throughout the 21st century, with Rabbis Mark Dratch, Mark Wildes, and Meir Soloveichik gracing the secondary pulpit position, along with many incredibly illustrious congregants filling the seats, including George Rohr and the real-estate magnate Kushner family,²⁷ matching the upper-class regality that the Upper East Side had adorned itself with.

However, tragedy struck in 2011, when a four-alarm fire ripped through the synagogue three months into a four-million-dollar renovation project,²⁸ collapsing the roof and damaging the stability of the building, including several of the upper floors. Fortunately, the structure as a whole remained intact, and while services were moved to the neighboring Temple Emanu-El and Park Avenue Synagogue in the interim, the synagogue returned to a newly renovated and rededicated nine-story building four years later. This reopening coincided with a major changing of the guard, as Rabbi Lookstein, who had been selected by Newsweek magazine as the most influential Orthodox pulpit rabbi in the United States in 2008, took emeritus roles at both Ramaz and Kehilath Jeshurun, with Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz taking over the latter post; for the first time in 110 years, a rabbi from outside of the Lookstein/Margolies family led the pulpit of the storied synagogue. Nonetheless, with Rabbi Lookstein maintaining a significant role and Rabbi Jeremy Wieder, one of the youngest appointed *roshei yeshiva* in the history of RIETS, serving as its Rabbinic Scholar, the synagogue remained a staple of Modern Orthodox Jewry in New York City.

Upon visiting present-day Kehilath Jeshurun,²⁹ one will notice the variety of buildings that

²⁷ Uriel Heilman, “Celebrated NY Shul to Begin New Era with 'Outsider' Rabbi,” *Times of Israel*, August 4, 2015, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/trump-daughters-shul-to-begin-new-era-with-outsider-rabbi/>.

²⁸ “Fire Devastates Old Manhattan Synagogue,” *Jewish News of Northern California*, July 15, 2011, <https://www.jweekly.com/2011/07/15/fire-devastates-old-manhattan-synagogue/>.

²⁹ I visited the block on February 26, 2021.

surround the synagogue. Aside from a variety of eateries, their neighbors on the block include the Ramaz Middle School (which now covers kindergarten to twelfth grade and has over six thousand alumni), some financial institutions, and several foundations, as well as several other decades-old mainstays, such as the Park Avenue Methodist Church. Although Kehilath Jeshurun finds itself enveloped by countless structures ranging from dozens of stories high to skyscrapers, it nonetheless remains in the center of one of the most affluent neighborhoods in New York City, with the greatest concentration of individual wealth in Manhattan. As the Upper East Side remains a hub of opulence, affluence, and worldliness, the synagogue has managed to gracefully adapt and adjust over the decades while retaining its religious tenets and principles, refusing to let Orthodoxy fall by the wayside to modernity. Ultimately, Kehilath Jeshurun's ability to acculturate and acclimatize to the perpetual evolution of the Upper East Side on a structural, intellectual, cultural, and communal level is what has enabled the synagogue to remain a religious pillar of one of the most prominent neighborhoods in New York City, where it will continue to serve as a major linchpin for years to come.

Who was Living at the Qumran Site?

Allie Matofsky

There has been much debate as to which group of people lived at the Qumran site and wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls. The majority opinion of ancient writers, such as Pliny the Elder and Josephus, as well as many modern scholars like James C. VanderKam, Magen Broshi, and Eleazar Sukenik, is that the Essene sect lived at the Qumran site. Despite the overwhelming evidence in support of the “Essene Hypothesis,”¹ which states that the Essene sect lived at the Qumran site, there are those who think otherwise. Some, like Lawrence Schiffman, are of the opinion (due to discrepancies in the Essene Hypothesis) that a different group lived at Qumran—the Sadducees. Another theory, held by academics like Norman Golb, is that no one lived at Qumran, rather Jews from Jerusalem used the site to hide their scrolls from the Romans in caves. The goal of this paper is to understand the different perspectives as to who the inhabitants at Qumran were.

In James C. VanderKam’s award winning work *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, he writes about various different topics related to the Dead Sea Scrolls as well as the Dead Sea Sect living at Qumran. In chapter three of his book, “The Identification of the Qumran Group,” VanderKam focuses on the Essene Hypothesis, which he believes to be the accurate one. He brings in various different proofs to support his argument. In support of his claim, VanderKam brings in evidence from Dr. Eleazar Sukenik, an Israeli archaeologist and professor at Hebrew University who was an early scholar of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Sukenik purchased some of the Dead Sea Scrolls from an antiques dealer in 1947, and was the first to determine that the Essene sect lived at Qumran. He found his proof from the “Rule of the Community, which defined the way for a wilderness

¹ Jonathan Klawans, “The Essene Hypothesis: Insights from Religion 101,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 23, no. 1 (2016): 51, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685179-12341373>.



Qumran caves in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered

sect.”² Sukenik believed that the Essenes inhabited this area “because he knew that ancient sources placed a band of Essenes on the west side of the Dead Sea near En-Gedi.”³

Sukenik most likely got his information from a section in Pliny the Elder’s work *Natural History*. Pliny the Elder and Josephus were two famous ancient writers who wrote about the Essenes at Qumran. Pliny the Elder was a Roman geographer who lived from 23-79 C.E. He wrote a book titled *Natural History*, in which he writes of “places and items of interest throughout the Roman world and beyond.”⁴ In one of the sections of his book he writes of Essenes who lived to the west of the Dead Sea. He states that “the solitary tribe of the Essenes, which is remarkable beyond all other tribes in the whole world, as it has no women and has renounced all sexual desires, has no money, and has only palm trees for company.”⁵ He also states that En-Gedi was south of the community. According to VanderKam, many scholars determined that the only possible location Pliny is referring to is Qumran. While there are some discrepancies in Pliny’s evidence, the overwhelming proof that Pliny provides makes it clear that the Essenes were in fact living at Qumran.

Josephus as well as other ancient writers mentioned that Essene practices are referenced in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Essenes had a unique viewpoint on determinism, the nonuse of oil, bodily functions, spitting and other topics. These topics are found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and help determine that the Essenes lived at Qumran. VanderKam also adduces support for the Essene Hypothesis from theological writings found at Qumran. In Josephus, *Antiquities* XIII, “The Sects and God’s Role in Human Affairs,” he writes that three different Jewish schools of thought existed

² James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010), 97.

³ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁵ *Ibid.*

at this time, each with its own theology of free will: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Josephus states that determinism was a heated topic about which the Pharisees, Sadducees and the Essenes vehemently disagreed. The Sadducees believed that man is in complete control over his destiny, while the Pharisees held that man is in control over some things and not others. Finally, the Essenes believed that nothing is in man's control and that fate is only in God's hands. The Essene belief is referenced in the Thanksgiving Scroll and, therefore, helps prove that the Essenes were living at Qumran. In Hymn 6 lines 3-7 it states that "By Thy wisdom [all things exist from] eternity, and before creating them Thou knewest their works for ever and ever. [Nothing] is done [without thee] and nothing is known unless Thou desire it."⁶ This proves that the Essene theology matched what was found in the Thanksgiving Scroll found near Qumran.

Aside from theology, there were many practices that set the Essenes apart from other sects. These practices are mentioned in the scrolls found at Qumran and help prove the Essenes were living there. Josephus discusses the idea that the Essenes refrained from putting oil on their bodies because they believed it to be impure, without explaining why He writes "Oil [the Essenes] considered defiling, and anyone who accidentally comes into contact with it scours his person; for they make a point of keeping a dry skin and of always being dressed in white."⁷ The Essenes also distinguished themselves from other Jewish sects through their view on bodily functions. According to Josephus, "the Essenes are stricter than all Jews in abstaining from work on the seventh day... they do not venture to remove any vessel or even go to stool."⁸ According to the War Scroll, "there shall be a space of about two thousand cubits between all their camps for the

⁶ Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin, 2011), 258.

⁷ Flavius Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.123, quoted in VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 108.

⁸ VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 112.

place serving as a latrine, so that no indecent nakedness may be seen in the surrounding camps.”⁹ These instructions are more explicit than what was originally written in Deuteronomy, where it states that “thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad. And thou shalt have a paddle among thy weapons; and it shall be, when thou sittest down abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee.” (Deuteronomy 23:13-14) The Essenes added the two-thousand-cubit requirement.

Josephus and the Community Rule both discuss the concept of spitting. Even though this is a seemingly minor topic, the fact that it is referenced in two sources proves its relevance in determining that the Essenes lived in Qumran. Josephus writes that “they are careful not to spit into the midst of the company or to the right.”¹⁰ Additionally, the Rule of the Community states that “Whoever has spat in an Assembly of the Congregation shall do penance for thirty days.”¹¹ According to VanderKam, it is unclear why spitting, a minor detail, is mentioned in both places. However, what is clear is that this topic is associated with the Essene sect.

There are a few holes in the Essene Hypothesis which VanderKam addresses in his work. For instance, there is no mention of the name “Essene” anywhere in the Dead Sea Scrolls. VanderKam responds to this claim by stating, “to say that the name does not occur in the Scrolls presupposes that we would recognize it if we saw it. But if we don’t know what the Hebrew or Aramaic term for Essene was, why should anyone claim that it is not in the Scrolls?”¹² Additionally, there are those who argue that a possible definition of Essene comes from the word “doers.”¹³ Therefore, one can infer that “doers” means “doers of Torah,” which is in fact

⁹ Ibid., 113.

¹⁰ Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.147, quoted in VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 113.

¹¹ Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 108.

¹² VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 118.

¹³ Ibid.

mentioned in the Qumran text.

Another discrepancy in the “Essene Hypothesis” is the role of women and marriage at Qumran. Pliny mentions that the Essene sect living at Qumran “has no women and has renounced all sexual desire.”¹⁴ Josephus writes that they were against marriage but did adopt male children. However, there was another group of Essenes who believed “that those who decline to marry cut off the chief function of life, the propagation of the race... the whole race would very quickly die out.”¹⁵ Josephus argues that this sect did have wives, but “they have no intercourse with them during pregnancy, thus showing that their motive in marrying is not self-indulgence but the procreation of children.”¹⁶ The Community Rule also has no mention of marriage. However, in the Qumran cemetery, skeletons of women and children were found. Due to this discovery, many say that the sect could not have been Essene because of Pliny’s statement regarding the absence of women at the site. Magen Broshi, an Israeli archaeologist and historian, mentions that it is most likely that these female skeletons were Bedouin. This would explain how skeletons of women were found at Qumran while remaining consistent to Pliny’s description of the Essenes.

There are a number of noteworthy theories that suggest a different group lived at Qumran. Some are of the opinion that Christians were living at the site. VanderKam thinks this view “can be dismissed as contrary to the archeological and paleographical evidence that it existed well before the time of Jesus.”¹⁷ Another opinion which has gained more acceptance is that the Sadducees lived at Qumran. One of the main scholars who takes this approach is Lawrence Schiffman. As VanderKam explains, “his evidence is that several of the legal views on purity

¹⁴ Ibid., 116.

¹⁵ Ibid., 117.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 119.

defended in some of the works of the Torah as those of the authors have significant overlaps with positions that rabbinic literature attributes to the Sadducees.”¹⁸ For example, Schiffman states that positions attributed to the Sadducees by the Mishna are found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. One main support Schiffman provides for this theory is that the head priest’s name was Zadok, and that the name Sadducees comes from this name. There are many similarities in terms of certain laws between the views of the Sadducees and the Essenes. Despite Schiffman’s compelling argument, VanderKam believes that Schiffman’s theory challenges the Essene Hypothesis only indirectly, as it revolves around proper terminology rather than the character of the Qumran community. Additionally, the fact that some Qumran views align with Sadducee views does not prove that these groups were identical. The scrolls found at Qumran reference many concepts that are against Sadducean belief; for example, the Qumran ideology regarding fate is against the Sadducean view. Therefore, it does not seem likely that the Sadduceans were the inhabitants of Qumran.

Some, such as K. H, Rengstorf, are of the opinion that “the scrolls found in the caves were not the library of the community living at the site but were rather from libraries located in Jerusalem.”¹⁹ Norman Golb of the University of Chicago believed that the “Qumran buildings were a fortress and that they had no direct connection with the caves.”²⁰ Golb determined that the scrolls found at Qumran were left by Jews from Jerusalem fleeing the Romans. Golb points to the large number of Qumran texts, which supports the theory that they came from Jerusalem, because it is highly unlikely that they originated from one small group. Golb additionally states that Pliny’s writing was inaccurate because he described the Essenes in the present tense and according to some opinions, his book *Natural History* was published nine years after the sect was

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 122.

²⁰ Ibid.

destroyed by the Romans. Therefore, Golb believes Pliny was writing about a different sect. Another proof Golb provides is that there were no legal documents found at Qumran associated with the Essenes. VanderKam however, disagrees with Golb's hypothesis because of the peculiarity of how common Essene views were in the Qumran texts, and the fact that unique views of other groups were uniformly presented negatively, indicating that the texts were not really randomly collected. Additionally, when Golb wrote that Pliny had to be referring to a different sect, what sect could he have been referring to, living in what place with the exact specification Pliny was writing of?

Two of the many articles from *Dead Sea Discoveries* that address in great detail the question of who was living at Qumran are the following: "Essenes at Qumran? A Rejoinder to Albert Baumgarten" by Magen Broshi and "The Essene Hypothesis: Insights from Religion 101" by Jonathan Klawans. Both articles analyze the majority opinion that the Essenes were living at Qumran, and provide substantial counterarguments to the main hypothesis.

In Broshi's article, he discusses Albert Baumgarten's opinion as to who was living at Qumran and refutes Baumgarten's position. Baumgarten searched through the enormous number of Qumran texts in search of proof that the group living at Qumran was not the Essenes. Baumgarten believed that the site Pliny was referring to in his writing was Qumran, but he did not agree that it was the Essenes who lived there. Broshi provides a counterargument that Qumran shared many similarities with an Essene monastery. Additionally, the Dead Sea Scrolls lack characteristics which would identify them with any other movement and seem to have an Essene grounding.

Another issue addressed in Broshi's article is the opinion that Qumran was "just a

country estate.”²¹ Broshi provides a number of points refuting this argument. His first counterargument is that the site bears little resemblance to a Roman villa, instead typifying simplicity, indicating the religious devotion of its inhabitants. The glass vessels that were found at the site were most likely brought by the Romans after 68 C.E. A second counterargument is that Qumran had no agriculture; therefore, it is unlikely that this would be the place the Romans would choose for a country estate. Broshi argues that the Essene Hypothesis makes sense in light of the strict Essene purity laws, which would make Qumran an ideal Essene location.

Klawans’ article also discusses the Essene Hypothesis, emphasizing the insider/outsider problem. This problem stems from the idea that those who have an outsider’s perspective will make assumptions about a sect or group of people due to their lacking an insider’s perspective. According to Klawanas, “The Essene Hypothesis makes a great deal of sense when seen in light of the ways generalized labels are used in a variety of descriptions of religious groups, both ancient and modern.”²² Therefore, when Josephus categorized the sect living at Qumran as the Essenes, he generalized the group, not taking into account the subgroups that may have been within the sect. As a result, “it has now become commonplace to view the Dead Sea community as a “branch” of the Essenes, one part of a wider Essene movement, or the result of a split which occurred within the Essene movement.”²³ That is why many believe that Qumran is one of various places where the Essene movement resided. However, it is Qumran that housed the “movement’s elite.”²⁴

²¹ Magen Broshi, “Essenes at Qumran? A Rejoinder to Albert Baumgarten,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 14, no. 1 (2007): 27, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156851707779141182>.

²² Klawans, “The Essene Hypothesis,” 51.

²³ *Ibid.*, 56.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 57.

When taking a deeper look at the insider/outsider perspective and comparing the group living at Qumran to other well-known sects today, the article concludes that with the possibility that the Qumran group used different terms to refer to themselves than did outsiders. Klawans gives the following example: “Imagine that Pliny... stumbled by Kiryas Joel: would he describe the town as “Satmar” or just “Hasidic?” Surely the latter is more likely.”²⁵ This idea can be said for various other religious groups as well, especially when speaking to a less knowledgeable audience (which, in fact, Josephus was). Therefore, Klawans concludes, “it is quite possible that Josephus’s Essenes were a single well-known and well defined group, like Chabad, while for this analogy, the Dead Sea scrolls reveal the inner workings of some other lesser-known, more insular group (or even sect), like the Yiddish-speaking Satmar Hasidic community that constitutes the vast majority of... Kiryas Joel.”²⁶ Other topics brought up in this article are the various opinions who say that it was not the Essenes living at Qumran. Some say the Qumran group were zealots, while others say they were Pharisees or Sadducees. Albert Baumgarten claimed that “the Essene hypothesis is a dying consensus.”²⁷ Yet despite some critics, Klawans asserts that “the Essene hypothesis remains the likeliest of all proposed solutions.”²⁸

After thorough research on this topic, I believe that despite the minimal discrepancies in the Essene Hypothesis as well as the compelling arguments brought by Schiffman, Golb, Baumgarten and others, the evidence supports the theory that the Essenes were the group living at Qumran. The Essene Hypothesis is supported by proofs brought by various ancient writers and modern scholars as well as the proofs found in the Dead Sea Scrolls themselves. Additionally,

²⁵ Ibid., 69.

²⁶ Ibid., 67.

²⁷ Ibid., 54.

²⁸ Ibid., 55.

many of the other viewpoints simply poke holes at the Essene Hypothesis but lack evidence of their own to support their claim. That being said, it is important to recognize that there are differences of opinion on this topic due to conflicting evidence that must be addressed. According to VanderKam, “the Essene hypothesis (and it is only a hypothesis) accounts for the totality of evidence in a more convincing way than any of its rivals.”²⁹ This quote from VanderKam emphasizes that the Essene Hypothesis remains only a hypothesis and therefore there is always room for other theories as to who was living at the Qumran site.

²⁹ VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 125.

The Boston Massacre in the American Collective Memory

Zachary Ottenstein

The American people is one that is quite attached to specific dates because of the historical events that occurred on them. Certain days in history resonate deeply with Americans of all stripes whether they lived at the time of the event itself or not. An overwhelming majority of people in the United States can speak vividly, whether their account is factual or not, about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and even more Americans can remember exactly where they were when they heard about the attack on the World Trade Center on 9/11. On a more positive side, many Americans can recall their reaction when they were informed that Osama Bin Laden had been killed in a military strike; the 40,000 fans chanting “U.S.A, U.S.A” at Citizens Bank Park,¹ among others, will never forget that moment. There is a date in the early history of the United States, March 5, 1770, that may not resonate instantly with Americans, but the events of that day are some of the most famous.

What happened on an otherwise normal day in one of the most important cities of the Thirteen Colonies is the subject of massive debate. The colonists were quick to refer to it as the Boston Massacre, while British accounts chalked the alleged massacre up to nothing more than an attempt at “crowd control” gone wrong,² or one that was not terribly wrong according to some. More vivid and useful to the study of the collective memory of Americans than the over 200 written

¹ It is quite spectacular that the decades old Mets vs. Phillies rivalry was put on hold due to national pride. The video of this historic moment in sports can be found on YouTube, May 3, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IvpBivJBK7o>.

² Competing newspaper accounts, one from the Boston Gazette of March 12, 1770 and one from the London Chronicle dated April 26, 1770, are only two of the many news accounts of the events. Most accounts agree on some of the basics but leave much to be decided based on whether one was a Patriot or Loyalist.

The BLOODY MASSACRE perpetrated in King Street BOSTON on March 5th 1770 by a party of the 29th REG^t



Engraved Printed & Sold by PAUL REVERE BOSTON

Unhappy Boston! see thy Sons deplore,
Thy hallow'd Walks besmear'd with guiltless Gore:
While faithless Power and his savage Bands,
With murderous Rancour stretch their bloody Hands;
Like fierce Barbarians grinning o'er their Prey,
Approve the Carnage, and enjoy the Day.

If scalding drops from Rage from Anguish Wring;
If speechless Sorrows lab'ring for a Tongue,
Or if a weeping World can ought appease
The plaintive Ghosts of Victims such as these:
The Patriot's copious Tears for each are shed,
A glorious Tribute which embalms the Dead.

But know, Fate summons to that awful Goal,
Where Justice strips the Murderer of his Soul:
Should venal Courts the scandal of the Land,
Snatch the relentless Villain from her Hand,
Keen Execrations on this Plate inscrib'd,
Shall reach a JUDGE who never can be brib'd.

*The unhappy Sufferers were Messrs SAM^l GRAY SAM^l MAVERICK, JAM^s CALDWELL, CRISPUS ATTUCKS & PAT^r CARR
Killed. Six wounded; two of them (CHRIST^s MONK & JOHN CLARK) Mortally*

The Boston Massacre by Paul Revere Jr. (1770)

eyewitness accounts of the massacre³ are the propagandistic images of the massacre created after the event. Literacy in the Colonies stood at an average of about seventy percent,⁴ with more being illiterate in the southern colonies, but even at that time a significant percentage of colonists remained unable to read thus making images all the more powerful. Colonists were quick to make various types of “artwork” depicted their abuse at the hands of the British. Henry Pelham, the half-brother of famed painter John Singleton Copley, created the engraving that became the “banner” of the Patriots as they resisted British tyranny. Notable to this engraving is Captain Preston of the British Army ordering his troops to fire in an organized fashion, which is directly contradictory to the written accounts that describe the chaos of the affair. Some of the prints were colored by artist Christian Remick who took the artistic liberty of adding the words “Butcher’s Hall” to the sign in the background of the British forces⁵. This “new and improved” print was printed for mass circulation by famous Son of Liberty Paul Revere. Clearly, a factual portrayal of the occurrence was less important to the rioters and their supporters than propagandistic concerns. It is definitely reasonable to say that those who perceived themselves as having been “massacred” were simply unable to reckon with the fact that the blood of five men rest on them and thus they felt the need to compensate with propaganda.

³ This number is mentioned by Eric Hinderaker in his article “Rethinking the Boston Massacre: It is one of the most familiar incidents in American history, and also one of the least understood in many ways,” *American Heritage* 63, no. 2 (2018),

https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A617621186/ITOF?u=nysl_me&sid=ITOF&xid=881684db.

⁴ F. W. Grubb, “Growth of Literacy in Colonial America: Longitudinal Patterns, Economic Models, and the Direction of Future Research,” *Social Science History* 14, no. 4 (1990): 459, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1171328>.

⁵ David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere's Ride, and the Battle of Lexington and Concord* (Oxford University Press, 1994), 24.

Eric Hinderaker has drawn attention to the choice of the word “massacre” and its unique inflammatory connotations in an eighteenth-century setting.⁶ This is in fact so; the 1755 *A Dictionary of the English Language*⁷ published by Samuel Johnson describes a massacre as “butchery; indiscriminate destruction.” This an extreme term to use for the events that occurred considering that both parties had a degree of culpability in them. In fact, when a Wikipedia list of all historical events labeled “massacre” pre-1945 is examined, it is discovered that the Boston Massacre is the sole event titled “massacre” with a death toll of five people.⁸ To quote Hinderaker, “The Boston Massacre is a phrase that contains within itself a judgment, an indictment, a conviction.”⁹

When considering the role of the Boston Massacre in the collective memory of those who lived it and that of future Americans it is important to consider the role that the city of Boston played in the Colonial era. Bostonians of the period felt a strong sense of English-Protestant identity and were eager to assist their motherland in its fight against the Catholics of New France in the Seven Years War. Bostonians willfully participated in the war by both enlisting in the military and by using their ships and goods to assist the war effort.¹⁰ The relationship naturally was strained by the British desire to keep large numbers of troops stationed in the Thirteen Colonies in the post-war years. Coupled with the taxes imposed on the colonists in order to pay for the cost of British imperialism, the once loyal city of Boston was bound to become a powder

⁶ Hinderaker, “Rethinking the Boston Massacre,” 1.

⁷ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*.... (Dublin: W. G. Jones, 1769), s.v. “Massacre,”

<https://books.google.com/books?id=bXsCAAAAQAAJ&pg=PT54#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

⁸ *Wikipedia*, The Free Encyclopedia, s.v. “List of events named massacres,” last modified May 10, 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_events_named_massacres.

⁹ Hinderaker, “Rethinking the Boston Massacre,” 1.

¹⁰ Hinderaker, 2.

keg with its citizens “holding lit matches.” The situation was even more so headed toward an explosion when troops that did not belong occupying the city killed residents of a city that was once of the most loyal to the British Crown. It is by no accident that Boston and its surrounding area became an area of volatile conflict and was the location of the Boston Tea Party with the Battles of Lexington and Concord happening a short two years later.

Besides being an explicit example of crafty propaganda made by the Colonists, the Boston Massacre reemerged in the American mind approximately a century later. After the Revolution the memory of March 1770 was no longer necessary. With the exception of the War of 1812, the threats to American security were domestic, not foreign. At a certain point in the nineteenth century, Britain ceased to be the enemy as the United States attempted to tackle questions of slavery and the rights of the state in relation to the federal government, all while conquering more land in the name of Manifest Destiny. The point in history when accounts of the Boston Massacre next resurfaced were in post-Civil War histories of the United States written by African Americans. Prominent historian of African American History, Benjamin Quarles, attributes a renewed focus on the American Revolution in Black thought to a desire to dispel myths of the ignoble African American.¹¹ Much of the hatred towards Blacks stemmed from an erroneous belief that African Americans had not accomplished anything of significance, making it justifiable to enslave them, nor were they capable of accomplishing anything with their freedom, making it tolerable to deny them rights and to discriminate against them. The best possible defense to these myths was to bring

¹¹ Benjamin Quarles, *Black Mosaic: Essays in Afro-American History and Historiography* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 109.

the accomplishments of African Americans into the public consciousness as “proof” that Blacks were capable of more than what racist Whites thought they were.

One of the casualties of the Boston Massacre, possibly the most famous of them, was Crispus Attucks. Attucks is widely held to be a freed slave of mixed Native American and African heritage, but there is dispute as to what constituted his genetic makeup. An article from the Pennsylvania Gazette from shortly after the events of March 5 makes mention of Attucks’ African heritage, but at no point mentions the other half of his identity.¹² Being that “the first casualty of the American Revolution” was in fact a Black man, even the most racist of people had to admit that Blacks had sacrificed and accomplished on behalf of their country. Attucks’ death became a symbol for Black Americans; he “penetrated their popular historical consciousness.”¹³ African Americans viewed Attucks as the quintessential Black hero, a person who ran away from his master to obtain his freedom and *then* went on to participate in a movement to free others. It is no shock that Frederick Douglass and other African American abolitionists viewed Attucks as an inspirational figure and considered him one of their own. Interestingly, government opposition to Attucks’ commemoration prompted Blacks to “canonize” him to a larger extent than before. Black historian and abolitionist, William Cooper Nell, and a committee of other Black intellectuals petitioned the Massachusetts legislature to erect a monument to Attucks in 1851. To their dismay their request was denied, but they were not surprised; Nell is quoted as saying that the committee

¹² The March 22, 1770 printing of the Pennsylvania Gazette refers to Attucks as a mulatto, but never mentions his partially Native American heritage. “The Pennsylvania Gazette article March 22, 1770, on the Boston Massacre,” Walk Boston History Website, <https://www.walkbostonhistory.com/the-boston-massacre-per-the-pennsylvania-gazette.html>.

¹³ Cynthia P. King, “Representing Revolution in Black History: Consensus and Resistance in Nineteenth Century African American Accounts of the Boston Massacre,” *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* 10, no. 1 (2007): 197-221, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15362426.2007.10557282>.

“had accepted the axiom that a colored man never gets justice in the United States.”¹⁴ The refusal to allow the monument prompted Nell to include the discussion of the committee meeting and its aftermath in the introduction to his seminal work *Colored Patriots of the American Revolution*, which combined his own historical analysis with interviews he conducted with Black veterans of the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. Attucks may have been the most famous African American to die for the revolutionary cause, but Nell’s writings attest to the fact that he was by no means the only one.

The use of the Boston Massacre in African American social movements did not end with the slavery era. The most prominent activist in the Civil Rights Movement, Martin Luther King Jr, makes mention of Crispus Attucks in the introduction to his book *Why We Can’t Wait*.¹⁵ Much like Nell, King speaks of the Black race as not a historically ignorant one. Obviously, the context has changed and King speaks of the “Negro boy... sitting on a stoop in front of a vermin infested apartment house in Harlem”¹⁶ and not of someone literally living in the conditions of slavery. Like the slave, this boy knows “that Negroes were with George Washington at Valley Forge... that the first American to shed blood in the revolution which freed this country from British oppression was a Black seaman named Crispus Attucks.”¹⁷ Two hundred years later the heroism of Crispus Attucks remained in the Black consciousness. In a tumultuous period that included many great acts of physical and intellectual heroism by Blacks, their leaders still viewed Attucks as the essence of what a Black American should be. Despite all of the suffering caused to them by the founders of

¹⁴ William Cooper Nell, “*COLORED PATRIOTS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: with Sketches of Several Distinguished Colored Persons....*” (Forgotten Books, 2017), 17–18.

¹⁵ Martin Luther King and Jesse L Jackson, *Why We Can’t Wait* (New York: Penguin Books, 2018), viii-vix.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

the United States, it remains admirable that they took this level of pride in a man who was fighting for what was an ostensibly “White” cause.

While the Boston Massacre is not often thought of as an event of “White on Black” violence, Farah Peterson has attempted to demonstrate that the Boston Massacre is the real beginning of a problem that has continued into the twenty-first century. An article by Peterson opens with a blunt and simple explanation of the problem: “On March 5, 1770, at a little after nine o’clock in the evening, men in uniform shot and killed an unarmed Black man named Crispus Attucks. They got away with it.”¹⁸ Most historians would not make this connection at first glance, but the parallel does hold up in many ways. Michael Brown, the victim of the shooting in Ferguson, Missouri, was an unarmed, young Black man who was shot by a White law enforcement official. As in the case of Crispus Attucks, much controversy and uncertainty surround the events of the Ferguson shooting. Officer Wilson claimed a threat to his life as the cause for having opened fire,¹⁹ as did the British soldiers in 1770. Naturally, other narratives exist that contradict the reports of justified self-defense. Some have blamed the British troops for being “trigger happy” and poorly trained to handle high-pressure situations and some have attributed Officer Wilson’s use of force to racism. Peterson goes even further and suggests that John Adams’ defense of the soldiers revolved around the idea that “his clients had only killed a Black man and his cronies and that they

¹⁸ Peterson, Farah. “Black Lives and the Boston Massacre: JOHN ADAMS’S FAMOUS DEFENSE OF THE BRITISH MAY NOT BE, AS WE’VE ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD IT, THE ULTIMATE EXPRESSION OF PRINCIPLE AND THE RULE OF LAW,” *The American Scholar* 88, no. 1 (Winter 2019), 34,

https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A566399661/AONE?u=nysl_me&sid=AONE&xid=d1cc80f1.

¹⁹ United States Department of Justice, “Department of Justice Report Regarding the Criminal Investigation into the Shooting Death of Michael Brown by Ferguson, Missouri Police Officer Darren Wilson” (2015), https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/doj_report_on_shooting_of_michael_brown_1.pdf.

didn't deserve to hang for it.²⁰ Officer Wilson, in his statement, is quoted as saying that Michael Brown charging toward him "looked like a demon."²¹ Whatever the motivations of those involved may be, Peterson's point that Crispus Attucks and Michael Brown are only remembered for their death. What they accomplished in life is constantly overshadowed by their being victims of police or military shootings. Even in communities sympathetic to Blacks, Crispus Attucks is known as "the first person to die in the American Revolution." No mention of his being a mixed-raced runaway slave who was able to single-handedly start a riot against the British is found in most of the sources; perhaps this is the biggest tragedy of them all.

After extensive use of the Boston Massacre in Black causes, it was used as a point of comparison and analysis when discussing the Kent State Massacre of 1970. Besides coincidentally happening 200 years later, there are many ways that make the two events seem closely related; in fact, the narratives read almost the same in some instances. The sentence "By 11:00 a.m., students began gathering on the Commons at the center of the Kent State University campus in defiance of an order banning all outdoor demonstrations and gatherings"²² reads oddly similarly to Captain Preston's 1770 account of the Boston Massacre, which states "On Monday night about 8 o'clock two soldiers were attacked and beat. But the party of the townspeople in order to carry matters to the utmost length..."²³ Both events stemmed from an unlicensed gathering and both ended with a confrontation between the military and civilians. While it is important to remember that these two

²⁰ Peterson, "Black Lives and the Boston Massacre," 1.

²¹ Department of Justice, 15.

²² James A. Michener, *Kent State: What Happened and Why*, (New York: Random House, 1971), 327–337.

²³ Steven Mintz and Sara McNeil, "Captain Thomas Preston's account of the Boston Massacre" (2018), *Digital History*,

https://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=4121.

episode are on the short list of times that a military has opened fire on civilians in the United States, it is important to remember the disparity in what caused each event. Those that protested at Kent State were not protesting something that affected them directly. Yes, many young people had been sent to war and had died in Vietnam, but there was no threat to *these specific* students until they began to protest in an unorganized and somewhat violent way. Rumors suggesting that the students of Kent State planned to blow up a store and spike the town's water supply with LSD surfaced and this motivated the response of Kent's mayor, LeRoy Satrom, to request backup from the National Guard. Eventually some young people, possibly Kent State students, did set the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) building on fire and the situation only became more violent from that point.

This chain of events is starkly different from those of Boston in 1770. By the time that the metaphorical "powder keg" had exploded Boston had already been under military occupation for 2 years and for years prior to that had been subjected to draconian taxes from the British monarchy. This is not to say that any of the sides involved in these two conflicts, protestors or responders, is more to blame or is blameless, but it is important to distinguish between the nature of the threat posed to the Bostonians of 1770 and the cause of the Kent State protests that was nine thousand miles away. When attempting to compare these two events it is important to consider their respective aftermaths. According to Ronald Hatzenbuehler, by 1795 the young nation that was the United States had already forgotten about the Boston Massacre; it would only resurface in the American consciousness in the 1840s with the rise of abolitionism.²⁴ In contrast, a week of

²⁴ Ronald L. Hatzenbuehler, "Assessing the Meaning of Massacre: Boston (1770) and Kent State (1970)," *Peace & Change* 11, no. 2 (1996), <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=9606054362&site=eds-live&scope=site&authtype=sso&custid=s6086892>.

activities to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Kent State Shootings was planned. The students of Kent State University chose the word “Inquire, Learn, and Reflect” to be the theme for the commemoration.²⁵ Even in the twenty-five years since 1995 those at Kent State have not forgotten about the events of May 4, 1970. A large fiftieth anniversary commemoration was planned and took place online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁶ It seems as though the American public will never forget about the events of 1970, but take little issue with having the events of 1770 disappear for many decades.

Most would not think to associate the Boston Massacre with sports and pop culture, but is in fact a tactic used by various sports journalists. The number of newspaper headlines that use the term “Boston Massacre” to describe the sporting event is astonishing. A headline from the *New York Post* of August 10, 2009 reads “Yanks Have Blast Sweepin’ Out Sox; Bombers Up 6 1/2 After Boston Massacre.”²⁷ A similarly shocking headline from the *New York Times* pronounces “Boston Massacre: Knicks Lose Historically”²⁸ as a way of marking the Knicks’ loss to the Boston Celtics. Whether it is tasteful to use an event that killed five people and began a period of war is a question of a journalist’s tact, not a historical question. It is important to note that the two publications mentioned which speak about the Massacre in a joking way are based in New York. The wounds of the Boston Massacre clearly do not sting the New Yorker as much as they do the Bostonian. It is hard to imagine even the Bostonian of today, 250 years later making light of an

²⁵ Hatzenbuehler, 3.

²⁶ Details of the fiftieth anniversary of the Kent State Shootings can be found at “May 4, 50th Commemoration,” Website of Kent State University, accessed May 16, 2021, <https://www.kent.edu/may4kentstate50/welcome-virtual-may-4-50th-commemoration>.

²⁷ Jon Lester, “Yanks Have Blast Sweepin’ Out Sox; Bombers up 6 1/2 after Boston Massacre,” *New York Post*, Aug. 10, 2009.

²⁸ Sam Goldaper, “Boston Massacre: Knicks Lose Historically,” *New York Times*, April 29, 1990.

event that killed fellow denizens of his city and sparked a revolution that the city of Boston played such a key role in. Similarly, in both of these headlines “Boston Massacre” is used to describe a victory for a Bostonian entity, one of their sports teams, and not to mark an event that caused the death of five residents. It would seem that once taken across state lines, the Boston Massacre can be stripped of all original meaning.

Maybe the Boston Massacre was not a massacre in the traditional sense, but nonetheless a gallant effort by the colonial propaganda machine and the following generations of both Black and White Americans have preserved it as such. Virtually no American can name all five people that died on that day, but the name Crispus Attucks is one that rings in the head of the American schoolchild and rang in the head of abolitionists, civil rights activists, and college students for two and a half centuries. Very few events, maybe not even one, have had the ability to inspire the minds of people ranging from those fighting for the cause of racial equality to those trying to write a catchy sports headline. What causes this relatively minor event to have such a major impact? Maybe it is the fact that the story of March 5, 1770 can be the story of any day in modern America. Americans have stood up and continue to stand up against injustice, sometimes taking a while and sometimes organizing mass protest spontaneously, but nonetheless Americans fear tyranny, British or otherwise. It is difficult to envision a day when the Boston Massacre no longer serves an inspiration to Americans for that very reason; it serves as a call to action for Americans and it is difficult to find fault in that.

The Transformation of Porcelain in Pre-Revolutionary France

Natan Pittinsky

Porcelain has had a unique journey through history and across the globe. Production of porcelain began approximately 1,500 years ago in China. Production began to spread over the centuries to other countries in East Asia, the most prominent of which being Japan. Porcelainware was exported to the Islamic world from its creation but didn't make it to Europe until late in the fourteenth century. Direct trade for porcelain in Europe picked up with Dutch and Portuguese merchants in the sixteenth century, causing interest for such wares to increase dramatically across the continent. France began manufacturing soft-paste porcelain, a material of lower quality than the hard-paste variety from East Asia, in the very beginning of the eighteenth century, with England following suit shortly thereafter. Alchemists in the German state of Saxony discovered the importance of a naturally occurring mineral, kaolin, to the production of hard-paste porcelain and began the first production of authentic porcelain in Europe in 1708. French soft-paste and German hard-paste porcelain were both highly regarded and sought after in Europe for much of the eighteenth century. Yet in the late 1760s, the French manufactory Sèvres finally mastered kaolin-based clay and set the standard for European porcelain production for the decades that followed.

The book *Shapely Bodies: The Image of Porcelain in Eighteenth-Century France* by Christine Jones narrows its scope to porcelain's history in France from the 1660s to the 1760s. Using this limited purview enables a heightened awareness of the cultural evolution taking place in France at that time. Furthermore, porcelain functioned both as a commodity and as an artistic medium, which each tell their own cultural narratives respectively. The tale of the artistic medium is one of a struggling confidence in the field. France struggled with achieving the standards that other countries had set, yet eventually the French artisans found their own unique



A Ming porcelain teapot at the Ceramics Gallery of Tibet

artistic voice, until the monarch, King Louis XV, took complete control. He forced the nature of the expression to shift to being evocative of other countries' styles, yet distinctly different, conveying a French preeminence in the field. The tale of the commodity is one of France's national pride and arrogance. French artisans began producing soft-paste porcelain, marketing it as being superior to other varieties of porcelain because it was the result of human ingenuity rather than the use of naturally occurring elements. France successfully rode this marketing tactic to come to the fore of porcelain production in Europe, despite their product being of lesser quality than Saxony's hard-paste blend. The journey of porcelain exposes a narrative of eighteenth-century France being paranoid with their status in relation to other countries, of France's absurd pride in themselves to the point of arrogance and delusion, and of the French monarchy imposing on the freedoms of the people.

France's obsession with porcelain began with King Louis XIV. He had developed a familiarity and fascination with the Chinese vessels after seeing the collections of his father's advisors. Louis XIV planned the construction of a country home in Versailles, in which he planned to have an entire estate capable of hosting much of the nobility and showing his grandeur and power. As a result, King Louis XIV commissioned the construction of the Trianon de Porcelaine nearby as a getaway from everybody he was to be hosting. This building was completed in 1671 and was a shrine to King Louis XIV's obsession with porcelain. Both the interior and exterior of the Trianon were embellished almost entirely in blue and white "in the manner of wares from China."¹ Porcelain vases and fruit bowls lined every level of the building, and the floors, walls, and roofing were decorated with Chinese colors as well. Yet this grand structure ultimately turned

¹ Christine Anne Jones, *Shapely Bodies: The Image of Porcelain in Eighteenth-Century France* (University of Delaware Press, 2015), 49.

out to be a grand failure. The tiles on the roof and floors were regular earthenware enameled to look like porcelain, and thus lacked the necessary structural integrity and strength. The weather and foot traffic resulted in flaking and constant maintenance. By 1687, King Louis XIV ordered the building to be torn down. This provided the impetus for France to turn their focus on developing their own porcelain rather than producing ineffective imitations of the Chinese product.

Artisans throughout Europe struggled for decades to artificially produce porcelain, lacking the key ingredient, kaolin. In 1700, the Chicaneau family of potters, working just outside of Paris in Saint-Cloud, declared that they had successfully invented French porcelain. They had produced soft-paste porcelain, a clay which was fired at lower temperatures and more susceptible to scratches and was therefore inferior to the hard-paste Chinese variant. The Chicaneau's were able to change Europeans' tendency to associate porcelain with Asia through their marketing tactics. They said that porcelain was not the result of naturally occurring materials, but rather that "its perfection derives instead from an unusual secret and consists essentially in human innovation and labor."² Though they were ultimately wrong about porcelain's dependence on natural materials, their sales pitch was still effective. French soft-paste porcelain remained at the top of the industry due to how they marketed their ingenuity. Even when hard-paste porcelain began to be produced in Saxony in 1708, the French were able to maintain their status as premiere producers of porcelain. They accomplished this by deluding themselves into believing that their porcelain was the finest, and convincing the other countries in Europe of this "truth."

While French soft-paste porcelain was inferior to hard-paste in some ways, it was identical in appearance, and thus equal in quality as an artistic medium for vibrant ceramic glazes. Initially, French artisans imitated the Chinese style of cobalt blue coloring over the white surface, which

² Ibid., 106.

provided an aesthetically pleasing contrast and had been the look of porcelain in Europe for centuries. Around 1730, they shifted to the Japanese kakiemon style, which added turquoise and red coloring to the blue and often depicted flora or animals. Following that, France began their own style of glazing on porcelain called Rococo. Rococo porcelain is characterized by its elaborate representation of flowers or scenic landscapes, the incorporation of a wider range of coloring, and gold patterns lining the pieces. This art form was meant to catch one's attention upon entering a room, and was an ideal style for French artistic expression to thrive in the medium of porcelain.

King Louis XV had a strong hand in the progression of porcelain in France from the 1730s on. He commissioned many pieces in the Rococo style, investing heavily in the porcelain industry. In 1745, King Louis XV began to issue patents that would go on to grant the Vincennes manufactory exclusive rights to porcelain production in France. The other manufactories had already begun to lose their funding, but these privileges Louis XV provided to Vincennes sealed their fate, with the last of the competing manufactories failing in 1752. Additionally, the king cleared Vincennes' debts, invested heavily in the company, and passed more laws putting the government in charge of porcelain production. King Louis XV went on to move the company to the more local Sèvres in 1756, renaming it Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres, and took complete control of the company in 1759. Louis XV further changed the nature of porcelain production by commissioning the Vincennes-Sevres company to make him a matching dinner set. It was the first such set commissioned in France (previously, people owned individual porcelain pieces) and was a display of his wealth and of a unique perspective of the direction of porcelain. King Louis XV also changed the image of French Rococo porcelain. He commissioned porcelain in the Rococo style, yet had a new color, celeste blue, incorporated heavily into the pieces as a background color, often completely covering up the natural white on the exterior. This was meant to symbolize France

perfecting their own style and surpassing that of China, with the celeste blue being softer and more aesthetically pleasing than the sharp cobalt blue-and-white look of Chinese porcelain.

It is important to note that King Louis XV's contributions to French porcelain were immensely beneficial to the industry. Yet at the same time, his complete seizure of control of porcelain production, and his role in dictating the artistic expression of the potters, were illustrative of problems in France that would rise to the surface and result in the French revolution around 30 years later. Additionally, while porcelain in France was innovated by common people, the vessels themselves were luxury pieces produced almost exclusively for the wealthy. The increase in porcelain obsession was representative of the wealth gap in France, as the production of pottery could only rise as the noblemen's interest did. The porcelain industry only thrived because of the immense amount of wealth the noblemen held. The trickle-down spending may have initially helped the common people of France, but the monarchy went on to take over porcelain production and profits, taking even that from the French people.

One last aspect of the French production of porcelain that was significant was the role of secrets and the sharing of information, or lack thereof. French manufactories refused to share their soft-paste recipes. Each manufactory had to come up with their own blend, without any guidelines to work with. This led to healthy competition and improvement in the quality of porcelain in France. However, the nature of this mentality changed when King Louis XV took control of production. The king passed extreme restrictions on any information regarding porcelain production. Employees, both current and former, were under constant surveillance and subject to heavy fines and jail time if they were to divulge secrets. Access to Vincennes-Serves's construction sites were closed to foreigners and only French subjects with a permission slip from the king

himself were permitted entry. There was even a law that gave the police power to “conduct search and seizure wherever there may be suspicion of porcelain activity.”³

Porcelain appears to have played a significant role in sparking the French Revolution, given the similar manner in which the government and monarchy viewed information in the years leading up to it. Soon-to-be revolutionaries would be careful when making plans, out of fear of being caught by the king’s spies, as was the case with porcelain. Information was integral to the spread of the revolutionary ideas, and as the French government attempted to control and suppress the dissemination of philosophies they found to be dangerous, the revolutionaries pushed back. Pamphlets such as “What is the Third Estate” and “The Declaration of the Rights of Man” were published in 1789, and the French Revolution began in earnest. Porcelain was an early area where the French government imposed directly on the freedom of their citizens, and served as a precursor for the intensified oppression and resistance between the monarchy and the people which resulted in the French Revolution.

³ Ibid., 202.

Runic Alphabet: The History of Futhark

Joshua Polster

The corpus of inscriptions broadly ascribed to the runic alphabet contain a wide historical progression of several different subsets of runic characters that raise fascinating historical questions regarding creation, usage, development, and dispersion. The point of origin, as well as scriptural precedent, for runes are still contested subjects to which the extant evidence provides no clear answer. However, the general features of the script in its various stages are definable as three distinct periods: the original Elder Futhark script, followed by the generational branches of Anglo-Saxon Futhark and Younger Futhark, respectively.¹ An evaluation of the characteristics of the runic alphabet, Elder Futhark in particular, as well as a discussion of the different theories on origin, paint the general picture of the history of the runic script between its shadowy creation and the present day.

Leaving aside the question of exact date and location of origin, the rise and fall of the runic alphabet as a living tradition can be traced. The variations in runic lettering can be divided into two halves: the pre- and post-bracteate eras. Bracteates are thin, beaten pieces of gold often bearing runic inscriptions along with an associated image. Generally assumed to be imitations of Roman coins, bracteates were in use between 350-550 C.E. across the North Germanic regions.² Hundreds have been found and analyzed to date.

This period of time is used as a convenient marker for the transition from the Elder Futhark, which dominated the pre-bracteate period, to Anglo-Saxon Futhark on the European continent around 400 C.E. as well as the Younger Futhark practiced in Scandinavia starting around 800 C.E.,

¹ Ralph W. V Elliot, "The Runic Script," in *The World's Writing Systems*, ed. Peter T. Daniels and William Bright (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

² Elmer H. Antonsen, "The Runes: The Earliest Germanic Writing System," in *The Origins of Writing*, ed. Wayne M. Senner (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991).

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h	n	i	j	ī	p	z	s
t	b	e	m	l	ŋ	d	o
t	b	e	m	l	ŋ	d	o

Fig. 1: The Elder Futhark runes and their common transliteration, arranged by *aettir*.



Fig. 2: Fyn bracteate discovered in Funen, Denmark. Housed in the National Museum of Denmark.

both of which replaced Elder Futhark entirely. The original Elder Futhark contained twenty-four distinct runes, a number expanded to thirty-one in England, while simultaneously reduced to sixteen characters in Scandinavia, for phonological reasons related to the development of Old English and Old Norse respectively. In the end, all of the runic forms bowed to the proliferation of the Latin alphabet as it spread across the area. Anglo-Saxon Futhark was wiped out by the Norman conquest of 1066. Younger Futhark in its pure form did not persevere much better, streamlining into a secondary system of dotted runes around 1050 C.E. before falling into total obscurity by 1400 C.E.³ Any appearance of runes after that were the results of later scholarship on the subject, expressions of Nordic heritage, or modern cultural adaptation, such as J.R.R Tolkien's use of Elder Futhark in *The Hobbit* to represent dwarven runes on the secret map to Erebor.

In analyzing the actual characters of the Elder Futhark script, several key characteristics become clear, even if the underlying reasons for them are not always transparent. As mentioned, Elder Futhark contains twenty-four unique characters, with groups of eight runes split up into three *aettir*, or families, of runes. The name Futhark comes from the unique alphabetic ordering of the script, the reason for which is unknown to modern scholars. One possibility is that the order relates to a mnemonic device used in teaching the script.⁴ Generally, writing was fixed from left to right, though not absolutely. Each rune had a name corresponding to its vocalization according to the acrophonic principle, with individual characters made up of a number of staffs (vertical lines) and branches (slanted horizontal marks).⁵ This construction becomes clear in light of the large body of extant texts almost entirely made up of carvings into wood, metal, or stone, in the form of monuments or small, portable objects. Straight lines are easy to incise into hard surfaces, and the

³ Antonsen, "The Runes."

⁴ Antonsen, "The Runes."

⁵ Elliot, "The Runic Script."

slant of the branches make the lines stand out, instead of getting lost in the grain of wood pieces.⁶ With these factors in mind, the forms of the runic alphabet make perfect sense.

However, while the forms themselves might seem perfectly logical, both the location and date of origin of the Elder Futhark system is subject to debate. One of the great difficulties arises from the shocking uniformity of Elder Futhark texts; there is very little deviation in letter forms throughout the entire pre-bracteate period, making specific finds, and therefore the spread of the alphabetic system, very hard to track over time. With Elder Futhark inscriptions found scattered across northern Germany, Scandinavia, and England, pinning down a definite origin point is difficult.⁷ As a result, two predominant theories have been proposed as to the time and location of runic origin. The first claims that the runic alphabet was adopted directly from the Roman alphabet via direct contact between the two cultures. The second theory rejects this claim in favor of a much earlier date of inception and a Proto-Germanic independent source. Neither of these theories are completely watertight, but an analysis of both arguments raises interesting possibilities. Three prominent advocates of the Roman origin theory are scholars Lisbeth Imer, Terje Spurkland, and Tineke Looijenga. The most obvious point in favor of a direct Roman connection is the clear correlation between a large number of Roman and runic phonemic counterparts. Any small adjustments can be accounted for by the intended purpose of runes as carved letters, necessitating the staff and slanted branch configuration.⁸ Further, Spurkland posits that the inventor of runes must have been bilingual, intimately familiar with the Latin system.

⁶ Antonsen, "The Runes."

⁷ Tineke Looijenga, *Texts & Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

⁸ Antonsen, "The Runes."

The parallels between runes and the Latin script are not exact, and whoever invented the runes had to make some definite changes to adjust for the language differences between Latin and the Germanic languages. This was done in a systematic fashion, with “extra” Roman letters adapted for completely different purposes as needed by the Futhark system. The conceptual understanding necessary for this transference, Spurkland insists, must have come from someone with a clear understanding of the Latin system and all of its inherent grammatical rules.⁹

In addition to the overall runological correspondence between the runic and Roman scripts, evidence has been unearthed showing close contact between the two cultures. Lisbeth Imer highlights these points of intersection, noting the imitation of Roman maker’s marks on North Germanic weapons as well as certain similarities in the format of monument stones.¹⁰ The similarities in form and purpose all combine to form a convincing theory placing the origin of the runic alphabet at the border line of Roman-German interaction at the beginning of the second century C.E., the likely start date for contact of this kind. This theory paints the runic originators as artisans or mercenaries involved in Roman society who spread their adaptation of a highly efficient system across the Germanic world from the Roman front lines. To validate this theory, scholars point out the portable nature of the objects found scattered across North Germanic areas, allowing for the possibility that they were not created where they were found. The identity of these objects as mainly swords, lances, or spears points to a soldier or swordsmith (or groups thereof) as the likely agents of runic proliferation.¹¹

⁹ Terje Spurkland, “The Older *Futhark* and Roman Script Literacy,” *Futhark: International Journal of Runic Studies* 1 (2010): 65

¹⁰ Lisbeth Imer, “Runes and Romans in the North,” *Futhark: International Journal of Runic Studies* 1 (2010).

¹¹ Looijenga, *Texts & Contexts*.

Opponents of the Roman theory include the likes of Elmer H. Antonsen, Eric Moltke, and Bernard Mees, who object on both conceptual and evidential grounds and propose their own theory. On a linguistic level, Antonsen notes that despite the iconographic similarities between Roman and Runic letters, the lack of total sound-value correlation prevents a simple acceptance of the parallel. He notes that a far more accurate comparison would be to a more archaic script, one with shared peripheral rules like the lack of fixed writing direction and only the occasional use of interpuncts. On a deeper level, Antonsen also notes that the six vowel designates in Elder Futhark correspond exactly to Proto-Germanic, a fact that would be hard to explain as an outgrowth of a strictly Roman comparison. In that case only five signs would be needed, able to represent the long and short forms of each vowel. A sixth sign would simply be awkward and unnecessary, a bizarre aberration in what seems to be a highly logical and planned script. Viewed in a Proto-Germanic context, the sixth sign makes perfect sense. There are only two short/long vowel pairs in Proto-Germanic in addition to two long and two short vowel sounds, adding up to a perfect six. This match is also correlated in data from published texts regarding the names and functions of these vowel characters.¹² It is on this basis that Antonsen spurns the Roman origin theory in favor of a far earlier (likely 50 C.E., possibly earlier) theory, positing a natural outgrowth of runes from Proto-Germanic. The abundance of objects found in Denmark and Northern Germany support a northern, rather than Roman, location of origin. This point is seconded by Eric Moltke, who notes that early runic inscriptions bear many of the same uncertainties as independently developed alphabets: non-fixed writing direction, irregularity of letter size, and inconsistent punctuation. These factors, as well as the radically different alphabetic order from preexisting alphabets,

¹² Antonsen, "The Runes."

combine to support the idea that runes were an independent invention, though Moltke admits that Roman culture may have had some influence.¹³

The Proto-Germanic position is further supported by Mees, who cites the evidence of the Meldorf fibula, the earliest known rune-engraved object, which has been dated to 50 C.E. There is some doubt as to the nature of the engravings, but Mees contends that a runic interpretation is far more convincing than non-runic alternatives.¹⁴ If this is true, along with an assumed century or two of development, the Meldorf fibula would date the use of runes in Northern Germanic territory to a period predating the sustained interaction of Roman and Germanic culture, lending Antonsen's explanation a great degree of credibility.

Regardless of origin, the runic characters themselves are very striking. Carved in stone or beaten in metal, they represent a long tradition of writing in Scandinavia and across the European continent in its various stages. Many attempts have been made to link the runic characters themselves to some form of divination or magic, but this position has essentially been discredited across the field. Looijenga raises the suggestion but admits it as unlikely, while Antonsen sharply rejects the premise outright.¹⁵ While some runic inscriptions do contain religious or mythic references, there is little to no evidence that any supernatural properties were ascribed to the runic characters themselves.¹⁶

Overall, the simpler reading of the existing evidence leads in the direction of the Roman theory of origin, considering the clear imitation in both culture and runic character shapes.

¹³ Erik Moltke and Peter Godfrey Foote, *Runes and Their Origin: Denmark and Elsewhere* (Copenhagen: National Museum of Denmark, 1985).

¹⁴ Bernard Mees, "A New Interpretation of the Meldorf Fibula Inscription," *Zeitschrift Für Deutsches Altertum Und Deutsche Literatur* 126, no. 2 (1997): 139.

¹⁵ Looijenga, *Texts & Contexts*.

¹⁶ Antonsen, "The Runes."

Accommodating Antonsen's Proto-Germanic theory requires ignoring these shockingly clear parallels. Yet the existence of the Meldorf fibula, the chaotic nature of Elder Futhark's peripheral rules, and the simple fact of the archeological find locations of hundreds of runic objects keep this theory afloat. A convincing synthesis of these divergent factors has yet to be published.

Leaving a Legacy: The Impact of Daring to be Different

Shoshana Rockoff

With its soft colors and peaceful mundanity, Johannes Vermeer's *Woman with a Water Jug* (1660-62) appears to be worlds apart from Rembrandt's dark and intense *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* (1653). Yet, both of these paintings are, in fact, Dutch and created in the same decade. With the shift in political power, renewed independence and establishment of the Bank of Amsterdam, art in the Dutch Republic changed dramatically in the seventeenth century. This new art focused primarily on depictions of landscapes, portraits of middle-class men and women, genre paintings and still lifes. Though Vermeer and Rembrandt lived in similar locations and contexts, their respective paintings of *Woman with a Water Jug* and *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* are representative of the differing styles and iconographies that appear in many of their works. Vermeer painted more in line with standard seventeenth-century Dutch styles and iconographies, while Rembrandt veered away from them. Additionally, while Rembrandt quickly achieved international fame through his unusual sketches and paintings, Vermeer only sold his works to a small number of local collectors, and did not gain renown outside of his community during his lifetime.¹ A comparative analysis of *Woman with a Water Jug* and *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* as representative of Vermeer's approach to adhering to standard styles and iconographies of the time as opposed to Rembrandt's of deviation from those styles, point to the fact that artists who choose to innovate, create and digress from the artistic standards of their era, tend to gain more prominence and artistic fame during their lifetimes.

In the seventeenth century, it was not uncommon to find Dutch art depicting genre scenes such as quiet interiors of Dutch homes with men and women engaging in household tasks.

¹ "Jan Vermeer," *Biography.com*, April 13, 2019, <https://www.biography.com/artist/jan-vermeer>.



Fig. 1: Young Woman with a Water Pitcher by Johannes Vermeer (ca. 1662)



Fig. 2: Aristotle with a Bust of Homer by Rembrandt van Rijn (1653)

Vermeer's *Woman with a Water Jug* is no different. Vermeer portrays an ordinary woman in her Dutch home, opening a window and holding onto a water pitcher. The viewer of *Woman with a Water Jug* can feel the sense of domestic peace and familiarity that so many Dutch artists sought to express in their works. The woman smiles slightly with her head bowed, indicating that she is thoughtful, and her lavish surroundings seem to provide her with a sense of ease to think without worrying, emphasizing the tranquility of the composition.

Perhaps what is most striking about *Woman with a Water Jug* is the profound realism it presents. Realism is a style many Dutch artists of the time conveyed in their works. Vermeer accomplished this through significant attention to detail, which interplays with his mastery of light. As the woman opens the window, light projects into the room, casting shadows and creating an illusion of space. Vermeer's technique is deepened with his expression of how this light interacts with different materials in the room. For example, while light creates shadows on the opaque wall, it also shines through the thin, white headpiece the woman wears, indicative of the headpiece's translucent qualities. Vermeer also recognized that light is composed of colors, and, with great detail, he paints reflections off of surfaces modified by colors nearby.² The blue drape in the background reflects as dark blue in the side of the metallic water pitcher, and the basin holding the water pitcher reflects the red tablecloth beneath it. The shadows, reflections and presentation of light within materials creates a realistic aura that is only enhanced by details in the room such as the map of the Netherlands on the wall, the jewelry box on the table, and the woman's headpiece, all societal norms that realistically represent seventeenth century Dutch culture.

While *Woman with a Water Jug* is replete with stylistic elements of the time, it lacks iconographic significance. The painting's simplicity in symbolism is perhaps reflective of the

² Fred S. Kleiner and Helen Gardner, *Gardner's Art through the Ages* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2013), 314.

ordinariness of life it tries to convey. Regardless of its deeper meaning, it is certainly a work that comes to represent the styles that Vermeer used in many of his paintings, such as depicting genre scenes, imbuing a sense of peace and familiarity and establishing a realistic effect through his mastery of detail and light, all characteristics of seventeenth century Dutch art. Some of Vermeer's works are so realistic in their pictorial light that a number of art historians believe that he used tools such as mirrors and the camera obscura to emulate a realistic effect.³ This explains the fact that his name became widely known and his paintings more appreciated only after his death, when the camera was invented. While Vermeer's works are undoubtedly profound, the impacts of his art were not far reaching during his lifetime.

In contrast to *Woman with a Water Jug*, Rembrandt's *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* rejects the gentle naturalism of Dutch art, and instead imparts deep, dark and historic significance. The painting depicts Aristotle as he holds a golden chain and reaches forward to rest his hand on a bust of Homer. The historic subject of the work differs from the ordinary, domestic subject of *Woman with a Water Jug*, and evokes a sense of detachment, the distance of centuries, as opposed to one of immediate familiarity. In fact, it was extremely uncommon to find historic figures in seventeenth century Dutch art, a norm that Rembrandt chose to deviate from in many of his works. On the rare occasion that philosophers were painted in the Netherlands, they were generally portrayed actively interacting outdoors, in stark contrast to *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* in which Aristotle is alone with his thoughts in a dark and dreary room.⁴

Like Vermeer, Rembrandt was a master of light, but instead of using it to adhere to Dutch standards to express realism, Rembrandt used light to convey emotion, character and mood. In

³ Kleiner, *Gardner's Art through the Ages*, 313.

⁴ Menno Jonker, "Rembrandt's Philosopher: Aristotle in the Eye of the Beholder," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 9, no. 1 (2017), <https://www.doi.org/10.5092/jhna.2017.9.1.12>.

Aristotle with a Bust of Homer, Rembrandt illuminates Aristotle, the bust of Homer and the golden chain with a soft, faltering light. In contrast, the rest of the painting is dark and shadowy. This technique of dramatically using contrast to isolate and highlight particular figures and objects against a background of intense darkness is called tenebrism. Tenebrism was uncommon in most Dutch genre scenes, landscapes and portraits. The uniqueness of this style is evident when it is contrasted with that of Vermeer's *Woman with a Water Jug* where he portrays a full display of the subject and her surroundings in a clear, vibrant image-like form. Furthermore, most earlier artists who would use similar techniques to tenebrism would abruptly display the contrast between light and dark. Rembrandt, however, developed a revolutionary approach of subtly blending light and dark together, otherwise known as gradation. By using gradation Rembrandt rendered character, mood and suggested that variations in light can be read as emotional differences.⁵

The light and shadows in *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* suggests a level of complexity, a dramatic effect evoking a world beyond the picture plane. This differs from *Woman with a Water Jug* whose essence is the mere simplicity in conveying daily life. Culminating the aura of intense emotion generated by light, Rembrandt painted Aristotle looking off into the distance at a point beyond the picture plane, channeling the emotion towards deep thought and internal reflection. This is intensified by Aristotle's hands holding onto the illuminated gold chain and the bust of Homer. The viewer can't help but wonder, "what is Aristotle thinking about?" Although this thoughtfulness is similar to the woman in Vermeer's painting, Vermeer's overall simplicity suggests a naïveté in the young woman's far off gaze and shy smile, whereas Rembrandt portrays a philosopher who knows too much. In contrast to Vermeer's painting, *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* is not just an appearance but an expression of inner life. Rembrandt's painting delves into

⁵ Kleiner, *Gardner's Art through the Ages*, 310.

the subject's inner psychological world whereas Vermeer's tells a more superficial story.

With such emotional and psychological depth on the surface, it is no wonder that *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* is replete with iconographic significance. This contrasts with *Woman with a Water Jug* whose simplicity is expressed almost through its lack of iconography. The illumination of Aristotle, with a gold chain in one hand and the bust of Homer in the other hand, draws the viewer's attention as to what Aristotle can be contemplating as he stares off into the distance. Just as Aristotle is a historical figure to the viewer, Homer is a historical figure to Aristotle, a figure who embodies intellect, humility and legacy. On the other hand, both literally and figuratively, Aristotle holds a seemingly heavy gold chain; a chain with a portrait of who historians take to be Alexander the Great, a symbol of strength, power and material wealth.⁶ Just as the gold chain weighs upon Aristotle, so too the centuries weigh upon the world. Aristotle grapples with questions as he rests his hand on Homer, his historical figure, and viewers as well ask themselves questions as they rest their eyes on Aristotle and Alexander the Great, the viewer's historical figures: when all is said and done, how are human beings remembered? Are people remembered for their intellect, humility and depth, or for their material wealth, influence and strength? Hidden in the background, obscured by the shadows, one can make out a curtain slightly pulled aside, revealing a pile of books, the ultimate expression of worldly intellect; perhaps the curtain is exposing not just the room decor, but also the answers to the questions that weigh so heavily on Aristotle and all of humanity.

Human beings contemplate how they will be remembered, and what legacy they will leave behind. Rembrandt clearly grappled with these questions as he amassed fame and material wealth during his lifetime. Through an in depth analysis of Vermeer's *Woman with a Water Jug*, a work

⁶ Jonathan Jones, "Aristotle with a Bust of Homer, Rembrandt (1653)," *The Guardian*, July 27, 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2002/jul/27/art.homer>.

adhering to the standards of seventeenth century Dutch art, and Rembrandt's *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer*, a work veering from the standards of seventeenth century Dutch art, an answer becomes clear. Fame and recognition stems from creativity; from taking initiative and daring to be different. Rembrandt was innovative and painted with styles and psychological depth, unique in his time. He added himself into the framework of societal norms, and it was precisely this uniqueness that contributed to his timely success. Vermeer, on the other hand, created beautiful works of art within the standards of his time period, and as a result gained minimal fame and respect. It was only after the invention of the camera in the 19th century, when a new way of capturing the reality of the world came to the stage, that Vermeer's paintings were recognized for displaying a reality so similar to the new camera; ultimately making both Rembrandt and Vermeer titans of seventeenth century Dutch art. Though they differed in their styles, effects and approaches to societal norms, both Rembrandt and Vermeer undoubtedly left legacies that live on in their art, a culmination of the ultimate human experience.

The Dangers Within: Fears of Imprisonment in Enlightenment France¹

Professor Jeffrey Freedman

The historian Jean Delumeau begins his classic study of fear in late-medieval and early-modern Europe by citing Montaigne's description of arriving after nightfall in the town of Augsburg in 1580. To enter the town, Montaigne wrote, the traveler had to pass through a daunting series of protective barriers—hidden doors and iron gates that slammed shut behind him as he advanced; a drawbridge suspended above a moat; and several dark or dimly lit rooms. In the last of those rooms, a bronze vase hung from a chain. Into that vase the traveler deposited his travel money, which the town guard reeled in by pulling on the chain. If the amount was enough to satisfy the required entrance fee, the guard would activate one final door allowing the traveler to pass into the town; if it was not enough, the traveler would be condemned to spend the rest of the night confined in the room. That the citizens of Augsburg would erect so formidable a wall against the threat of external dangers testifies to the general atmosphere of insecurity prevailing at that time. It also provides Delumeau with the framing synecdoche for his study, that of the West as a “besieged fortress” (*cit  assi g e*), a fear-ridden civilization struggling to defend itself against the multiple dangers that assailed it during the roughly three hundred years from the advent of the Black Death to the end of the age of religious wars.²

But now, by way of comparison, consider the description of another fortress, that of the Ch teau de Vincennes, the donjon on the outskirts of Paris in which the future Revolutionary leader

¹ This article has been published in a revised form in *Modern Intellectual History* 14, no. 2 (August 2017): 339-364, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479244315000463> and is reprinted with permission. This version is published under a Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND license. No commercial redistribution or reuse allowed. Derivative works cannot be distributed.   Cambridge University Press 2016.

² Jean Delumeau, *La Peur en Occident (XIVe-XVIIIe si cles). Une cit  assi g e* (Paris, 1978), 1-2. Delumeau's reference is to Montaigne, *Journal de voyage*, ed. M. Rat (Paris, 1955), 47-48.

the comte de Mirabeau was confined by *lettres de cachet* from 1777 to 1780. Following his release, Mirabeau published an account of his ordeal at Vincennes, *Des Lettres de cachet et des prisons d'état*, in which he describes in minute detail all the physical barriers separating the prison from the outside world—the deep and wide moat surrounding the donjon, the high towers, thick walls, iron gates, and doors opening onto doors, all loaded with locks and bolts and guarded by vigilant sentries.³ The description bears a certain resemblance to that which Montaigne had offered two hundred years earlier of the urban fortifications at Augsburg. In this case, however, the barriers do not evoke the promise of protection against external threats so much as the terror of incarceration.⁴

From walls that repel to walls that confine? So stark a contrast would be misleading as an account of historical change if taken literally. Prisons, after all, existed in the late sixteenth century; defensive fortifications in the late eighteenth. By the time of Mirabeau's imprisonment at Vincennes, however, defensive fortifications did not any longer surround towns in the interior of the French kingdom. Beginning in the seventeenth century, the French monarchy had set about building a *cordon sanitaire* of fortresses along its frontiers, while fortifications in the interior of the kingdom, including those of the capital, were either dismantled or allowed to decay.⁵ Fragments of the old defensive walls survived here and there, but they did not any longer betoken a sense of imminent danger lurking beyond the gates. That Paris in effect lay open to attack testified to a heightened sense of security within the kingdom.

³ [Honoré-Gabriel Riqueti, comte de Mirabeau], *Des Lettres de cachet et des prisons d'état* (Hamburg [sic—i.e., Neuchâtel], 1782), 2 : 43-45.

⁴ On the contrast between protective barriers and prison walls, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, 1977), 116. The prison walls to which Foucault is referring, however, are those of the nineteenth-century penitentiary rather than of an eighteenth-century donjon.

⁵ Michael Wolfe, *Walled Towns and the Shaping of France: From the Medieval to the Early Modern Era* (New York, 2009), 123-70.

The establishment of perimeter defenses, the “defortification” of French towns, and the pacification of the kingdom were one side of a process of absolutist state-building; the other side was that the state itself became a new source of fears. In the eighteenth century, political fears proliferated—fears of overzealous police agents, whom Parisians suspected of abducting children from the streets of working-class neighborhoods;⁶ of spies (*mouches*), who eavesdropped on conversations in cafés and private social gatherings, creating an atmosphere of distrust in which even friends trembled to speak candidly to one another;⁷ and of *lettres de cachet*, the administrative arrest warrants that allowed for the imprisonment or exile of subjects without any formal presentation of charges, judicial proceedings or accompanying publicity.⁸ These fears took multiple forms and cut across class boundaries, but they coalesced in the belief, voiced with increasing frequency and increasing stridency during the last decades of the Old Regime, that the monarchy was degenerating into “despotism.” And the most potent symbols of despotism were state prisons of the kind that Mirabeau described. Part of a growing body of works dedicated to exposing the frightening reality of life behind prison walls, Mirabeau’s description of Vincennes

⁶ On the fear of child abductions, which exploded in the Paris riots of spring 1750, see Arlette Farge and Jacques Revel, *The Vanishing Children of Paris: Rumor and Politics before the French Revolution*, trans. Claudia Miéville (Cambridge, Mass., 1991).

⁷ Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Tableau de Paris* (Amsterdam, 1782), 1: 194.

⁸ The fear of police surveillance, spies, and imprisonment by *lettres de cachet* shadowed the lives of practically everyone associated with the production and circulation of prohibited books, as Robert Darnton has depicted in his numerous works on Grub Street and the underground book trade, from the essays collected in *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982) to his more recent studies of libels, *The Devil in the Holy Water or the Art of Slander from Louis XIV to Napoleon* (Philadelphia, 2010) and censorship, *Censors at Work: How States Shaped Literature* (New York, 2014), esp. 59-86; and as Gudrun Gersmann shows in her study of the same milieu: *Im Schatten der Bastille. Die Welt der Schriftsteller, Kolporteur und Buchhändler am Vorabend der französischen Revolution* (Stuttgart, 1993), esp. 182-228. It would be a mistake, however, to view the expanding police apparatus as purely repressive, as recent work on the police has emphasized. See, above all, Vincent Milliot, *Un Policier des Lumières, suivi de Mémoires de J. C. P. Lenoir* (Seyssel, 2011); and Vincent Denis, *Une Histoire de l'identité, France 1715-1815* (Seyssel, 2008).

both reflected and shaped the mounting fear of imprisonment during the last phase of the Old Regime.⁹ Its significance, when compared to Montaigne's description of the urban fortifications at Augsburg, lay in its shift of perspective: the inward displacement of the object of fear. The traditional extra-mural fears of marauding armies, barbarian invaders, or criminal bands had given way, in Mirabeau's text, to the fear of what would befall the confined self.

The inward displacement of fear went together, moreover, with a growing anxiety about fear itself. In the eighteenth century, fear became a problem, especially in the eyes of the *philosophes*, for whom the conquest of irrational fear was both a condition and a goal of Enlightenment. Analyses of fear, of its sources, its symptoms, and its consequences, multiplied, as did proposals for combating it—notably, in the counter-phobic strategies of Enlightenment pedagogy. In *Emile*, for example, Rousseau devised a program of education with the goal of steeling his imaginary pupil against a long list of age-old fears, including the fears of snakes, masks, the night and ultimately of death itself. While such concerns were not peculiar to the Enlightenment in France, their specifically political dimension was. The two main conditions for the emergence of modern political fears—a powerful centralized state and a vigorous print culture—coalesced in France sooner than they did anywhere else.¹⁰

⁹ The most-frequently depicted prison in the eighteenth century was not Vincennes but the Bastille. On images of the Bastille, see Monique Cotret, *La Bastille à prendre. Histoire et mythe de la forteresse royale* (Paris, 1986); and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink and Rolf Reichardt, *Die "Bastille." Zur Symbolgeschichte von Herrschaft und Freiheit* (Frankfurt a/M, 1990). John Bender discusses the representations of prisons in eighteenth-century English fiction. Those representations, however, do not correspond to the images of the Bastille current in eighteenth-century France. The main difference was that the famous French prison was usually pictured as a separate, self-enclosed domain surrounded by impregnable walls; the prisons depicted in English fiction allowed for relatively free and easy exchanges with the outside world. Cf. Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago, 1987)

¹⁰ The starting point for the many historical studies of fear remains Delumeau's *Peur en Occident* (see n. 1). Those studies are now too numerous to be listed individually. Andreas Bähr

The transition to a modern regime of fear did not mean that older, extra-mural fears were permanently banished. The traditional fear of “barbarians at the gates,” though it may have retreated with the establishment of perimeter defenses and the dismantling of town walls, could—and did—return when those defenses were breached. At such moments of acute national crisis, which occurred, for example, in the late summer of 1792 following the Brunswick Declaration and the fall of Longwy and Verdun to the advancing Prussian armies, or again in 1870-71 at the time of the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune, time-honored patterns of behavior reasserted themselves: gates came down and drawbridges went up, albeit metaphorically.¹¹ Nor did the centuries-old fear of scarcity and hunger or the equally old fear of vagabonds suddenly dissipate.

provides a useful survey, as well as a critique of Delumeau’s approach, in his study of the descriptions of fear in the seventeenth century: *Furcht und Furchtlosigkeit. Göttliche Gewalt und Selbstkonstruktion im 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2013), 21-54. According to Bähr, Delumeau’s work reflects a “dialectic of Enlightenment” model of fear: it posits a historical transition from pre-Enlightenment object-related fear (*Furcht*) to post-Enlightenment existential fear (*Angst*). The *Furcht*-*Angst* opposition, which Bähr regards as problematic, is crucial to much of the literature on the history of fear, including the two principal studies on eighteenth-century Germany: Christian Begemann, *Furcht und Angst im Prozess der Aufklärung: Zu Literatur- und Bewusstseinsgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt a/M, 1987); and Hartmut Böhme und Gernot Böhme, *Das Andere der Vernunft. Zur Entwicklung von Rationalitätsstrukturen am Beispiel Kants* (Frankfurt a/M, 1983). In comparison to the German scholarship, the work on fear in eighteenth-century France seems both sparse and under-theorized. While individual episodes of fear have been studied, there is no synthetic account of the subject. Jacques Berchtold and Michel Porret have edited a conference volume: *La Peur au XVIIIe siècle. Discours, représentations, pratiques* (Geneva, 1994). More recently, Ronald Schechter has published an article surveying the shifting meanings, both positive and negative, of the concept of “terror” in the European Enlightenment with a particular emphasis on France: “Conceptions of Terror in the European Enlightenment,” in *Facing Fear: The History of an Emotion in Global Perspective*, eds. Michael Laffan and Max Weiss (Princeton, 2012), 31-53.

¹¹ Timothy Tackett describes the reaction of panic in late August 1792 to the reports of an imminent Prussian invasion: *The Coming of the Terror in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 2015), 207-10. On the siege mentality at the time of the Paris Commune, see John Merriman, *Massacre: The Life and Death of the Paris Commune* (New York, 2014).

Those highly combustible fears came together in the summer of 1789 to produce the explosion of the Grande Peur.¹²

The survival of older fears into the eighteenth century and beyond shows that the history of fear is not a unidirectional process. It embodies what the German philosopher Ernst Bloch described as the “simultaneity of the non-simultaneous” (*die Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*).¹³ In order to capture its complexity and its contradictions, one has to be mindful of the coexistence at any given moment of fears originating in different historical epochs.

Yet it is not possible, as a practical matter, simultaneously to study all the fears existing in a given period. In what follows, I concentrate on the new trends in the eighteenth century, beginning with the problematization of fear, and especially political fear, in the discourse of Enlightenment and moving from there to the fear of imprisonment as emblematic of the inward turn in the nature of political fear. I conclude with some general remarks on the afterlife of eighteenth-century fears in the Gothic literature of the nineteenth century.

I. The Analytics of Fear

The oft-repeated association of fear with despotism in the eighteenth century went back to one source in particular: Montesquieu’s *L’Esprit des lois*.¹⁴ The famous doctrine of the “separation of powers,” the concept of “intermediary bodies,” and the celebration of the British constitution—

¹² Georges Lefebvre, *The Great Fear of 1789: Rural Panic in Revolutionary France*, trans. Joan White (New York, 1973), esp. 7-23.

¹³ Bloch developed the concept of “Ungleichzeitigkeit” in connection with his historical critique of fascism: *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (Zurich, 1935).

¹⁴ On the idea of fear in Montesquieu’s political philosophy, see especially Judith Shklar, *Montesquieu* (Oxford, 1987); and Corey Robin, *Fear: The History of a Political Idea* (Oxford, 2004), 51-72. Melvin Richter provides a general overview of Montesquieu’s political thought in his introduction to *The Political Theory of Montesquieu*, ed. and trans. Melvin Richter (Cambridge, 1977), 1-111.

all those highly influential and oft-cited ideas from Montesquieu's magnum opus acquired their full meaning only when set in opposition to the extreme form of political corruption, a type of government that Montesquieu labeled "despotism" and of which the underlying "principle" was "fear" (*crainte*). Under a despotic system of government, neither law nor tradition limited the prince's power, and fear alone deterred subjects from rebelling—the fear of punishment by the state as well as the more diffuse fear inculcated by religion. The combination of those two factors, "fear added to fear" (*une crainte ajoutée à la crainte*), was enough to keep subjects in a state of abject submission, but only so long as the regime of fear was maintained.¹⁵ Because neither virtue (the principle of republics) nor honor (the principle of monarchies) had any influence in a despotic state, the prince could not relax his grip for even a moment. In fact, he was obligated constantly to outdo himself in cruelty and brutality; otherwise, his subjects would soon become inured to terror and the prospect of punishment would no longer deter them from committing crimes or taking up arms against the state.¹⁶

Where did such despotic regimes exist? For reasons of climate, geography, religion, and national spirit, Montesquieu thought that the natural home of despotism was Asia, a view that reflected an enduring Orientalist prejudice.¹⁷ As many scholars have shown, however, his main concern was not Oriental despotism. It was that Europe—and especially France—might be facing an Asiatic future. Such a future was by no means certain: as a former judge in the Parlement of

¹⁵ On "fear" (*crainte*) as the principle of despotism and the necessity in such regimes of maintaining fear without any interruption or diminution, as well as the special influence of religion as an additional source of fear in despotisms, Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, vol 1 of *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. André Masson (Paris, 1950), 3.9: 35-36; 5.14: 80-81.

¹⁶ On the logic of escalating brutality in despotic regimes, see Montesquieu's comments on punishments in Japan: *De l'esprit des lois*, 6.13: 115-18.

¹⁷ On Orientalist themes in Montesquieu's work, see Madeleine Dobie, *Foreign Bodies: Gender, Language, and Culture in French Orientalism* (Stanford, 2001), 35-82.

Bordeaux, Montesquieu believed that the slide toward despotism could be halted by strengthening such “intermediary bodies” as the *parlements* and by guaranteeing the complete independence of the judiciary. But the historical signs were not encouraging. In France, the reduction of the old feudal nobility to a class of servile courtiers boded ill for the cause of liberty, as did the harassment of the *parlements* by the Crown. Unlike the English, moreover, the French did not enjoy a right of habeas corpus, nor did they have any protection against arbitrary arrest or extrajudicial imprisonment. If current trends continued, they faced a bleak future indeed—a world such as Montesquieu had evoked in miniature in the harem of *Les Lettres persanes*, a world so filled with fear as to make death seem preferable to life. The mere possibility of such a future supplied the ultimate ground for Montesquieu’s defense of liberal institutions, a philosophy that the political theorist Judith Shklar described as the “liberalism of fear.”¹⁸

Of course, not all the *philosophes* embraced Montesquieu’s brand of “liberalism” (to use Shklar’s admittedly anachronistic term). Voltaire, who took a much more favorable view of the Crown’s historical role than did Montesquieu, derided his defense of the *parlements*. But all the *philosophes*, whatever they may have thought of the relative merits of the *thèse royale* and the *thèse nobiliaire*, would have endorsed Montesquieu’s ultimate goal of reducing the burden of fear. That goal united them at the same time that it set them apart from a long tradition of Christian teaching on the subject of the passions. Thinkers in that tradition viewed fear as a useful counterweight to strong and ungovernable passions. Such a view commended itself in particular to theologians who emphasized the doctrine of Original Sin and who interpreted ungovernable passions as signs of man’s fallen nature. For those theologians, it was pious to fear the wrath of

¹⁸ Shklar, *Montesquieu*, 89. On the “liberalism of fear” more generally, see Shklar, “The Liberalism of Fear,” in *Political Thought and Political Thinkers*, ed. Stanley Hoffmann (Chicago, 1998), 3-20.

God, the torments of hellfire, or the temptations of the devil. Such fears humbled overweening pride and fostered Christian humility.¹⁹ Christian thinkers, however, were not the only ones to embrace the idea of using fear to counteract other, more destructive passions. One can find that idea at work in the thought of neo-pagan thinkers of the Renaissance such as Machiavelli, who counseled the prince on the importance of inspiring fear in his subjects, and above all Hobbes, whose whole political philosophy rested on fear—specifically, the fear of death. In Hobbes’s account of the origins of political society, the fear of death supplies the motive for human beings to quit the unruly, passion-tossed state of nature—the *bellum omnium contra omnes*—and to enter into the covenant establishing the commonwealth. It appears therefore as a form of political intelligence: better to submit to the absolute power of the sovereign than to endure the constant fear of living in a state of nature.²⁰

To the French *philosophes*, the premises as well as the conclusions of such reasoning were repugnant.²¹ Thinkers as diverse as Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot, H elvetius, and Rousseau all rejected the idea that the passions were inherently evil, let alone sinful. As part of their larger

¹⁹ The valorization of fear—or what Jean Delumeau called the “evangelism of fear” (*pastorale de la peur*)—was particularly characteristic of the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The distinctive feature of that tradition was to lay greater stress on the Passion than the Resurrection, sin than pardon, hell than heaven. On the “*pastorale de la peur*,” see Delumeau, *Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture*, trans. Erich Nicholson (New York, 1990), 327-557. On fear of God as a religious virtue in the early-modern period, see in particular B ahr, *Furcht und Furchtlosigkeit*, esp. 55-184.

²⁰ On the role of fear in Hobbes’s political philosophy, see Robin, *Fear*, 31-50.

²¹ While the *philosophes* rejected Hobbes’s political philosophy, they nonetheless took it very seriously. Diderot was the author of the long entry in the *Encyclop die* on Hobbes, whom he called “the apologist of tyranny” (“Hobbisme,” in *Encyclop die* [ARTFL], 8:232-41); and Rousseau’s political philosophy can be read as a sustained response to and refutation of Hobbes. How the *philosophes* responded to the challenge of Hobbes is a recurrent theme in the recently published survey of the Enlightenment by Anthony Pagden: *The Enlightenment and Why It Still Matters* (New York, 2013), esp. 56-64.

commitment to promote human happiness in this world, they sought to rehabilitate the (moderate) passions; and along with that rehabilitation went a corresponding devaluation of fear. Seen from their perspective, fear did not supply an antidote to man's tempestuous nature so much as it poisoned his existence. The less of it, therefore, the better.²²

The list of fears whose baneful influence the *philosophes* decried was a long one. It included not only the political fears discussed by Montesquieu but also a wide range of religious fears, from the belief in purgatory and hell to the existence of the devil. Not all forms of fear, however, were subject to the same degree of suspicion and critique. To help separate the really pernicious from the relatively benign forms, the *Encyclopédie* developed what could be described as an analytics of fear, a set of categories and definitions that anticipated, in some respects, psychoanalytic distinctions such as the one between "realistic" and "neurotic" fear.²³

At the bottom of the scale was what the *Encyclopédie* called simply "*peur*." Such an emotion resulted from "the vivid apprehension of some danger" or "the idea of imminent peril." The person who experienced fear of that kind was expressing a healthy survival impulse, "a love of self-preservation" (*amour de notre conservation*) similar to the passion of "self-love" (*amour de soi*) that Rousseau imputed to man in a state of nature. Somewhat less benign because more paralyzing

²² For a recent discussion of the idea of happiness in the Enlightenment, see Darrin McMahon, *Happiness. A History* (New York, 2006), 197-252. Ronald Schechter observes that the *philosophes* accepted the utility of fear, or more specifically "terror," in certain specific domains—notably, warfare and the punishment of crime. They recognized, in other words, that it was useful to strike fear in the hearts of enemy soldiers and would-be criminals. But recognition of that fact did not negate their overall commitment to reducing the burden of fear in human existence. See Schechter, "Conceptions of Terror in the European Enlightenment."

²³ The distinction between "realistic" and "neurotic" fear (*Angst*) was developed by Freud in the "Twenty-Fifth Introductory Lecture on Psycho-Analysis" (1916-17), then refined and substantially modified in "Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety" (1926) and the "Thirty-Second New Introductory Lecture on Psycho-Analysis" (1933). See *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey (London, 1956-74), 15: 392-411; 20: 77-175; 22: 81-111.

were the extreme forms of fear that the *Encyclopédie* listed in ascending order—first “*frayeur*” (fright), then “*terreur*” (terror). Even those, however, were described in fairly neutral language. The really poisonous form of fear was what the *Encyclopédie*, following Montesquieu in *L’Esprit des lois*, called “*crainte*” (dread).²⁴ In the article on “*crainte*,” an entry three times as long as the one dealing with “*peur*, *frayeur*, and *terreur*,” the Chevalier de Jaucourt, a disciple of Montesquieu and close collaborator of Diderot, laid stress on the utter “uselessness” of such a passion. Far from signaling the approach of danger, “*crainte*” detached itself from its ostensible object and floated free of temporal coordinates. It did not therefore produce an experience with a sharply drawn beginning and end, so much as a condition, a permanent state of mind, the very horror of which moved Jaucourt to lyrical heights:

How many people have become miserable from their fear of becoming miserable, how many ill from their fear of falling ill? ... Other evils make themselves felt while they exist, and the pain lasts only as long as the cause. But *la crainte* extends into the past, into the present, and into a future that is not and perhaps will never be. The enemy of our repose, she knows only evil—often mistakenly—and, in addition, removes—annihilates, so to speak—the real goods that we enjoy and takes delight in corrupting all the pleasures of life. She is therefore an ingeniously tyrannical passion, one that, far from drawing honey from flowers, sucks out only the bitterness and dashes merrily toward the sad visions that consume her.²⁵

Though the feminine pronouns may sound strange in English, they are necessary in order to capture Jaucourt’s personification of *la crainte*. Endowed by him with all the attributes of subjecthood—willing, desiring, and knowing—*la crainte* resembled a jealous goddess, avenging fury, or even,

²⁴ Louis de Jaucourt, “*Crainte*”; “*Peur*, *Frayeur*, *Terreur*,” in *Encyclopédie* (ARTFL), 4 : 428-29; 12: 480. The life-affirming aspect of “*peur*” comes through even more clearly in the article on “*Crainte*” than in the article on “*Peur*, *Frayeur*, *Terreur*.” In the former, Jaucourt seeks to identify the debilitating effects of “*crainte*,” which he does by contrasting them to the healthy effects of “*peur*.” The claim that “*peur*” springs from a “love of self-preservation” (*amour de notre conservation*) is contained in the article on “*Crainte*.”

²⁵ Jaucourt, “*Crainte*.” It must be admitted, however, that the *Encyclopédie* as a whole was not perfectly consistent in its definitions. Diderot contributed an entry on “*allarme*, *terreur*, *effroi*, *frayeur*, *épouvante*, *crainte*, *peur*, *appréhension*” (1: 277-78), the definitions of which did not correspond to those given by Jaucourt.

considering its pleasure in doing evil for the sake of evil, the devil. One might say that Jaucourt demonized *la crainte*, though not literally: none of the *encyclopédistes* really believed in the existence of the devil. It was as if *la crainte* had lodged itself in the conceptual space left empty by the withdrawal of the devil from the scene of human suffering.

How to exorcise so devilishly perverse a passion? The simplest solution was, in fact, not to exorcise it at all, but rather to prevent it from developing in the first place. That was why in *Emile*, Rousseau was so insistent on keeping his fictional pupil away from doctors: “I do not know of what illnesses the doctors cure us,” he wrote, “but I do know that they give us quite fatal ones: cowardice, pusillanimity, credulousness, and terror of death [*terreur de la mort*]... The lying art of medicine... does less to cure illnesses than to inspire a fear [*effroi*] of them, less to postpone death than to make it felt ahead of time.”²⁶ Rousseau’s view of medicine could hardly have been more damning. And yet, ironically, he also borrowed a page from the textbook of eighteenth-century medical wisdom in designing Emile’s education. To cure Emile of his fear of the night, Rousseau proposed a remedy modeled on the logic of smallpox inoculation. That remedy was to fight fear with fear, to expose Emile to the night until he ceased to be afraid of it.²⁷

Ultimately, the goal of Rousseau’s pedagogy was to endow his pupil with strength of character and immunize him against such irrational terrors as would prevent him from becoming a good man and a good citizen. The main culprit, therefore, was not this or that particular fear so

²⁶ Rousseau, *Emile ou De l’éducation*, vol. 4 of *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond (Paris, 1969), 1: 269-70. The English translation cited in the text comes from: *Emile or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York, 1979), 54.

²⁷ Emile, in *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 381-385. Rousseau did not, however, propose that children should be exposed to the night individually. The technique he advocated was to organize some kind of night game in which children would participate as a group. On the counter-phobic strategies in Rousseau’s pedagogy, see Jean Starobinski, “Surmonter la peur,” in *La Peur au XVIIIe siècle*, 87-95 (esp. 92-95).

much as fearfulness, a disposition or inclination to be afraid. The *philosophes*, however, could hardly hope to achieve through their publications the task of character formation that Rousseau assigned to the tutor. Authors did not have that kind of power over their readers, nor, of course, could they determine who their readers would be. And no doubt many of those whose superstitious and irrational fears the *philosophes* sought to dispel were the ones least likely to read their works, either because they would never, on principle, open such blasphemous and sacrilegious works, or because they lacked the means to acquire them, or because they did not have the literacy skills to read them. To some extent, the Enlightenment campaign against fear was therefore a matter of preaching to the converted. And yet, even among the converted, victory was by no means assured. The *salonnière* Mme. du Deffand, when asked whether she believed in ghosts, said that she did not but that she feared them nonetheless.²⁸ Rational conviction alone was not enough to direct the will.

Nor was it enough, in combating political fears, merely to alter the mental outlook of French subjects. Unlike hell, purgatory, demons, witches, ghosts and all the other imaginary fears inspired by religion, police inspectors, police spies, and prisons really existed. At a bare minimum, the remedy for political fears, such as the fear of imprisonment at the hands of the state, required concrete measures to reduce if not eliminate the use of *lettres de cachet*. But how could anyone outside the councils of state hope to bring about such a change in the policies of an absolutist monarchy? The answer was by appealing to “public opinion.” Though a relatively new concept, “public opinion” emerged during the final decades of the Old Regime as an important force in

²⁸ Cited in Richard Alewyn, “Die Lust an der Angst,” in *Probleme und Gestalten. Essays* (Frankfurt a/M, 1974), 316. Unfortunately, Alewyn does not supply a reference for Mme du Deffand’s *boutade*.

French political life—shadowy, imprecise, and hard to gauge but a force nonetheless.²⁹ The irony, as we shall see shortly, is that the effort to mobilize public opinion against *lettres de cachet* relied in no small measure on scare tactics, or what I will call the “public use of fear.”

II. The Public Use of Fear

Though the origins of *lettres de cachet* went back to the sixteenth century, their use expanded enormously beginning in the reign of Louis XIV. In the eighteenth century, the victims included Jansenist dissidents, magistrates in the parlements, insubordinate workers, undisciplined soldiers, renegade clergymen, and a wide range of authors, from such famous *philosophes* as Voltaire and Diderot to obscure Grub Street hacks who turned out libels for a living. The largest category of victims, however, consisted of individuals imprisoned at the request of their families. Families could address such requests either to the minister in charge of the King’s Household, or to the Lieutenant General of Police in Paris, or to the *intendant* in the provinces; and they could make them on the grounds of libertinism, profligacy, or madness—indeed practically any type of behavior that threatened to produce a scandal and that the families wished to see ended as discreetly as possible. In such cases, the costs of maintaining the prisoners fell on the families that had sought the *lettres de cachet*, not on the state; but many of those arrested at the demand of their families found themselves thrown together in the same state prisons as those arrested by direct order of the government. And a few even ended up in the Bastille, a fortress surrounded by such thick walls of

²⁹ Keith Baker, “Public Opinion as Political Invention,” in *Inventing the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1990), 167-99; and Mona Ozouf, “L’Opinion publique,” in Keith Baker, ed., *The Political Culture of the Old Regime* (Oxford, 1987), 419-434. For a somewhat different approach, which criticizes Baker and Ozouf for treating “public opinion” as merely a discursive construct, see Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York, 1995), esp. 232-46.

mystery and dark legend that it grew into a symbol of Bourbon despotism. Closely associated in the popular imagination with the Bastille, *lettres de cachet* cast a long shadow of fear.³⁰

Not so long a shadow, however, as to darken the lives of most French subjects. Estimates place the number of prisoners confined by *lettres de cachet* in 1789 at between 7,000 and 8,000, a large number when one considers that none of those prisoners had been formally accused of any crime, but small when set against the total population of the French kingdom, which was more than 25 million.³¹ In addition, it should not be forgotten that for every errant youth or drunken, abusive husband confined against his will, there was a family grateful for the opportunity to have that individual shut away. However it may appear to us today, the use of *lettres de cachet* was not self-evidently an evil in the eighteenth century.³² Those who believed that it was an evil had to make the case for it. How did they go about doing so?

Perhaps the most powerfully argued case against *lettres de cachet* came from the pen of Lamoignon de Malesherbes, the friend and protector of the *philosophes* who served at various times during his long career as Director of the Book Trade, magistrate in the Cour des Aides, minister of the King's Household, and ultimately defender of Louis XVI during his trial, before he

³⁰ On the multiplication of *lettres de cachet* beginning in the reign of Louis XIV, see Claude Quétel, *Les Lettres de Cachet. Une légende noire* (Paris, 2011). According to Quétel's estimates (*Les Lettres de Cachet*, 318), anywhere between one and two hundred thousand French subjects were imprisoned for an average duration of two to three years in the period stretching from the reign of Louis XIV to the outbreak of the Revolution. The vast majority of them would have been held in a religious community, house of confinement (*hôpital général*), or beggars' hospice (*dépôt de mendicité*) rather than in a famous state prison like the Bastille. There is no doubt, however, that *lettres de cachet* were closely associated, in the popular imagination, with the Bastille, the dark reputation of which is described by Cotret (*La Bastille à prendre*) and by Lüsebrink and Reichardt (*Die "Bastille"*). On the requests for *lettres de cachet* by families in Paris during the eighteenth century, see in particular Arlette Farge and Michel Foucault, *Le Désordre des familles. Lettres de cachet des Archives de la Bastille* (Paris, 1982).

³¹ Quétel, *Les Lettres de cachet*, 318.

³² Vincent Milliot (*Un Policier des Lumières*, 294-97) discusses the defense of *lettres de cachet* offered by J. C. P. Lenoir, Lieutenant General of Police under Louis XVI.

himself fell victim to the Terror in 1794. In several remonstrances that he wrote on behalf of the Cour des Aides, first to Louis XV in 1767, then to Louis XVI in 1775, Malesherbes offered a scathing indictment of the use of *lettres de cachet*—or rather of their *misuse*, for he did not contest the principle that the king might have to circumvent the normal course of justice in exceptional circumstances.³³ With the multiplication of *lettres de cachet*, however, the king had no knowledge at all of most of the extrajudicial arrest orders that went out under his name. Ministers and their numerous underlings diverted the *lettres de cachet* from their intended function and used them instead to pursue their own personal interests and private acts of vengeance. Even worse, they did so in secret, with hardly any possibility of being called to account. For Malesherbes, secrecy was the enemy of justice, publicity its chief support. And he was convinced that in “the age of printing,” the normal system of justice in France had in fact become more open, transparent and public than ever before. Not only the texts of laws but also trial briefs—the lawyers’ *mémoires judiciaires*—were now printed, he observed: “Judges themselves may be judged by an informed public, and this judgment is much more severe and just when it is exercised through calm and reflective reading than when opinions are carried away in a tumultuous assembly.”³⁴ Immune to such public scrutiny, *lettres de cachet* were the very negation of justice.

The remonstrances in which Malesherbes condemned the misuse of *lettres de cachet* can be tied to a particular view of print culture, one that contrasted the sound judgments reached “through calm and reflective reading” with the volatile opinions of a “tumultuous assembly.” Such

³³ On Malesherbes’s criticisms of *lettres de cachet*, see Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Durham, 1991), 34-36; and Quézel, *Les Lettres de cachet*, 323-25.

³⁴ The English translation of the 1775 remonstrance by the Cour des Aides is drawn from: Keith Michael Baker, ed., *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, vol. 7 of *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization*, ed. John W. Boyer and Julius Kirscher (Chicago, 1987), 69-70.

a view had broad appeal in the late eighteenth century—from Kant’s famous essay, “What Is Enlightenment?” which connected the domain of print with “the public use of reason,” to Condorcet’s *Esquisse d’un tableau du progrès de l’esprit humain*, which associated the invention of the printing press with the development of science and the spread of Enlightenment. In all those accounts, the slow, reasoned reflection encouraged by print stood in sharp opposition to the culture of the spoken word, a domain in which rumors ran rampant and emotions reigned supreme.³⁵

So sharp an opposition, however, hardly did justice to the diversity of rhetorical styles that coexisted within Enlightenment print culture. Even the published lawyers’ briefs—the *mémoires judiciaires* that Malesherbes associated with “calm and reflective reading”—were very far from eschewing emotional appeals. As Sara Maza has shown, the authors of those briefs sought to gain sympathy for their clients by manipulating the narrative techniques of melodrama. They cast their clients as the protagonists of moralistic, sentimental tales—as Virtue undone, or Innocence betrayed—less to provoke “calm and reflective reading” than to elicit tearful compassion.³⁶ Of course the victims of *lettres de cachet* did not have the benefit of lawyers writing briefs on their behalf while they were in prison. And neither were they allowed to speak of their arrest and detention after their release. Prisoners who had been detained in such state prisons as the Bastille or the Château de Vincennes were made to swear an oath of silence as a condition of their liberation. Not all of them, however, honored their oath. In the early 1780s, two recently freed victims of *lettres de cachet*—the comte de Mirabeau and Simon-Nicholas-Henri Linguet—

³⁵ Roger Chartier, “Les Représentations de l’écrit,” in *Culture écrite et société. L’Ordre des livres (XIVe-XVIIIe siècle)* (Paris, 1996), 20-26; Elizabeth Eisenstein, *Divine Art, Infernal Machine: The Reception of Printing in the West from First Impression to the Sense of an Ending* (Philadelphia, 2011), 149-51.

³⁶ Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The causes célèbres of Pre-Revolutionary France* (Berkeley, 1993).

published blockbuster bestsellers in which they described the torments of their imprisonment. In these exposés of life in jail, Mirabeau and Linguet sought to dramatize the iniquity of *lettres de cachet* for a broad public of readers, the vast majority of whom would have had no direct experience of extrajudicial imprisonment. Their depictions of prison life gave concrete shape to the vision of *crainte* evoked by Jaucourt: the image of fear as a relentless and implacable torturer.

III. The Carceral Imaginary

Mirabeau and Linguet took very different paths to prison. The former was an aristocratic libertine, arrested in 1777 and confined for forty-two months in the Château de Vincennes at the request of his father for a variety of scandals, including the abduction of a married woman, with whom he had run off to Holland. The latter was a disbarred lawyer and muck-raking journalist, imprisoned in the Bastille from September 1780 to May 1782 for having antagonized the maréchal de Duras, a powerful and influential *académicien* whom he had managed to offend both publicly in his journal and in a personal letter. In addition, Mirabeau and Linguet differed quite significantly in their political views. The future defender of an English-style constitution in the National Assembly, Mirabeau followed Montesquieu in regarding “despotism” as the supreme evil.³⁷ Linguet, on the other hand, saw the Crown as a potential ally in the fight against privilege, a form of injustice that he denounced in its many institutional incarnations, from the Order of Barristers, to the Booksellers’ Guild, to the Académie française.³⁸ So great were the differences between them

³⁷ There is a large body of literature on Mirabeau, the hero of the Tennis Court Oath and leader of the Constituent Assembly during the early phase of the Revolution. For a brief sketch covering both “halves” of his life, before the Revolution and after, see the article by François Furet in Furet and Mona Ozouf, eds., *A Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), 265-71.

³⁸ Linguet was an enemy of most of the *philosophes*. A self-styled man of the people, he attacked (some would say “libeled”) the established *philosophes* in the manner of Rousseau for their

that they would have been very unlikely to see one another as partners in a common struggle. And yet the works they published on the basis of their experiences in prison—Mirabeau’s *Des Lettres de cachet et des prisons d’état*, which was published in two volumes in 1782, and Linguet’s *Mémoires sur la Bastille*, published in one slender volume the following year—reveal a number of important similarities.

To begin with, both publications emerged from major centers of clandestine French publishing—Mirabeau’s from Neuchâtel in western Switzerland, Linguet’s from London. Printed at exceptionally high pressruns and in multiple editions, they were prohibited in France, but smuggled into the kingdom and circulated widely through the networks of the underground book trade.³⁹ Secondly, both authors used their personal experiences of imprisonment to mount general

complicity with privileged institutions. David Bell has described him as the embodiment of a new type of barrister who emerged during and after the Maupeou reforms at the end of the reign of Louis XV, the lawyer who aspired to a highly visible public role. See Bell, *Lawyers and Citizens: The Making of a Political Elite in Old Regime France* (Oxford, 1994), 134-63. What Linguet was *not*, despite his sometimes slanderous comments on the subject of the *philosophes*, was a counter-Enlightenment author of the kind described by Darrin McMahon in his *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford, 2001). For a general overview of Linguet’s career, see Darline Levy, *The Ideas and Careers of Simon-Nicolas-Henri Linguet: A Study in Eighteenth-Century French Politics* (Urbana, 1980). Discussions of *Mémoires sur la Bastille* are contained in: Cotret, *La Bastille à prendre*, 119-26; and Lüsebrink and Reichardt, *Die “Bastille,”* 29-33.

³⁹ According to Lüsebrink and Reichardt (*Die “Bastille,”* 28-29), the original edition of *Lettres de cachet*, published by Jonas Fauche in Neuchâtel, was printed at the staggeringly high pressrun of 15,000 copies; *Mémoires sur la Bastille* appeared in six different French-language editions as well as in Linguet’s political journal, *Annales politiques, civiles et littéraires du dix-huitième siècle*. On the circulation of those works through the underground book trade in France, see Darnton, “A Clandestine Bookseller in the Provinces,” in *The Literary Underground*, 139. Darnton’s study analyzes the orders of a bookseller in Troyes, a clandestine dealer named Mauvelain who received books from the Société Typographique de Neuchâtel (STN). The recently published on-line database devoted to the STN (Simon Burrows, Mark Curran, Vincent Hiribarren, Sarah Kattau and Henry Merivale, *The French Book Trade in Enlightenment Europe Project, 1769-1794* [<http://fbtee.uws.edu.au/stn/>], 6 May 2014) [“**FBTEE Project**”]) reveals that the STN did not always fill Mauvelain’s orders exactly: Mauvelain ordered 30 copies of the work by Linguet but received only 10; he ordered 21 of the work by Mirabeau but received only 6. The STN did not fill the orders for the simple reason that it did not have enough copies of the

attacks on *lettres de cachet*. Linguet concluded his work by appealing to Louis XVI to destroy the Bastille—an appeal echoed in the frontispiece to the London edition of his work, which depicted a statue of Louis XVI on the site of the Bastille with the ruined, crumbling walls of the fortress in the background and grateful subjects gazing worshipfully at the statue in the foreground. It seems doubtful, however, whether Linguet really believed that Louis XVI would heed such a call. In effect, the target of his work was the same as Mirabeau’s: not to reach the king directly but rather, as Mirabeau put it, “to sway [public opinion],” which “sooner or later exerts a great influence.” And to achieve that goal, both of them pursued the same rhetorical strategy: they sought to make readers participate imaginatively in the horrors of their imprisonment.⁴⁰

What made the imprisonment so horrible? Conditions in the Bastille and the Château de Vincennes were not nearly so harsh as they were in such squalid, overcrowded *hôpitaux* as Bicêtre or La Salpêtrière, the all-purpose institutions of confinement into which were dumped a hybrid population of beggars, vagabonds, petty criminals, the aged, infirm, and insane. Those institutions, discussed by Michel Foucault in his famous account of the Great Confinement (*Grand Renferment*), housed the poor, the abandoned, and the downtrodden, whereas the Bastille and the Château de Vincennes were generally reserved for prisoners of elevated social rank and some financial means.⁴¹ Mirabeau, a nobleman supported by a pension from his father, was not exposed

books in stock. Neither of those books were its own editions. But that does not alter the fact that Mauvelain registered a strong demand for the works. Finally, it is worth noting that the works of Linguet and Mirabeau also circulated widely outside of France. On their diffusion in Germany, see Jeffrey Freedman, *Books Without Borders in Enlightenment Europe: French Cosmopolitanism and German Literary Markets* (Philadelphia, 2012), 227-30.

⁴⁰ The reference to the influence of “public opinion” is in *Des Lettres de cachet et des prisons d’état*, 2: 95. Note that the first volume of Mirabeau’s work is devoted primarily to attacking *lettres de cachet* on historical and philosophic grounds. It is in the second volume that Mirabeau draws on his personal experiences of imprisonment in order to depict the horrors of prison life.

⁴¹ Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York, 1965), 38-64. Foucault’s *Grand-Renferment* thesis has inspired

to any great material privations. Though he alluded once to a “hunger dungeon,” a cell in which prisoners had to survive for a certain period of time on a diet of bread and water as punishment for some infraction, he did not describe the punishment in any detail, nor did he claim to have endured it himself. In fact, his own diet seems to have been quite plentiful, to judge from his complaints on the subject of food, which focused on the dryness of the meats and the lack of seasoning in the sauces.⁴² By comparison, the material hardships of Linguet’s imprisonment seemed severe. He complained bitterly of the cold in the winter, the heat in the summer, a moth infestation in the autumn, and the pestilential odor rising up from the sewers of the rue St. Antoine. But even he did not claim that he had ever been at risk of starving. Both Mirabeau and Linguet described the conditions of their imprisonment in such a way as to suggest that the principal object of their punishment had been to torture the ‘soul’ rather than the body.⁴³

The punishment began with the experience of entering the prison. To penetrate into the interior of Vincennes or the Bastille was to pass over into another world, one completely cut off from the world outside. Mirabeau went to great lengths, as we saw earlier, to describe the many physical barriers the prisoner would traverse on the way to his cell—the moat, towers, walls, gates, and the multitude of doors.⁴⁴ Those barriers symbolized the autarchic nature of prison life. Isolated

a good deal of critical commentary. That debate, however, is not directly relevant to the subject of this article precisely because conditions in the hôpitaux were so profoundly different from those described by Mirabeau and Linguet. I am currently at work on a more general study of fear in Enlightenment France, one chapter of which will be devoted to the fear of incarceration in the hôpitaux among poor and working-class Parisians.

⁴² On the “hunger dungeon” (*cachot de la faim*), see *Des Lettres de cachet*, 2: 25. Mirabeau complains repeatedly about the poor quality of the food, which he attributes to the financial speculations of the prison commander Rougemont.

⁴³ Linguet speaks of “tortures of the soul” (*ces tortures de l’âme*) and says that the goal of imprisonment in the Bastille is “to tear apart souls” (*déchirer les âmes*): *Mémoires sur la Bastille, et la détention de l’auteur dans ce château royal depuis le 27 septembre 1780 jusqu’au 19 mai 1782* (London, 1783), 55, 57.

⁴⁴ *Des Lettres de cachet*, 2: 43-45.

and turned in on itself, the prison was a self-contained regime in which the prison commander, his guards, and the ubiquitous turnkeys ruled over the prisoners like so many sultans, satraps, and vizirs. Unfettered by laws or ethical restraints, they did to the prisoners whatever they pleased—or rather whatever pleased them. And what pleased them above all was tormenting the prisoners, as both Linguet and Mirabeau discovered when they were searched on their arrival. The search—*la fouille*—functioned like some grim rite of passage, an initiation into the malign and sordid universe of prison life: “He [i.e., the prisoner] is as surprised as he is terrified [*effrayé*] to find himself delivered over to the searches and to the groping [*tâtonnements*] of four men whose appearance belies their official duties and makes their actions all the more shameful,” Linguet wrote—“four men who wear uniforms such as would lead one to expect some show of consideration and who are decorated with marks of distinction that presuppose... unblemished service.”⁴⁵ The sexual nature of the “shameful” actions—*tâtonnements*—to which Linguet alluded was hard to miss. Indeed, the whole atmosphere of the prison seemed to be suffused with a kind of predatory sexuality, a point that both Linguet and Mirabeau conveyed by playing on the sexual connotations of the verb “*jouir*” (to enjoy): “The prison commander,” Mirabeau wrote, “is an absolute tyrant who takes pleasure [*jouit*] when he is able to put prisoners in cells, load them with chains, and make them feel the heavy weight of his iron scepter... To inflict suffering is his sweetest pleasure [*faire du mal est sa plus douce jouissance*].” The prison guards, Linguet observed, know quite well that the treatment they inflict is bound to produce despair: “That is one of their most cherished pleasures [*c’est une de leurs plus précieuses jouissances*].”⁴⁶

⁴⁵ *Mémoires sur la Bastille*, 64. Mirabeau also describes the shame and humiliation of the “search” (*la fouille*), an experience that he recalls with “indignation and pain.” See *Des Lettres de cachet*, 2: 47.

⁴⁶ *Des Lettres de cachet*, 2: 42, 60; *Mémoires sur la Bastille*, 76.

Separated by impenetrable barriers from the outside world and subjected to the omnipotent will of their jailers, the prisoners were also isolated from one another—in fact, their exposure to anyone other than their turnkeys was kept to a bare minimum. If one of them had to leave his cell for an interrogation or medical treatment in the “main building” (*corps de logis*), Linguet explained, his turnkey would make a noise to alert others of the prisoner’s passage, and all the curtains, shutters, or blinds of any windows in his path would close before him. In that way, the jailers conveyed to the prisoner the sentiment that “he no longer exists in the world for anyone other than them.”⁴⁷ It was a sentiment inextricably bound up with feelings of utter helplessness and imminent doom: “Every time the door of his cell is opened, the lugubrious jangling of the locks... can sound to the prisoner like the precursor of a death sentence, a signal for the arrival of silent executioners summoned to kill him.”⁴⁸ Of course Linguet was not in fact murdered in his cell, as readers of his work would inevitably realize. To live in constant anticipation of being murdered, however, was a torture in itself. Isolated and powerless, the prisoner could never know from one moment to the next what would happen to him. He existed in a state of permanent anxiety.

In such a state, the prisoner’s mind would float free of its moorings in external reality. A stray sound or smell was enough to turn it loose. Then the mind would supply images corresponding to the sounds and smells; those images would call up other associations, and so on without any possibility of confirmation or refutation. Linguet recalled, for example, how on one occasion he had been awakened at 2 o’clock in the morning by a great commotion in the staircase. People stopped at the cell beneath him. Words were exchanged, groaning could be heard, and there was much coming and going. It was possible, he thought to himself, that a prisoner had been taken

⁴⁷ *Mémoires sur la Bastille*, 71-73.

⁴⁸ *Mémoires sur la Bastille*, 54.

ill and a doctor called to treat him, but equally possible that an executioner had come to kill him—there was no way to know. Then, three days later at the same hour, he heard another noise in front of the same door. This time he detected the sound of what he took to be a coffin being carried into the cell and a body placed inside, followed soon after by the smell of juniper. He did not explain how he identified the sound as that of a coffin, nor did he describe his reaction to the smell of juniper (a plant used widely in early-modern Europe to fumigate rooms infected with Plague). He left it to the reader to imagine how terrifying that odor would have been to a prisoner lying alone in the dark at 2 o'clock in the morning.⁴⁹

Similarly, Linguet described how he had come to believe that his food was being poisoned, and how such a belief had caused him to experience the symptoms of poisoning. Afterward, he realized that his fear may have been unfounded, yet he blamed the Bastille for having created the conditions in which such suspicions could take root and flourish: “even if those apprehensions and those symptoms had been merely the fruit of an overwrought imagination, is it not already a veritable crime that the Bastille occasions such fears [*craintes*] and places the prisoner in a position of absolute powerlessness to defend against the secret machinations that could justify them?”⁵⁰ Even worse than the physical hardships of life in the Bastille were the phantoms of the imagination that such a life awakened.

By candidly describing the phantoms that had tormented him during his imprisonment, Linguet invited readers to consider just how tenuous was the mind's hold on external reality, and how thin the frontier separating reason from madness. Whether deliberately or not, he tapped a deep well of epistemological anxiety among philosophers of the Enlightenment. No less a figure

⁴⁹ *Mémoires sur la Bastille*, 75.

⁵⁰ *Mémoires sur la Bastille*, 86.

than Immanuel Kant worried repeatedly about how to distinguish objective experience from the visions of religious fanatics and the delusions of madmen.⁵¹ Although Linguet did not address that issue in the language of philosophy, he dramatized it vividly in his narrative. Through his astute psychological self-reporting, he showed that an individual cut off from exchanges with other human beings had no reliable way to tell whether he was sane or insane. The experience of isolation opened onto the abyss of solipsism.

Mirabeau did not plunge his readers into quite such terrifying depths. In fact, his work even offered a few moments of comic relief: darkly humorous, biting sarcasm passages in which the cupidity, vanity, and overblown pretensions of the prison commander Rougemont, Mirabeau's nemesis, were held up to ridicule. But Mirabeau too insisted on the connection between imprisonment and madness, claiming that prisoners could easily lose their minds from "the horror of a solitude in which they encounter at every instant the figments of an imagination sharpened by pain." And like Linguet, he laid particular stress on the psychological torments of confinement—"the tedium of being alone," "all the horrors of uncertainty," and the lack of "correspondence," "distractions," and "exercise."⁵² For all their differences, Mirabeau and Linguet came to remarkably similar conclusions about what made the experience of imprisonment such a torture. The question was how readers would react emotionally to their descriptions of that suffering.

One possible reaction was pity, an emotion of the kind that Rousseau considered to be a natural response to the sight of someone else's pain. The rhetoric of both Linguet and Mirabeau, however, aimed to produce something more like sympathy in the literal sense of "suffering with."

⁵¹ Kant's preoccupation with the question of how to distinguish objective experience from mere fantasy went back to his pre-critical writings—above all, *Träume eines Geistersehers* [Dreams of a Spirit Seer] (1766), his response to the mystic Swedenborg. See Hartmut Böhme und Gernot Böhme, *Das Andere der Vernunft*, 233-74; and Begemann, *Furcht und Angst*, 261-73.

⁵² *Des Lettres de cachet*, 1: 267, 262.

Its goal was to inspire in readers the same terrors as were evoked on the page, a duplication of emotional states similar to that which Diderot's *drame bourgeois* strove to accomplish in the theater. Just as the *drame bourgeois* invited the theater audience to feel the pain and sorrow of the tragic hero or heroine represented on the stage, so Linguet and Mirabeau encouraged their readers to identify with the victims of *lettres de cachet*. That many of those readers did not consider themselves to be at any risk of arrest should not matter, Mirabeau wrote: "What man of feeling will need to think of his own situation in order to be frozen with fear at the thought of arbitrary arrest warrants?" (... *quel homme sensible aura besoin de faire ce retour sur lui-même pour être glacé d'effroi en pensant aux ordres arbitraires?*)⁵³

The two former prisoners used various rhetorical techniques to achieve their goal of reproducing in readers the emotional states they depicted on the page. To begin with, both of them narrated their experiences of imprisonment primarily in the third person. Thus the victim of *lettres de cachet* was not the authorial "I," a singular individual, but rather an impersonal "he"—"the prisoner," a role that readers could step into and inhabit imaginatively. Although Linguet used the first-person to recount such intensely personal and unique experiences as the terrifying episode of being awakened at two in the morning, he reverted to the third-person just as soon as he was describing an experience common to all prisoners such as the dreaded *fouille*.

⁵³ *Des Lettres de cachet*, 1: 96. Mirabeau's appeal to "l'homme sensible" echoed the rhetoric of sentimentalism, an emotional style that set a high value on compassion. There is a vast and growing body of research devoted to sentimentalism. See, among others, William Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001), 141-210; Colin Jones, *The Smile Revolution in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford, 2014); Anne Vincent-Buffault, *The History of Tears: Sensibility and Sentimentality in France* (London, 1991); and David Denby, *Sentimental Narrative and the Social Order in France, 1760-1820* (Cambridge, 1994).

Secondly, both Linguet and Mirabeau went to great lengths to emphasize that the same fate to which they had fallen victim could strike anyone. “Which is the inhabitant of countries in which *lettres de cachet* exist who does not have a sharp sword suspended above his head?” Mirabeau asked. All that was required to become the victim of *lettres de cachet* was a bit of bad luck. It was enough to catch the eye of a pretty woman who happened to be the mistress of a powerful and jealous minister, or to be in the way of a courtier whose intrigues required your removal. The next thing you knew you were being spirited off to prison. And once you were locked away, immured in total secrecy and dead to the outside world, there was nothing further you could do about it. “Abandon all hope, you who enter here” (*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che ’ntrate*), the same words Dante found written on the gates of hell would, Mirabeau thought, make a fitting epigraph to be displayed above the entrances of state prisons.⁵⁴

Finally, and most dramatically, both Linguet and Mirabeau sought to evoke fear in the minds of readers by comparing imprisonment to the most terrifying form of confinement imaginable: that of being buried alive. Burial metaphors abounded in both of their works. Mirabeau compared the chateau de Vincennes to a vast “sepulcher” and said of himself that he had been “buried for fifteen months in the most austere solitude”; Linguet spoke of the Bastille as a “grave in which the prisoner was buried alive,” of the isolation in which he had been held as a “funerary shroud,” and of himself after his liberation as a “new Lazarus.”⁵⁵

While readers today might be inclined to dismiss such metaphors as little more than a literary conceit, those images would have resonated with great force in the second half of the eighteenth century. At mid-century, doctors had suddenly begun to issue dire warnings about the

⁵⁴ *Des Lettres de cachet*, 1: 94.

⁵⁵ *Des Lettres de cachet*, 2: 55, 95; *Mémoires sur la Bastille*, 48, 54.

difficulty of distinguishing between “seeming death” and real death and the consequent danger of premature burial. In dozens of treatises, pamphlets, and journal articles, they argued that the only infallible sign of death was the putrefaction of the corpse, and that unless burial were delayed until the onset of putrefaction, mistakes were inevitable and many unsuspecting victims would awaken to find themselves entombed beneath the earth—indeed, those works suggested that a great many people *were* enduring that horrific fate. The medical arguments were carefully reasoned, and yet the doctors did not rely on reasoning alone to make their point, any more than did Linguet and Mirabeau. They also told stories, hundreds of lurid, blood-curdling tales of people who had been buried alive or who had narrowly escaped such a fate. Those tales appear to have had a profound impact on some readers. The salon hostess and wife of the French finance minister Suzanne Necker, for example, was so terrified of being buried alive that she made her husband promise not to bury her until he had attempted a multitude of reanimation techniques, including cutting and burning her seemingly lifeless body.⁵⁶ By piggybacking, so to speak, on the horror-mongering of the doctors, Linguet and Mirabeau used one fear to support another.

Did such scare tactics actually succeed? Of course, one can never say precisely how great was the impact on public opinion of any particular work, even such spectacular bestsellers as *Mémoires sur la Bastille* and *Lettres de cachet*.⁵⁷ There can be little doubt, however, that

⁵⁶ On the fear of premature burial in the second half of the eighteenth century, see Jeffrey Freedman, “The Limits of Tolerance: Jews, the Enlightenment, and the Fear of Premature Burial,” in *Into Print: Limits and Legacies of the Enlightenment. Essays in Honor of Robert Darnton*, ed. Charles Walton (University Park, Pennsylvania, 2011), 177-97. On Mme. Necker, see Antoine de Baecque, *Glory and Terror: Seven Deaths under the French Revolution*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (New York, 2001), 184-203. On the fear of premature burial across the ages, see Jan Bondeson, *Buried Alive: The Terrifying History of Our Most Primal Fear* (New York, 2001).

⁵⁷ That Linguet’s work created quite a stir is clear from the pamphlet war it provoked—a reaction documented in the underground journal *Correspondance secrete, politique et littéraire* published by Louis-François Mettra in Cologne: Lüsebrink und Reichhardt, *Die “Bastille,”* 32. According

Mirabeau's stated goal of turning public opinion against *lettres de cachet* was in fact achieved by the eve of the Revolution. Nearly all the *cahiers de doléances* drafted by the bailiwick assemblies of the Third Estate, as well as many from the First and Second Estates, called for their abolition.⁵⁸ In November 1789, the National Assembly created a special committee on *lettres de cachet* under the direction of none other than Mirabeau. And, in March 1790, the Assembly decreed their formal abolition. Even before that, however, the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, adopted in August 1789, had, in effect, outlawed the practice of extrajudicial imprisonment: "No man may be accused, arrested, or detained except in cases determined by the law and according to the forms it has prescribed," the Assembly famously proclaimed in Article 7. The principle of legal due process defended by the *philosophes* and supported through the public use of fear seemed finally to have prevailed.⁵⁹

IV. From the Old Regime Prison to the *cité sadienne*

to Sara Maza, Linguet and Mirabeau supplied many of the themes for the widely disseminated judicial *mémoire* published in 1786 by the lawyer Lacretelle on behalf of his client the comte de Sanois, a victim of *lettre de cachet*. To win sympathy for Sanois, Lacretelle described the sadistic jailers and the mental torments to which his client had been subject during his imprisonment. See Maza, *Private Lives*, 280. On the Sanois case, see also Lüsebrink, *Kriminalität und Literatur im Frankreich des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1983), 227-28.

⁵⁸ Quézel, *Les Lettres de cachet*, 342. The "public" whose opinion the *cahiers* expressed should not be conflated with the entirety of the French population. According to Sarah Maza (*Private Lives*, 87), lawyers often made up between 70 and 90 percent of the members of the local committees that drafted the *cahiers* in the provinces. In such cases, one would expect the concerns of lawyers to have predominated.

⁵⁹ For a similar argument as applied to the doctrine of natural rights more generally, see Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights. A History* (New York, 2007). According to Hunt, the emotional identification of readers with the characters in sentimental novels contributed to developing their sense of a common humanity, a feeling of kinship with unknown others that was a necessary condition for the emergent ideology of universal rights.

It would be nice to conclude on so triumphant a note, with danger eliminated and fear laid to rest. Unfortunately, the triumph was short-lived. The fear of arbitrary arrest came back with a vengeance in September 1793 when the Convention adopted the Law of Suspects. That law, one of the most important establishing the government of the Terror, defined the category of “suspect” so broadly that hardly anyone could feel safe. Of course those arrested as suspects during the Terror were not, strictly speaking, victims of extrajudicial imprisonment. They were brought before revolutionary tribunals and, if found guilty, executed in public. But such a distinction would have seemed like legal sophistry to the hundreds of thousands of French citizens who had ran afoul of their neighborhood Watch Committees. Those citizens lived in dread anticipation of a late-night knock on the door.⁶⁰

With the dismantling of the Terror came a flood of publications depicting the torments visited on its victims. Such works as *Almanach des prisons* by Philippe-Edme Coittant, published in 1794, and *Histoire des prisons de Paris* by Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Nougaret, a four-volume collection published three years later, invited readers to enter imaginatively into the dark, squalid confines of the Conciergerie and other Revolutionary prisons.⁶¹ While perpetuating the memory of the Terror, those works echoed the prison literature of the Old Regime, as did the increasingly popular genre of Gothic novels, which made extensive use of the fears evoked by Linguet and

⁶⁰ Studies of the Terror are too numerous to be listed. The recently published study of Timothy Tackett evokes the atmosphere of fear prevailing in the capital at the height of the so-called Great Terror during the late spring and early summer of the Year II. By then, according to Tackett, 300,000 “suspects” were either awaiting trial in prison or guarded in their homes: *The Coming of the Terror*, 330, 334. Of course, the fear of arrest during the Terror was a fear not just of imprisonment but also of the guillotine.

⁶¹ Philippe-Edme Coittant, *Almanach des prisons* (Paris, 1794); and Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Nougaret, *Histoire des prisons de Paris*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1797). The references to Coittant and Nougaret I owe to Howard Brown of Binghamton University, who is working on the memory of the Terror during Thermidor and the Directory. My thanks to Prof. Brown for providing me with those references.

Mirabeau—notably, the fears of isolation, madness, sexual violence, and premature burial.⁶² Through the medium of the Gothic, carceral images originating in the polemical literature of the Enlightenment were transmitted to the nineteenth century, an age in which “disciplinary power,” to use the concept of Michel Foucault, extended the regime of confinement to a wide range of social institutions, from military barracks and boarding schools to work houses, factories, orphanages, reformatories, insane asylums, and penitentiaries.⁶³

Plus ça change... ? Before leaping to that conclusion, we should take note of the fact that the authors of Gothic novels used the fear of imprisonment for their own distinctive purposes—not to sway public opinion, as Linguet and Mirabeau had done, but to elicit a frisson of aesthetic pleasure. Such a hybrid emotion, which the German literary critic Richard Alewyn described as “pleasure in fear” (*Die Lust an der Angst*), poses difficult problems of interpretation.⁶⁴ It may be, as Kant argued in his analysis of the sublime, that the aesthetic enjoyment of fear is only possible from a position of relative safety: that fear is cultivated in fiction when it has diminished in everyday life. It may equally be that the pleasure of reading Gothic novels is a defensive reaction

⁶² The most famous Gothic novels were of course English—notably, Mathew Lewis’s *The Monk*, published in 1796. But Lewis visited Paris in 1791, and his novel came out in a French translation just one year after its original publication in English. In the first half of the nineteenth century, French authors made some noteworthy contributions to the Gothic genre, from Victor Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) to Pétrus Borel’s *Madame Putiphar* (1838), a work inspired by the prison memoirs of the renowned escape artist Jean-Henri Latude. On Borel and the links connecting Old Regime prison literature to the Gothic imaginary, as well as the place of carceral images in French Romanticism more generally, see Victor Brombert, “Pétrus Borel, Prison Horrors, and the Gothic Tradition,” *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 2, no. 2 (1969): 143-152; and *La Prison romantique. Essai sur l’imaginaire* (Paris, 1975).

⁶³ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 135-308. According to Foucault’s analysis, “disciplinary institutions” are designed to facilitate surveillance, and thereby instill in their inhabitants the feeling of being perpetually watched. From that standpoint, neither the Bastille nor the Château de Vincennes as described by Linguet and Mirabeau would have qualified as “disciplinary institutions”: the two former prisoners evoked feelings of solitude but not of being subject to surveillance.

⁶⁴ Alewyn, “Die Lust an der Angst,” 307-30.

to ward off feelings of fear. In any case, the aesthetic use of fear in Gothic fiction should be distinguished from the public use of fear in the Enlightenment.

And yet the distinction between those two uses should not be drawn so sharply as to obscure the similarities. The works of Linguet and Mirabeau were, as already noted, bestsellers. In light of their success in the literary market, it seems likely that at least some readers found their representations of prison life darkly fascinating as well as terrifying, or perhaps fascinating *because* terrifying. The revelation of secret worlds hidden within enclosed, walled-in spaces—what Peter Brooks has described as the “claustal” theme of eighteenth-century literature—held a strong fascination throughout the period, from the harem of Montesquieu’s *Lettres persanes* to the convent of Diderot’s *La Religieuse*.⁶⁵ Those spaces evoked fear and desire in equal measure, and so also, in its own way, did the more sinister fictional universe of the Marquis de Sade, an author who was imprisoned at both Vincennes and the Bastille and whose life and work exemplified the connection between the prisons of the Old Regime and the genre of Gothic fiction. The imaginary space Roland Barthes called the “*cit e sadienne*”—a fully self-sufficient and hermetically sealed world with its own time, morals, population and practices—was prefigured in the autarchic image of prison life offered by Linguet and Mirabeau.⁶⁶ Behind the thick walls of the *cit e sadienne* lurked both the terror of annihilation and the thrill of transgression.

⁶⁵ Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven, 1995), 19, 209n26. See also, on representations of cloisters, Robert Shackleton, “The Cloister Theme in French Preromanticism,” in *The French Mind. Studies in Honour of Gustave Rudler*, ed. Will Moore, Rhoda Sutherland, and Enid Starkie (Oxford, 1952), 170-86.

⁶⁶ Roland Barthes, “Sade I,” in *Sade, Fourier, Loyola* (Paris, 1971), 23. The connection between Linguet and Sade is also noted by Cotret: *Bastille   prendre*, 121.

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