

JOURNAL OF ALPHA BETA PHI  
CHAPTER OF PHI ALPHA THETA

**Perspectives  
in  
HISTORY**

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**Perspectives in History** is an annual scholarly publication of the Department of History and Geography. Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the NKU Board of Regents, the faculty of the university, or the student editors of the journal. Manuscripts are welcome from students and faculty.

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Photograph of Great Buddha, Kamakura, Japan by James A. Ramage.



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Vol. XVII, 2001-2002

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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As this year's President of Alpha Beta Phi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, I am pleased to introduce you to the seventeenth volume of *Perspectives in History*. This publication would not have been possible without the hard work of many people. This year has been a great success for our Chapter and we have received recognition on the national, state, local, and university level.

I would like to thank all those who submitted papers and reviews. Your outstanding research and quality writing is what makes this journal so professional. This year's Editor, Ami Van De Ryt, has dedicated countless hours and energy to preparing the final product. I am certain you will enjoy the selection of publications. This year's assistant editors; Arden Steffen, Ryan Springer, and Rachel Noll, provided great support and help during the selection stage. A very special thanks goes to Dr. Ramage for his dedication and unending support. His devotion to the journal is unwavering and it is because of his guidance that we continue to produce such a fine publication.

Record setting is the word that describes this year. Though this is not our primary goal, it is nice to see our Chapter expand and grow. In September we hosted a welcome back breakfast for the History and Geography faculty and staff. We welcomed our new department chair Dr. Jeffrey Williams as he and I both adjusted to our new positions. We organized an extra bake sale this year in September to support United Way and the American Red Cross Relief Fund. We received a recognition award for our outstanding contribution to United Way. Our two other bake sales for Halloween and Valentine's Day were also successful. I would like to thank all those who contributed goods and time. Our Chapter took two field trips last fall. We visited the Louisville Slugger Museum and Kentucky Derby Museum in October. Then in November, we drove to Ft. Knox and toured the Patton Armor and Cavalry Museum. In December we hosted a Holiday Luncheon for the department and collected canned goods for local shelters. Dr. Ramage, Mrs. Ramage, Ryan Springer, and myself traveled to San Antonio to represent our Chapter at the Biennial National Phi Alpha Theta Conference. Ryan delivered a wonderful paper on his research on Voltaire.

We had a record number of students apply for membership this year. Twenty-nine new members were initiated at our annual banquet in April. This interest is in large part due to our increased visibility and recruiting efforts of the Chapter's officers. March saw the largest book sale in this Chapter's history thanks to faculty, student, and community donations. A special thanks to all the faculty who contributed this year. Your donations provided a wide variety of topics for students to browse through. In two days we raised over \$750. Thank you to all those who helped sort the books as well as those who worked the tables. In February, we co-sponsored the first ever Majors Meetings. This was a large undertaking for Dr. Williams and Bonnie May but it was well organized and very informative. Thanks to Bonnie May and the Soup Committee and all who participated, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Share Soup Project was a huge success. Twenty-three student organizations collected 4,423 cans of food for four local shelters. Late-arriving donations we gave to the Parish Kitchen in Covington. Thank you for everyone's hard work and generous donations.

Our Chapter won two awards in the Student Life Office award program at the Syndicate in Newport, April 17, 2002. For the second straight year, we won the Recognition Award as the organization that received the most acclaim through their national organization, press coverage or any other recognition that brought positive acclaim to Northern Kentucky University. For the fifth straight year—since the awards were first organized—we won the Merit Award as one of the top ten student organizations on campus that evidenced an on-going commitment to excellence in all programming and development areas.

We were privileged to co-host the Military History Lecture Series. Under the leadership of Dr. Michael Adams and Bonnie May we hosted six lectures including the president of the Anne Frank Foundation as well as a panel of Tuskegee Airmen.

I would like to thank President Jim Votruba and Provost Rogers Redding for their continued support of our organization. Thank you Dr. Redding for matching our best journal award with a grant from your office. Thank you Dean Gail Wells for funding our trip to San Antonio and other activities. Thank you Dean Kelso for providing a generous grant to promote our Soup Project. A special thank you goes to Dr. Williams, Jan Rachford, Tonya Skelton, Amanda Alva, and Leigh Ann Ripley, our department staff, for their eagerness to help and pleasant disposition. Thank you Dr. Jonathan Reynolds for posting the journal on our web site, serving as judge for the Jeffrey Smith Award, and as chef for our annual picnic.

Thank you Kathy Dawn, Jo Ann Fincken, Bonnie Smith, and all the staff in University Printing. You gave our journal, posters, newsletters, and announcements professional quality.

Thank you Dr. Graydon A. Tunstall Jr., Executive Director of Phi Alpha Theta, for speaking in the Military History Lecture Series and presenting the address at our banquet. Your visit from national headquarters in Tampa was the highlight of our year.

I would like to extend an extra thank you to the faculty of the History and Geography Department for promoting our organization and encouraging membership. Your support and involvement are greatly appreciated.

Thank you Joe Alig and Charlie Lester for presenting your papers at the Regional at Thomas More College on Saturday, April 6, 2002, and thank you everyone who participated. Thank you Leigh Ann Ripley for working with the book on the history of Covington by the Kenton County Historical Society.

Most importantly I would like to recognize the officers of Phi Alpha Theta. Ryan Springer, Ami Van De Ryt, Joe Alig, Arden Steffen, Terry Leap, and Rachel Noll were instrumental in the success of our Chapter. We could not have accomplished our goals without you. The support and friendship you have given me means more than I can say. I wish you all the best.

I am honored to have been President of such a fine organization. It is because of the hard work of so many individuals that we maintain our level of excellence. I am grateful for the opportunity to lead such a fine group of people. I hope that I did justice to this Chapter and the ideals of Phi Alpha Theta. Please enjoy this distinguished showcase of research and writing.

Thank you,  
Deborah Bogel

# FOREWORD

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Undoubtedly, the most rewarding experiences of one's college career are the ones that bring students in contact with their peers and faculty in order to accomplish a greater good. Northern Kentucky University provides students with many occasions to participate in these kind of rewarding experiences, and without exception, the Alpha Beta Phi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta is at the forefront in offering students the opportunity to shine. My own personal experience and the experience of many of my peers in working directly with both Phi Alpha Theta and its journal, *Perspectives in History*, have been rewarding and fulfilling. *Perspectives in History* has given students, including myself, the opportunity to display their creativity, collaborate with faculty and other students about subjects that personally interest them, and develop skills of teamwork and cooperation, all factors that contribute to enriching students' academic careers and their futures ahead. As I reflect back on my association with *Perspectives*, I am proud and honored to be part of such a wonderful opportunity.

As with any project, no one can work alone. Though I have many people to thank, it would be difficult to mention them all. However, I would like to take this opportunity to mention a few who through their generosity, financial, and academic support, and hard work and dedication, were critical in helping Dr. James Ramage and I put together *Perspectives*.

First, I would like to warmly thank and congratulate all of the students and faculty who presented work for publication in *Perspectives*. The intelligence, creativity, and diversity of this year's submissions were fantastic and I was privileged to read and review many outstanding works. Every participant should be proud of his or her work, and I hope that this journal, like those in the past, will serve as an inspiration for other students to submit their own research and ideas in the future.

I would like to recognize the outstanding work of Kathy Dawn, Director of University Printing Services, and her staff for providing quality work consistently year after year. Your professionalism and excellence at work is truly appreciated. I would also like to thank Jan Rachford, Tonya Skelton, Amanda Alva, and Leigh Ann Ripley in the Department office. Every service you provide is invaluable, but I personally want to thank all of you for the work you have done this year in helping us enter several papers into the system. Unquestionably, it was time-consuming work, but your office handled it efficiently and courteously. For that, I cannot thank you enough.

I would like to acknowledge all the faculty of the History and Geography Department for their outstanding dedication to students and to Northern Kentucky University. Specifically, I would like to mention several faculty members who were indispensable with their assistance on *Perspectives*. Foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Jeffrey Williams, Chair of the History and Geography Department for his encouragement and support in countless ways. I personally thank Dr. Jonathan Reynolds for serving as a judge for the Jeffrey Smith Award for best undergraduate article and for

your consistently excellent work in installing our journal on the chapter home page. I also would like to thank Dr. Michael C.C. Adams for his exceptional support of the chapter and his invaluable work on the Military History Lecture Series.

The administration at Northern Kentucky University has always been supportive of Phi Alpha Theta and I am grateful for their dedication. I would like to thank Dr. Rogers Redding for his persistent encouragement and support of Phi Alpha Theta and for matching our \$250 award for winning runner-up in the 2001 Gerald D. Nash Best Journal contest. Dr. Gail Wells, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Dr. Jim Votruba, University President have also been enthusiastic supporters of Phi Alpha Theta, and I also thank them deeply for their contributions.

Of all the groups I have been privileged to work with during my years at Northern Kentucky University, the students and faculty advisors of the Alpha Beta Phi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta are by far the best. President Deborah Bogel, your leadership has proven to be tremendous and you stand as another great president in a line of great presidents (if only our country could get this lucky!). Assistant editors, Rachel E. Noll, Ryan N. Springer, and Arden L. Steffen, thank you for your hard work and intelligent input on our selections for the journal. Your help was indispensable. Professor Bonnie May, Assistant Faculty Advisor of Phi Alpha Theta and Coordinator of the Military History Lecture Series, I do not know when you find time to sleep! Your contribution to Phi Alpha Theta and to Northern Kentucky University has been consistently excellent and your dedication has made countless ideas and events come to life. I warmly thank you and am inspired by your leadership and resolve.

Most importantly, the Beta Phi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta would not be what it is today without the inspiration, dedication, and outstanding perseverance of Dr. James Ramage. It cannot be stated enough how important your contribution is to Phi Alpha Theta. The students of Phi Alpha Theta, myself included, thank you deeply for your commitment to us and for your leadership that inspires us to continue to support and pursue our love of history throughout our lives. I also thank you for making my experience as editor one I will always remember and for allowing me the ability to put forth my effort and creativity into creating a journal that can stand up to our outstanding journals in the past.

Finally, I would like to personally thank four professors for making me a better writer: Dr. John Metz, Dr. Francois LeRoy, Dr. David Potter, and Dr. Linda Dolive. Your dedication and insistence on quality work has helped me become a better thinker and a better writer. Your commitment to excellence will go with me throughout my career.

I am proud to present *Perspectives in History* to you. I hope our quest into the issues of yesterday and today will enlighten you and inspire you to make your own statement about history.

Ami M. Van De Ryt  
Editor

# **Mirror of the Times: The Racial Politics of Sport from Jackie Robinson to Muhammad Ali.**

**by  
Charlie T. Lester**

Since the inception of professionally organized athletics in this country, the sporting phenomenon has reflected our national identity and consciousness. Implicit in this identity and consciousness is the historically reoccurring dilemma of the hypocrisy of a self-proclaimed democratic government, where the effect of racial oppression has left an indelible mark on our society. Sport in the twentieth century reflected the struggle of African Americans. As with music, where African Americans excelled in such a way to force whites to recognize their legitimacy, professional sports represented one of the only viable vehicles available to African Americans in reaching beyond the Jim Crow World. American Sports in the twentieth century provided a pivotal battleground for the fight for racial equality. In 1900, there were no nationally recognized professional African American athletes because of the exclusionary practices of white-run sports. Today, there are several world-renowned African American athletes and literally thousands of African Americans who participate in professional sports. Two prominent athletes instrumental in this transformation were Jackie Robinson and Muhammad Ali.

Jackie Robinson emerged in post-World War II America to confront the practice of Jim Crow segregation in major league baseball. By doing so, he effectively showed white America that African Americans were willing and able to sacrifice for their freedom, thereby spearheading the Civil Rights movement to follow. Muhammad Ali emerged at a much different time. He showed white America the “New Negro” who possessed a newfound sense of identity and pride. The “New Negro” of the 1960s was finished sacrificing for his freedom; Ali proved it was time to fight for freedom.

Predating Robinson and Ali’s achievements for civil rights in baseball and boxing were the accomplishments of boxer Joe Louis and track and field star Jesse Owens, whose success worked more to reflect the attitude of World War II America against fascism than against segregation. Owens was touted as the American answer to Aryan supremacy in the 1936 Olympiad.<sup>1</sup> In the same light, Louis was pitted in the boxing ring against the embodiment of the ideal German, Max Schmeling, and though Louis lost his first bout, eventually triumphed in the second.<sup>2</sup> These experiences should not be discredited as to their effect on America’s perception of

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Charlie T. Lester is a Junior History major and Political Science minor at Northern Kentucky University. As a member of Alpha Beta Phi Chapter, he presented this paper at the Regional Phi Alpha Theta conference at Thomas More College, April 6, 2002.

race; however these instances reflected World War II America's opposition to fascism more than race consciousness.<sup>3</sup> Unlike Robinson and Ali's experiences in post-World War II America, where the hypocrisy of confronting racism abroad while ignoring it at home was strikingly obvious, Owens and Louis' experiences did not have the same impact in galvanizing or solidifying the Civil Rights movement. However, both helped open the door for Robinson and Ali and led to Robinson's acceptance into baseball.

Jackie Robinson's victory over segregated baseball was the first in a gradual succession of victories for the Civil Rights movement. He was the catalyst who got the proverbial "ball rolling." He transformed not only the game of baseball, but American public opinion at large. The "Noble Experiment," as the integration of baseball came to be known, was the brain-child of baseball executive, Branch Rickey of the Brooklyn Dodgers. On the surface, Rickey's experiment can be seen as a courageous act of humanity, but in reality, it does not appear to be such an altruistic act. Rickey himself admitted the financial opportunities afforded by the move: "The greatest untapped reservoir of raw material in the history of the game is the black race. The Negroes will make us winners for years to come, and for that I will happily bear being called a bleeding heart and a do-gooder and all that humanitarian rot."<sup>4</sup>

Regardless of personal motives, Rickey was shrewd and calculating in the execution of his master strategy. He understood that in order to succeed, he needed a martyr to wear a "cloak of humility" to gain social acceptance. By doing this, he hoped to open the door for other African Americans to join the league, thereby cementing his efforts.<sup>5</sup> He further realized that if he failed, he would set the entire movement back for years to come. Rickey sent out his top scouts to quietly search the Negro Leagues for a possible candidate.<sup>6</sup>

His martyr came in the form of Jackie Robinson, who on the surface did not seem the most likely candidate for the job. Although he was a gifted athlete, he was not considered the best Negro League star, and he possessed a fiery temper.<sup>7</sup> Growing up in Pasadena, California, Robinson was known to stand his ground against white children taunting him with racial epithets.<sup>8</sup> However, Robinson had desirable characteristics. He was educated at UCLA and served as a lieutenant in the army, factors used in the defense of his character as an upstanding citizen. Robinson also demonstrated that he was willing to challenge segregation through protest. While stationed in Fort Hood, Texas, he was riding on a military bus when the driver ordered him to the back. He refused to move on the grounds that military buses had recently been desegregated. Military police escorted him off the bus, and he was charged with a number of offenses including insubordination, charges later overturned by a military court.<sup>9</sup>

The scout responsible for finding Robinson, Clyde Sukeforth, believed that if Robinson could hold his temper, the project would succeed. Rickey met privately with Robinson and explained to him the magnitude of the undertaking. In that meeting, although he believed it would be an enormously trying task, Robinson

pledged for the benefit of his race that he would turn the other cheek for three years in the face of white physical and verbal abuse.<sup>10</sup>

After an impressive year in the Dodgers Montreal farm team in 1946, Robinson was called up to the big league to start at first base on opening day, April 15, 1947. Over the next three years, he endured taunting racial epithets from both opposing players and fans, rough treatment on the base paths, and even death threats.<sup>11</sup> At the start of the 1949 season, with thirty-six African American players signed by major league baseball clubs, Rickey released Robinson from his promise of passivity. Robinson then began aggressively retaliating when push came to shove. This was true not only with opposing players but with persistent segregation in stadium facilities, hotels, and restaurants.<sup>12</sup> Robinson's open displays of retaliation did not bode well with some sportswriters and fans. As he explained in his autobiography, published in 1972, shortly prior to his death, "I learned that as long as I appeared to ignore insult and injury, I was a martyred hero to a lot of people who seemed to have sympathy for the underdog. But the minute I began to answer, to argue, to protest—the minute I began to sound off—I became a swell-head, a wise guy, an 'uppity' nigger."<sup>13</sup>

Jackie Robinson's move to major league baseball had a lasting effect on the game, the general public and the civil rights movement. On the playing field, he brought the Negro League style of speed to the major leagues.<sup>14</sup> This brand of baseball had not been seen in the white league since the days of Ty Cobb.<sup>15</sup> From the time of Robinson's first day as a Dodger to 1960, only the 1950 Philadelphia Phillies would win a National League pennant without the help of a significant black star on their roster.<sup>16</sup> Robinson evoked admiration from fans, both black and white. To the African American fans who flocked to see him play, he was an instant hero.<sup>17</sup> Hank Aaron called Robinson, "a pillar of strength who gave me a lot of inner strength."<sup>18</sup> Sports writers seemed to have a love/hate relationship with him, as he notes several times in his autobiography. Nonetheless, they admired him well enough to vote him into the Baseball Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility, after playing only the Hall minimum of ten years.<sup>19</sup>

The integration of baseball impacted the Civil Rights movement as well, serving as a foreshadow of events to come. More importantly, Robinson's first three seasons were an early demonstration of nonviolent resistance in this country. This Gandhian approach was used by Martin Luther King Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee as the grand strategy to achieve the goals of the civil rights agenda.

In addition, the integration of baseball proved to be the beginning of a string of civil rights successes. One year after Robinson garnered Rookie of the Year, the armed forces were officially desegregated. The next major civil rights victory came with the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954, the same year another black baseball star, Willie Mays, made his famous over-the-shoulder catch in the World Series.<sup>20</sup> In 1955, Robinson won his only World Series title, the same year of the Montgomery bus boycott.<sup>21</sup> Jackie Robinson retired just prior to the 1957

season, the year King organized the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.<sup>22</sup>

Robinson's struggle for social justice did not end with his retirement from the playing field. Through his close personal friend and ghostwriter, Alfred Duckett, Jackie was introduced to Reverend King. Duckett had helped King with his "I have a Dream" speech and his book, *Why We Can't Wait*.<sup>23</sup> When the white backlash against the Supreme Court decision eliminating segregation rocked the South, resulting in the bombing of African American churches, King appointed Robinson head of the fund-raising drive to rebuild.<sup>24</sup> In 1959, he testified before the Federal Civil Rights Commission on the issue of equal rights in housing.<sup>25</sup> He helped establish the Freedom National Bank, an institution offering loans to the people of Harlem who had previously been denied because of discrimination.<sup>26</sup> In addition, he served for several years as the chair of the NAACP's Freedom Fund Drive.<sup>27</sup>

Martin Luther King Jr., speaking at a commencement ceremony in June 1961, expressed his belief that Jackie Robinson's courage has "come to remind us that we need not wait until the day of full emancipation."<sup>28</sup> However, despite their friendship, King and Robinson did not always agree. When King took a stance with the peace movement during the Vietnam War, Robinson publicly opposed. After a telephone conversation with King, in which King expressed his convictions, Robinson experienced a newfound respect for the man.<sup>29</sup>

Robinson also had public verbal clashes with another prominent black voice: Malcolm X. Although they disagreed on civil rights philosophy, Robinson always credited Malcolm for being articulate and intelligent. He felt Malcolm, "projected a great image for young black kids who needed virile black males to emulate."<sup>30</sup> Ironically, it would be one of Malcolm's proteges who would emerge as the new black athlete of the 1960s. Today, Muhammad Ali is an admired hero to millions, but in the tumultuous 1960s, he was controversial. His association with Malcolm X, Elijah Muhammad, and the Nation of Islam frightened white America. To the black community and black athletes in particular, he was a champion of personal conviction. Muhammad Ali grew up as Cassius Clay in post-World War II, segregated, Louisville, Kentucky. Ali was greatly affected by the 1955 murder of Emmet Till by whites in Mississippi. This was his brutal awakening to the reality of race consciousness.<sup>31</sup> As a young man, Clay quickly rose in the amateur boxing ranks. He set his sight on Olympic Gold in 1960. After reaching this objective in the Rome Olympiad, the young fighter was popular with the press. But when he entered professional boxing, he became cocky and brash and this upset the white media—few boxing purists believed he was actually worth his weight in words.<sup>32</sup>

Nonetheless, in 1964 Cassius Clay shocked the world three times within a two-week period. The first shock came February 25, when Ali, the 7 to 1 underdog, defeated Sonny Liston for the World Heavyweight Title.<sup>33</sup> Two days later, Ali announced his membership in the Nation of Islam and his conversion to Islam.<sup>34</sup> The final blow came March 6<sup>th</sup>, when he announced that he rejected his birth name, changing to Muhammad Ali.<sup>35</sup> He first became aware of the Nation of Islam in a Chicago Golden Gloves boxing tournament in 1959. Two years later, he met Sam

Saxon, a follower of the organization's leader, Elijah Muhammad. Sam convinced Clay to attend a meeting at the Miami mosque, an event that changed his life forever.<sup>36</sup> Through his membership, Ali met and befriended Malcolm X. The two were first introduced in 1962 at a Detroit Muslim luncheon just prior to a rally of the Nation of Islam.<sup>37</sup> Malcolm served as Ali's mentor, greatly impacting his racial consciousness.

As a sixth anniversary present to Malcolm and his wife Betty, Ali invited the couple to his training camp in Miami shortly before his first championship bout with Sonny Liston.<sup>38</sup> Malcolm prayed with Ali and made the analogy that this was a modern day crusade with the cross battling the crescent for the entire world to see. He told Ali that Allah had brought this about for him to win. At the weigh-in, Ali yelled: "It is prophesied for me to be successful! I cannot be defeated!"<sup>39</sup> Eventually, Ali's loyalty to Elijah Muhammad decided the fate of his relationship with Malcolm X when the latter was expelled from the Nation of Islam in 1963.<sup>40</sup>

Ali's brash, defiantly confident boasting was in sharp contrast to the American hero model.<sup>41</sup> This upset traditional boxing fans and sportswriters alike. Malcolm X described the reaction in his typically brutal fashion:

The power structure had successfully created the image of the American Negro as someone with no confidence—no militancy. . . . And now here come Cassius, the exact contrast of everything that was representative of the Negro image. He said he was the greatest. The odds were against him; he upset the odd-makers. He won. He became victorious. He became the champ. . . . They knew that if people came to identify with Cassius, and the type of image he was creating, that they were going to have trouble out of these Negroes, because they'd have Negroes walking around the streets saying, 'I'm the greatest.'<sup>42</sup>

Former two-time champion Floyd Patterson offered to fight Ali for free to regain the crown for Christian America. Patterson refused to call Ali by his new name. Referring to him as Cassius, Patterson only angered the champ more.<sup>43</sup> Before the fight, in one of his famous pre-fight poems, Ali taunted Patterson for moving to a white suburb:

Gonna put him flat on his back,  
So he'll start acting black.  
When he was champ he didn't do as he should,  
He tried to force himself into an all-white neighborhood.<sup>44</sup>

Ali punished Patterson in the ring, holding off at crucial moments to prolong the fight. This performance was seen as cruel by the general public, which only further polarized Ali and mainstream white America.<sup>45</sup>

The separation almost became complete when he opposed the Vietnam War. The

circumstances were complex but the results were that he was banished from the ring for over three years and he became a hero to the black community. He was originally classified 1-Y (mentally incompetent to serve in the armed forces) by the draft board in 1964.<sup>46</sup> He was a poor reader and did not score well on Army tests. When asked about the tests by the press, he replied, "I said I was the greatest, not the smartest."<sup>47</sup> After he declared the famous phrase, "I ain't got no quarrel with them Vietcong," anti-Ali sentiment rose sharply.<sup>48</sup> Consequently, without reexamination, Ali was then reclassified 1-A (fit for service) in February 1966.<sup>49</sup> He made two appeals for deferment under conscientious objector status, citing his religious beliefs.<sup>50</sup> Both appeals were denied; and when summoned to take the symbolic step forward, he officially refused induction into the armed forces on April 28, 1967.<sup>51</sup> On June 20, 1967, after a twenty minute jury deliberation, Ali was convicted of draft evasion and sentenced to five years imprisonment.<sup>52</sup> Within hours of the verdict, without the benefit of due process, Ali was stripped of his boxing title and license by boxing commissioners.<sup>53</sup>

Compounding the situation was the fact that Ali was guaranteed a non-combative role. The plan was for him to play the part of black role model and morale booster, in the same respect as Joe Louis in World War II.<sup>54</sup> By defiantly rejecting the wishes of the power structure, he risked losing millions of dollars and his livelihood. Ramsey Clark, at the time, was the Attorney General, and years later he explained the political motives of the government strategy:

The government didn't need Ali to fight the war. But they would have loved to put him in the service; get his picture in there; maybe give him a couple of stripes on his sleeve, and take him all over the world. Think of the power that would have had in Africa, Asia, and South America. Here's this proud American serviceman, fighting symbolically for his country. They would have loved to do that.<sup>55</sup>

Ali justified his position saying, "I could make millions if I led my people the wrong way, to something I know is wrong. . . . Damn the money. Damn the Heavyweight Championship. I will die before I sell out my people for the white man's money."<sup>56</sup> He called the next title a political and racial belt.<sup>57</sup>

Civil rights activist Julian Bond believed Ali's refusal caused a lot of people to rethink their positions on Vietnam.<sup>58</sup> Kwame Toure (formerly Stokely Carmichael) stated that of all the people who opposed the war in Vietnam, Ali risked the most. He also felt that the FBI viewed the deposed champion as more of a threat than either himself or H. Rap Brown.<sup>59</sup> Floyd McKissick, Leroi Jones, and other civil rights leaders in March 1968 announced their opposition to the title bout between Joe Frazier and Buster Mathis. Jones stated that the winner may tell white people that he is the champion, but they would never say it in the black community where Ali was an instant hero.<sup>60</sup> Martin Luther King spoke out publicly in favor of his decision:

And I say this morning, that it is my hope, every young man in this country who finds this war objectionable and abominable and unjust, will file as a conscientious objector. And no matter what you think of Mr. Muhammad Ali's religion, you certainly have to admire his courage.<sup>61</sup>

King's friend and World War II veteran, Jackie Robinson, had a very different view. He believed that Ali was hurting the morale of African American soldiers in Vietnam, and "made millions of dollars off the American public, and now he's not willing to show his appreciation to a country that has given him, in my view, a fantastic opportunity."<sup>62</sup>

It is clear that Ali's political ethos was in line with the Black Power paradigm of the civil rights movement. With many of the younger activists, a Black Power leaning was more appealing than the nonviolent arc of King's SCLC. This is evident in Ali's association with such people as Malcolm X, Floyd McKissick, Julian Bond, and Stokely Carmichael. After banishment from boxing and while his conviction was in appeal, Ali went on a public speaking tour of college campuses.<sup>63</sup> He used his engagements as a forum for his voice to be heard, echoing Black Power themes and confronting racism, both overt and subtle, as in a 1968 speech:

We were taught when we were little children that Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white as snow. Then we heard about Snow White, White Owl Cigars, White Swan Soap, White Cloud Tissue, White Rain Hair Rinse, White Tornado Floor Wax, White Plus Toothpaste. All the good cowboys ride white horses and wear white hats. The President lives in the White House. Jesus was white. The Last Supper was white. The angels is white. Miss America is white. Even Tarzan, the "King of the Jungle," in Africa, is white.<sup>64</sup>

When public opinion shifted toward opposition of the Vietnam War, vilification of Ali lessened. Many white college students were already protesting the war, and when they heard him speak, they opened their minds to racial issues. Americans from different social backgrounds—sports writers, politicians, religious leaders, and business leaders—began praising his courage.<sup>65</sup>

Ali's political stand had a huge impact on the 1968 Olympiad in Mexico City, where the Olympics were a platform for protest for some African American athletes. Early in 1968, Harry Edwards, a black sport sociologist, organized the Olympic Committee for Human Rights. Originally intent on a black boycott of the Olympics, the OCHR decided instead that a more effective protest would be to boycott the medal ceremonies at the games. They concluded that in a boycott replacements would be easily found, and many did not want to lose an opportunity for which they had trained for years.<sup>66</sup> They demanded:

1. The expulsion of South Africa and Rhodesia from the games due to apartheid policies.

2. The appointment of African Americans as coaches and as members of the U.S. Olympic Committee.
3. The resignation of Avery Brundage as International Olympic Committee Chairman. (He was regarded as a racist and anti-Semite.)
4. The restoration of Muhammad Ali's titles and boxing license.<sup>67</sup>

As the games began, it became evident that black athletes would participate in the medal ceremonies. On October 15, 1968, medal winners Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised their black-gloved fists in the black power salute as the *Star Spangled Banner* played, protesting in front of the entire world the inequity of race in the United States.<sup>68</sup> Smith and Carlos were both forced by the white U.S. Olympic Committee to leave after their single events were over. After Lee Evans, Larry James, and Ron Freeman swept the 400-meter race and wore black berets with clenched fists in protest, they were not expelled because the U.S. Committee's greed for Olympic medals required their talents as three-fourths of the relay team in a subsequent race.<sup>69</sup>

Years later, tennis star Arthur Ashe calculated the impact Ali had on the protest in Mexico City:

I believe that, if Ali hadn't done what he did, Harry Edwards wouldn't have gotten a fraction of the support he got in 1968 to boycott the Mexico City Olympics. Tommie Smith and John Carlos wouldn't have raised their fists. Ali had to be on their minds. He was largely responsible for it becoming an expected part of the black athlete's responsibility to get involved. He had more at stake than any of us. He put it all on the line for what he believed in. And if Ali did that, who were the rest of us lesser athlete mortals not to do it? I know he certainly influenced me later in 1967 when the Davis Cup draw came up and lo and behold, the United States was supposed to meet in South Africa in the third round. . . . There's no question that Ali's sacrifice was in the forefront of my mind.<sup>70</sup>

One Olympic athlete who took an entirely different stance was George Foreman. After winning the gold in the Heavyweight division in boxing, he was cheered wildly by the crowd, as he ran around the ring carrying an American flag, shouting, "United States Power!"<sup>71</sup> In his autobiography, published in 1975, Ali declared: "There was hardly a black or a fair-minded white who did not admire Smith and Jones [meaning John Carlos], or who did admire Foreman. And despite his considerable ability as a fighter, his image as an Uncle Tom has stuck with him."<sup>72</sup>

Having been stripped of his title, license, passport, Ali was kept from participating in the Olympics and was not allowed to leave the country.<sup>73</sup> Promoters tried to get him a fight venue several times in the United States but failed. Finally, the strikingly obvious answer came when someone suggested Atlanta, Georgia. And Atlanta hosted the return bout for two reasons: first, there was no boxing commis-

sion in the state of Georgia, and second, it was one of the few major cities controlled by black politicians.<sup>74</sup> After believing that he would never fight again professionally after a three and a half year absence from the ring, Muhammad Ali made his triumphant return to the ring on October 26, 1970.<sup>75</sup>

He lost his first title bout after his return against the current champ, Joe Frazier on March 8, 1971. He won a much more important battle when three months later, on June 28, 1971, the Supreme Court unanimously overturned his conviction of draft evasion. The court was reluctant to grant Ali conscientious objector status because they feared that it would set a precedent for other members of the Nation of Islam, thereby increasing its membership.<sup>76</sup> Elijah Muhammad, the ranking minister of the Nation of Islam, had served jail time during World War II on charges of draft evasion, and the court was reluctant to overturn the precedent.<sup>77</sup> A solution was reached when the court realized that the Selective Service board had not cited reasons for refusal in their report. This rendered the draft board's decision invalid, so on this technicality, the court could clear Ali without granting conscientious objector status to all Nation of Islam members.<sup>78</sup>

As Ali began to move toward Orthodox Islam with the death of Elijah Muhammad in February 1975, his ethos became more global and Pan-African. Elijah's son, Wallace, became the head of the organization and took it in an entirely different direction than his father. He changed the name to the World Community of Al-Islam in the West. Orthodox Islamic practices were adopted along with a more global concentration.<sup>79</sup> Ali's Pan-African ethos was solidified with his title bout against the young champion, George Foreman, in Zaire in 1974. Ali disliked Foreman for his display at the 1968 Olympics. Early in 1974, Ali shouted at a boxing writer's dinner, "I'm going to beat your Christian ass, you white flag waving bitch you."<sup>80</sup> Ali's long time friend and trainer, Bundini Brown taunted Foreman's trainer, Elmo Henderson, just prior to the fight saying, "There he is in the Olympics, a big fat fool dancing around with an eentsy American flag in his big dumb fist. He don't know what to do with a fist. My man does. My man got his fist in the air when he wins. Power to the people! That's my man. Millions follow him. Who follows your man?"<sup>81</sup>

The infamous "Rumble in the Jungle" was promoted as an African festival. Prior to the main event, African and African American entertainers performed for the thronging crowd. The show featured James Brown, B.B. King, The Spinners, and a Zaire Music and Dance ensemble.<sup>82</sup> Ali's pre-fight poem reflected this Pan-African theme:

Last night I had a dream,  
When I got to Africa,  
I had one hell of a rumble.  
I had to beat Tarzan's behind first,  
For claiming to be King of the Jungle.  
For this fight, I've wrestled with alligators,  
I've tustled with a whale.

I done handcuffed lightning  
And put thunder in jail.  
You know I'm bad.  
I have murdered a rock,  
I've injured a stone, and hospitalized a brick.  
I'm so bad, I make medicine sick.  
I'm so fast, man,  
I can run through a hurricane and not get wet.  
When George Foreman meets me,  
He'll pay his debt.  
I can drown the drink of water, and kill a dead tree.  
Wait till you see Muhammad Ali.<sup>83</sup>

Ali expressed his wish that all black Americans could see Africa. He spoke of the image of Africa as one of savage jungles. He wanted the public to see modern nations, run entirely by black people. Ali's popularity in Africa was tremendous.<sup>84</sup>

When his age forced his retirement, Ali moved to the role of world ambassador. In 1980, he served as Special Envoy to African Nations to garner support for the boycott of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow.<sup>85</sup> Over the years, he held audiences with twenty-six heads of state, including five U.S. Presidents, two Soviet Premiers, the Queen of England, and the Pope.<sup>86</sup>

The organizer of the Olympic protests of 1968, Harry Edwards, called Ali, "the single greatest athletic figure of this century in terms of the black community."<sup>87</sup> Bryant Gumble believed that one reason the Civil Rights movement succeeded was the overcoming of fear by the black community, which he attributes to Muhammad Ali.<sup>88</sup> Arthur Ashe appraised Ali's influence:

This man helped give an entire people a belief in themselves and the will to make themselves better. But Ali didn't just change the image that African Americans have of themselves. He opened the eyes of a lot of white people to the potential of African Americans; who we are and what we can be.<sup>89</sup>

Professional athletics represented a viable voice for African Americans to promote the issues of civil rights agenda. As with music, this was an area that the white public was decisively fixated with, in which African Americans excelled in such a way as to force the recognition of their legitimacy. Jackie Robinson and Muhammad Ali utilized this setting to promote the themes of African American convictions.

The nature of American sport has mirrored our national psyche throughout the twentieth century. As with baseball, it predated social movements. In the 1960s, it mirrored the volatile race relations and issues of the day. Sadly, the two principal participants of each era succumbed to an unfortunate fate: Jackie Robinson to an

early death, and Muhammad Ali to Parkinson's disease. Both men gave African Americans courage at a time when they needed it the most. They transcended into a political arena where few athletes dared and their names are immortalized in history.

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# **Deciphering the Range of Human Nature and Its Tribulations: Emile Zola and His Naturalism**

by  
**John A. Hodge**

Emile Zola discovered the ideal portal to analyze and comprehend human nature. Scholars of the sacred and the secular have searched through the ages for a way to realize the tendencies of human beings, and thus to pave a way for a more positive world. Zola used his ingenious writing ability to formulate a literary tradition entitled naturalism. With naturalism, Zola was not only confined to the written page, but was also able to transcend into the modern world's ills and understand them. Zola speaks not only for the latter nineteenth century, but also for all time. Zola epitomizes the intellectual striving for solutions aimed at an often-harsh world.

Emile Zola was born in Paris, France on April 2, 1840 "in the large flat. . . rented four floors about street level."<sup>1</sup> From this humble beginning, Emile was able to craft a style of writing that peeled away the more pleasant aspects of urban and rural life in France to reveal the harsh and difficult lives of individuals striving to better themselves through one avenue or another. He soon came under critical fire for his detailed and often explicit examinations of the human character and for his rejection of tradition. Some of his successful glimpses into the inconsistencies of the earth and humanity are *L' Assommoir*, *Nana*, *La Debacle*, and *Pot-Bouille*. Zola was also significant in his spirited defense of impressionism and its painters who came under fire for not simply adhering to the old ideas of painting. He was a childhood friend of artist Paul Cézanne. Despite all the difficult stands Emile Zola undertook, he is remembered today as one of France's greatest writers and minds.

Zola's literary device was not merely markings on a page; instead it was a tool in which to expand discourse on his France. He was steadfast about his invention; "Zola believed as sincerely in naturalism as in science and democracy."<sup>2</sup> Although many would attempt to discount Zola's methods as a mere offspring of positivism, Zola went a step further in the language he used to expose the vice of the bourgeoisie, and the words he chose to paint an accurate picture of life in France despite those who would prefer to silence him. Muzzling those with a vision of human nature is not merely a nineteenth century device, which supports the idea that Zola's way of thinking has not perished and still has a place in the twenty-first century.

Naturalism has been defined in many ways since its inception. Literary critics who misdirect pantheistic scribblings for naturalism have often used the term itself incorrectly. While other literary writers aim at the glitter of humanity, naturalism surgically reveals its guts. This is accomplished by a step-by-step detailed analysis

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of all the important elements: social class, sexual drive, and topography of the landscape, incorporated familial traits, and dangerous situations. Zola relied on other ammunition as well for the purpose of excising the vices of humanity, such as his use of “explicit” accounts of the animalistic impulses of man and woman. Zola aligned his written words with the problems of his day for medicinal purposes. He wanted to show humanity, through the use of his naturalism, that a more positive existence could be attained.

Zola left an incredible amount of his writings behind when he died under questionable circumstances. There still remain journals, letters, newspaper editorials (some very famous indeed), and of course his novels. By examining his written words one attains a better sense of his intent. From the beginning of Zola’s writing career to the end one can see a unique style present. Others such as Balzac may have influenced him early on, and yet most of that skin was shed in order to become the theorist on human nature that Zola became.

The Franco-Prussian War was truly a debacle for France. Like many others who carefully noted the actions of the French military and hierarchy, Zola was not impressed by what he witnessed. Zola, despite being lambasted in the press as a non-patriot, published a novel, which derailed the campaign of the French in their losing battle against the Prussians. The novel (in English translations) was entitled *The Downfall*, and its language shows Zola’s ability to unearth the reality although the press and France’s leadership were propagating a false one. Zola was also able to give the French and the world an accurate glimpse of what modern warfare would be like, and how hideous the results often were:

At the very door an odour of necrosis caught you at the throat. The wounds were suppurating, drop after drop of fetid pus was exuding from the drainage-tubes. It was often necessary to open the healing flesh again in order to extract splinters of bone, the presence of which had not been previously suspected. . . . Exhausted and emaciated, ashen pale, the poor wretches endured every torture.<sup>3</sup>

Although Zola’s account of the war was partially fictionalized, there is enough real history present to instill a startling reaction from all those who read it. The early editions of *The Downfall* contain maps of the battles, such as Sedan, which help enforce the realism of the novel. Zola wisely realized the foolhardy attitude of the French leadership to get involved in a war so obviously orchestrated against them. Although many reviewers of this work attempted to smear it as unrealistic, others saw the immense value of it as a guidebook to the Franco-Prussian War: “La Debacle is a fearfully black dose to take all at once. But by every student of history and literature swallowed the dose must be, at whatever cost, under penalty of being left altogether behind in the race.”<sup>4</sup> Zola used his naturalism to unravel the inept qualities of the Second Empire leadership. It is distressing that more individuals did not heed Zola’s warnings on the foolishness of war and the atrocities against humanity that unquestionably take place.

Life and human nature, however, are much more than about the thrusting hate of war. Zola also exposes the sexual tendencies of human nature brilliantly in many of his works. Unlike what many conservative (in a United States sense) reviewers espoused in their reviews of Zola's works as pornographic, Zola was not commenting on sex merely for the pleasure of discussing such a topic. Instead Zola was unraveling the mysteries of how class and social status evolve into the less powerful being sexually dominated by the more powerful. Zola saw these tendencies as a type of food chain where those of the middle class (who thought their position in society at this time in France granted them sexual privileges over those who were less fortunate) ate upon their "lower" subjects. This model, however, was not always the case as Zola was wise to point out. Often women like the heroic prostitute Nana seized power. She wielded her beauty and erotic powers to bring rich bankers and other prominent individuals to her feet.

The novel *Nana* contains both shocking and enlightening elements of human nature. Zola defined this "enterprise" of naturalism as "A corner of Creation reflected by a temperament."<sup>5</sup> Again Zola, through superbly drafted anecdotes, succeeds in opening a new corridor to the soul of humanity. Nana is quite simply a whore who chooses to better her living conditions through the occupation of using up men. The destruction she inflicts on others is simply a reaction to the reality she was born into. Zola masterfully relays the consequence of her condition:

With her, the scum that had been allowed to ferment among the lower classes was rising to the surface and rotting the aristocracy. She had become a force of nature, a ferment of destruction, unwittingly corrupting and disorganizing Paris between her snow-white thighs, and curdling it just as women every month curdle milk.<sup>6</sup>

Zola was not merely musing about the degradation of one particular female, but instead commenting on the reality of the Second Empire in Paris. It was a time of unabashed sex and debauchery, and Nana symbolizes the new spawn of this bacteria-laden reality. Nana was a new species given life by the unrelenting lifestyle of the bourgeoisie. Zola understands the ill effects that this will have on the future of France, and upon humanity in general.

Zola was not isolated from Catholic France, so he decided to venture into the realm of the church and how it works with the tendencies of man and woman. One of the finest works in encapsulating this is Zola's *Abbe Mouret's Transgression*. Using imagery reminiscent of the Adam and Eve garden scenes in the Bible, Zola demonstrates how the Abbe is lured into a world foreign to his church, and yet not unknown to his internal passion. Zola reflects how in a garden bursting with peace, the order of nature, and tranquility the enchantress Albine naturally induces the Abbe to his arousal:

She had conquered him, and held him there at her mercy. With a single

word she could dispose of him. And that which helped her to recognize her omnipotence was that she heard the whole garden rejoicing at her triumph, with gradually swelling paeans of approval.<sup>7</sup>

Zola portrays the Priesthood as an occupation, which is unnatural, as the impulse to enjoy the opposite sex is denied. This novel was first published in 1900 and is paramount in defining Zola's opinions of the Catholic church, which brought on a harsh reply from the church hierarchy. Zola carefully recounts the Abbe's actions in the garden called Paradou as his "transgression," and yet Zola has his finger on the pulse of something, which still remains a major issue today for Catholics. With the numbers of those entering the priesthood dwindling, one suggestion is to end the required celibacy of the priesthood. At the end of the novel the Abbe kneels in the church and discusses his failures of the flesh with God, and yet Zola comments on the unrealistic quality of the church's isolation:

The Church triumphed. It remained firm and unshaken over the priest's head, with its altars and its confessional, its pulpit, its crosses, and its holy images. The world had ceased to exist.<sup>8</sup>

Zola again had succeeded in envisioning the pitfalls of human nature, thus demonstrating how humans are often carried away with the sentiment of piety, however it might go against their biological realities.

It is often easier for a scholar to look at the novels of the twenty-volume Rougon-Macquart series separately instead of making the hereditary connections, which Zola draws. Zola theorized that bloodlines would evoke certain tendencies in mankind in a hereditary fashion. He was basing these ideas on some scientific theories that were being developed in his day, and yet most of these were debunked in the twentieth century. Perhaps if one takes away the science and biological facts and figures about human beings, one can get a sense of what Zola was striving for. He was attempting to understand how seemingly the mistakes and mishaps of one's parents were often repeated in the next generation. However shaky or insignificant the science of this idea is, there is some higher truth in the spirit of the concept.

The last novel in the Rougon-Macquart cycle is *Doctor Pascal* in which Zola architects his end result of the experiments of his earlier novels. The novel serves as the definitive work in explaining Zola's ideas on the forces of heredity. Passages in the novel suggest that Zola as social doctor was realizing some of the vulnerable spots on the armor of his ideas upon heredity through his character of Doctor Pascal:

To sum up, the Doctor had but one belief, a belief in Life. To him Life was the one unique manifestation of the Divinity. Life was itself God, the prime mover, the soul of the universe. And Life's only instrument was heredity; heredity made the world; so that if one only had full knowledge of it, and could seize upon it and dispose of it, one might mould the world according to one's fancy . . . Ah! If there could be no more illness, no more suffering.<sup>9</sup>

Zola, in *Doctor Pascal*, gives his powerful reasons for pursuing (in a twenty novel cycle) the idea of heredity. When Zola talks of the potential of ending illness and suffering, one cannot help but think of the diseases, which are in fact hereditary. Those “modern scholars” whose only aim is to gain personal admiration through their insignificant attacks on the ideas of Emile Zola cannot easily discount him. Zola, again with the publication of *Doctor Pascal* (first published in 1893), demonstrates his desire to put human nature under a microscope and understand it fully. He wants to dissect the engine of life in order to repair its flaws and make it better. Zola realizes that the ills of humanity portend future problems for the Earth, thus he leaves the world his naturalism as a way to contend with the parasites of the modern world: greed, corruption, pride, disease, and the misuse of power.

A study of Zola’s powerful discourses upon human nature in his novels would not be complete without a look at one of his last novels *Fruitfulness (Fecundite)*, in which Zola questions the necessity of birth control and considers the apparent birth-rate decline. Zola came up with his own conclusions about France’s low birth rate around the end of the nineteenth century. He believed in the “biblical injunction to be fruitful and multiply . . . (and) derived a catalogue of disorders associated with contraception.”<sup>10</sup> Zola, in *Fruitfulness*, asserts his belief that one should not ignore the natural phenomenon of having children, by using birth control. Zola abandons the scare tactics of Malthusian over-population concerns (often mislabeled as naturalism), and presents the main character of Mathieu as blessed in his ability to father many children. The characters in the novel that do not have children are the ones who are overcome by the more populated families. The subject matter (befitting Zola) is of course very controversial for its day, and was made even more so due to the ending of the novel where:

The milk had streamed even athwart the seas—from the old land of France to the immensity of virgin Africa, the young and giant France of tomorrow. . . . And this was the exodus; human expansion throughout the world, mankind upon the march towards the Infinite.<sup>11</sup>

Zola angered many by his ending, in which the children of Mathieu (and France) are employed in France’s colonial expansion. Zola believed that the low birth rate was leading France to its deterioration in world power, thus for French global significance to be restored, children must be born to heave the banner. Although today there are a plentitude of historians and scholars who would take great issue with the ideas present in *Fruitfulness*, it is nonetheless clear that Zola again understood the nature of humanity and its unquenchable desire for power. Unfortunately the often-poisonous nationalism also appears to have carried even Emile Zola away from his leftist roots. It is also clear that the arduous episode of the Dreyfus Affair had taken its toll upon Zola, and would weaken him mentally and financially until his death in 1902.

Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish Captain in the French military and a dedicated family man, would be stripped of his honor and cruelly imprisoned (including a stay in the atrocious conditions of the ill-famed Devil's Island). Dreyfus was found guilty of spying for the Germans (by a French military court) based upon a document found that showed that someone was feeding information about artillery and troop movements to France's greatest enemy. The setting of confusion, bitterness, and insecurity in France (largely a result of the painful loss of Alsace-Lorraine after France's collapse during the Franco-Prussian War) allowed Dreyfus to be falsely convicted of a crime largely based on the simple fact that he was Jewish. His handwriting had vaguely resembled that of the document found, and soon the press invoked the anti-Semitism that had lingered just below the surface until it had a chance to be "proven" by the actions (not in reality) of Alfred Dreyfus.

The Dreyfus affair gives scholars an opportunity to witness naturalistic ideals in action. Through Zola's painstaking defense of Alfred Dreyfus, Zola became a stalwart hero of truth and justice. Zola, although he did not initially get involved in the affair, became the principal defender of Dreyfus and turned the hierarchy of the French military upon its head. Zola's letters and articles in defense of Dreyfus showcase his ability to use his naturalism to uncover the reality of the situation. One fascinating article which predates Zola's involvement in the Affair is Zola's "A Plea for the Jews," in which Zola educates his readers upon the flaws of hate:

Down through the centuries, the history of the peoples of this earth is nothing other than a lesson in mutual tolerance, and indeed the final dream will be to induce them all to engage in universal brotherhood, to blend them all into one common tenderness so as to save them all, as much as possible, from their common anguish.<sup>12</sup>

Once again Zola is striving to achieve a better humanity vis-à-vis the interconnection of all peoples.

Zola's involvement in the Dreyfus Affair made him a loved and despised individual. He bravely accepted the wounds given to him by the lampooning press, and marched on in defense of the innocent Jew, Alfred Dreyfus. The salvation of Dreyfus was a very taxing and difficult situation and one can feel Zola's pain in his article "The Fifth Act," in which Zola vents his frustration about the soiling of French justice:

I am terrified, filled with the sacred awe of a man who witnessed the supernatural: rivers flowing backwards toward their sources and the earth toppling over under the sun. I cry out with consternation, for our noble and generous France has fallen to the bottom of the abyss.<sup>13</sup>

This passage is remarkable for its use of phenomenon that does not naturally occur in nature. Zola's fascinating use of imagery provides a powerful reasoning for

overturning the verdict of Dreyfus. After much anguish Dreyfus was finally released from the horrors of the ill-famed Devil's Island and eventually pardoned. Zola utilized his scientific-like use of words to expose the tyranny of the French military that had been plagued by the stupidity of pride and cowardice.

Perhaps Zola's greatest asset was his ability to assess the realities of his own time. Zola was able to majestically paint an historically accurate picture of middle to late nineteenth century France through his many novels. He was able to understand people from the lower class to the upper class. He knew what drove them to their actions, and understood their positive and negative qualities. He was a complicated individual himself, and perhaps this aided in his accurate portrayals of a whole host of characters. "More perhaps than any other, Zola set the pace and delineated the sphere for the contemporary novelist, through his dynamic relationship to his age."<sup>14</sup> Zola was able to transcend into the lives of a variety of "normal" and "abnormal" personages making him the perfect vehicle to contemplate the day-to-day nuances of human nature.

Emile Zola's death epitomizes the problem with an individual having too much insight into the inner-workings of the human psyche. It makes people uncomfortable to know that there is someone present on this Earth who can be at one with pain and pleasure and the agents which cause those powerful sensations. There is evidence (although admittedly not conclusive) that Zola was a victim of these individuals to whom the light is scarier than the darkness. Zola died on September 28, 1902 of carbon monoxide poisoning caused by a plugged flute in his chimney. It is interesting that an investigation of the death turned up the unsettling fact that there was not enough soot in the chimney to have blocked "the flow of air."<sup>15</sup> This data was apparently silenced (due to the inflammatory nature of Zola even in death) until 1953 when the newspaper *Liberation* received a letter from M. Hacquin who had received this unsettling deathbed confession in 1927:

Hacquin, I'll tell you how Zola died. I trust you and anyway the statute of limitations will soon obtain. Zola was deliberately suffocated. I and my men blocked his chimney while doing repairs on the roof next door. There was a lot of coming and going and we took advantage of the hubbub to locate Zola's chimney and stop it. We unstopped it the next day, very early. No one noticed us.<sup>16</sup>

Although there is some doubt as to the believability of this account, it is however plausible that Zola was killed for his involvement in the Dreyfus affair. It is only important as it supports the idea that people would rather kill someone with a unique outlook on life and the world, rather than let their "dangerous" ideas persist.

Even today some people in our "modern" universities do not look favorably upon the study of Zola and his works. Scholars of Zola are looked upon as being on the fringe. Although some individuals attempt to deny the value of the life of Emile Zola others still feel his grand importance. Zola was listed in the recent *1,000 Years*,

*1,000 People: Ranking The Men and Women Who Shaped the Millennium.* Although admittedly fairly subjective it was prudent to include Emile Zola, a man who developed the concept of naturalism as a literary device and carried it forward into the many pathways of the populace. Zola defied many of his time and will always be a hero of humanity, and a doctor of human nature. He will forever be remembered for his immortal words “When truth is buried underground it grows, it chokes, it gathers such an explosive force that on the day it burst out, it blows up everything with it.”<sup>17</sup> Perhaps one day the people of the earth will find other ways to understand the intricacies of human nature, but until that day Emile Zola’s naturalism lives on as the premier way to cope with the often-strange inclinations of the masses.

## *Endnotes*

1. Frederick Brown, *Zola: A Life* (New York, 1995), 12.
2. Harry Levin, *Gates of Horn: A Study of Five French Realists* (New York, 1966), 306.
3. Emile Zola, *The Downfall* (London, 1892), 418.
4. "Opinions of the Press on the French Edition of *The Downfall*," from the *Spectator*, in the Ghatto and Windus 1892 edition.
5. Brown, *Zola*, 428.
6. *Ibid.*, 426.
7. Emile Zola, *Abbe Mouret's Transgression* (Great Britain, 1993), 185.
8. *Ibid.*, 288.
9. Emile Zola, *Doctor Pascal* (Great Britain, 1995), 38.
10. Brown, *Zola*, 781.
11. Emile Zola, *Fruitfulness* (Garden City, 1923), 487.
12. Emile Zola, *The Dreyfus Affair: J'Accuse & Other Writings* (New Haven, 1996), 2.
13. *Ibid.*, 137.
14. Levin, *Gates of Horn*, 350.
15. Brown, *Zola*, 792.
16. *Ibid.*, 793.
17. Agnes Hooper Gottlieb, *1,000 Years, 1,000 People* (New York, 1998), 183.

**Voltaire:**  
**His Thought and Method of Writing History**  
by  
**Ryan N. Springer**

During the Enlightenment Era, many reforms took place in Europe; among them were the modernization of researching and writing of history. Although there were many who pushed the change of historiography to a new and more precise method, one in particular stands out: Francois Marie Arouet (1694-1778), the famous French poet, philosopher, dramatist, and historian better known as Voltaire. By examining how Voltaire's philosophy of history developed through his historical, social, economic, and religious works and commentary, we can properly evaluate his impact on history as a discipline.

Voltaire spent most of his life in exile in England, and had both good and bad relations with Frederick the Great. He lived for years along the northeastern border of France so that he could escape in case one of his writings was found subversive. His *nom de plume*, "Voltaire," was adapted after his release from the Bastille, a prison for political revolutionaries.<sup>1</sup>

Voltaire noticed that he enjoyed writing history when he began learning about the Romans and the Greeks in *Louis-le-grand*—the school he attended when he was young. The Bible and the history of France fascinated him. Early on in his study of history he adamantly pursued the history of sixteenth and seventeenth century France. In due course, he became involved in historical research working on *La Henraide* (1728), his epic poem about the popular French King Henry IV (1553-1610). Henry, who converted to Catholicism upon his accession, issued the Edict of Nantes in 1598, giving freedom of religion to the Huguenots.<sup>2</sup> Though a tolerant king, he fell victim to religious fanaticism—a Catholic fanatic stabbed him to death. Historian Ira Wade called *La Henraide* "history in rhyme."<sup>3</sup>

Voltaire moved from using history as background for his poems and plays to writing history with his *Histoire de Charles XII*. Charles XII (1682-1718) was the King of Sweden who invaded Russia and was defeated by Peter the Great. Voltaire became interested in "The Lion of the North" during his exile in England when he met a man (Baron Fabrice) who had known the king, having had contact with him as a diplomatic envoy.<sup>4</sup> This volume was "the work of an apprentice."<sup>5</sup> "Save for the efficiency and elegance of the narrative there was nothing outstandingly original."<sup>6</sup> J.H. Brumfitt points out that it was "a fascinating story of action and adventure"<sup>7</sup> and a work of art, but Voltaire had not developed his new social history or skeptical method.<sup>8</sup> Instead he used the great man theory of history. Prevalent at the time, the

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Ryan N. Springer, Vice President of Alpha Beta Phi Chapter and Assistant Editor of *Perspectives in History*, presented this paper at the National Phi Alpha Theta Conference in San Antonio, Texas, December 28, 2001.

great man theory centered on a heroic individual who molds events and guides history. With the great man theory in mind, Voltaire compared Charles XII and Peter the Great and preferred Peter because he created and built while Charles conquered and destroyed his country.<sup>9</sup>

Voltaire wrote the *Histoire de Charles XII* in prose and published it in 1731. It read like a tragedy. “As he stated in his preface, he had the didactic purpose of teaching rulers to avoid war. ‘There is no sovereign’,” he wrote, “who, in reading the life of this monarch, ought not to be cured of the folly of war.”<sup>10</sup> Voltaire hated war, and he broke from the historical method of his day by excluding from his book lengthy descriptions of battles. Indeed, he hated dull details such as genealogies and attracted readers by not burdening them with boring, meaningless facts. “Confound details,” he wrote, “they are a vermin which destroys books.”<sup>11</sup> Therefore, in *Charles XII*, he described a battle in three sentences,

After the first charge there was seen once again an effect of chance in battles. The French army and that of the enemy, seized with panic, both took flight at the same time, and marshal de Villas saw himself almost alone for a few minutes on the battlefield [; he] rallied his troops, led them back into the fray, and gained the victory.<sup>12</sup>

*Charles XII* was very popular, but received terrible reviews. Expert historians criticized Voltaire for factual errors and use of fictional anecdotes. In order to defend himself, he relied less on anecdotes when researching his next book and focused more on using important facts in social history. This approach was innovative, and Voltaire became an initiator of a new type of history, as the historian “not of an individual but of an age.”<sup>13</sup>

His next book, *The Age of Louis XIV*,<sup>14</sup> involved research on a larger variety of sources than his other histories. For example, Voltaire consulted some of the best sources available, “histories, memoirs, letters, . . . and [claimed] that he read some 200 volumes of these.”<sup>15</sup> He read published histories and memoirs, corresponded with eyewitnesses, and read diplomatic documents in the archives of the Louvre.<sup>16</sup> The research took nearly twenty years, of which twenty-seven months was concentrated effort.<sup>17</sup> Voltaire’s new approach abandoned chronological organization, and in order to emphasize artistic achievement he wrote in topics arranged in a pyramid with historical narrative as the base, social developments in the middle, and artistic achievement at the apex.<sup>18</sup> The book still contained the great man theory and included some anecdotes, but it departed from his former material by discussing social and economic development. For example, he wrote that impoverishment in France under Louis XIV’s reign was caused, not by Louis’s expensive building projects or extravagant court, but by war and famine.<sup>19</sup>

Besides biographies of historical figures, Voltaire also wrote novels such as *Candide*. *Candide* is easily Voltaire’s wittiest novel. In its time it was a powerful tool for political attack on Europe’s degenerate and immoral society. It is about a

young common man who, in the beginning, lived in Westphalia and was taught by the optimistic philosopher Pangloss. However, throughout *Candide*'s life, he runs into terrible barriers and is taught that even though all around him is bad, it is really for the good.

Voltaire's main motive in *Candide* was to respond to Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*, contradicting his optimism:

All nature is but art, unknown to thee;  
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;  
All discord, harmony not understood;  
And truth is clear. What IS, is RIGHT.<sup>20</sup>

Voltaire felt that Pope's essay was too optimistic. Voltaire, like Pope had been optimistic at one time in his life; however, the Lisbon earthquake in 1755 changed his outlook. Voltaire created a character named Pangloss who represented Alexander Pope.<sup>21</sup> *Candide* is a form of symbolic history—symbolizing the history of Voltaire's life and the philosophy of the Enlightenment. Furthermore, *Candide* shows Voltaire taking a "tragic view of history, that history in general is a collection of crimes, follies and misfortunes."<sup>22</sup> The historian is always looking for the failings and wrongdoings of man.<sup>23</sup>

As a historian, Voltaire had opened the way for new inquiry into economic and social history. He went a step farther by opening the discussion to religion. Like many philosophes, Voltaire became a deist, believing that once God started the lives of individuals, he left them alone to determine their fate. And as a proponent of the Enlightenment, he concentrated on attacking religious fanaticism. His battle cry was "Crush the infamous thing," meaning bigotry and fanaticism. As he developed a hatred and bias against the Church and the clergy, he took great pleasure in excluding the Christian philosophy of history from his writing, a reaction to historical interpretations such as Jacques Bossuet's *Histoire Universelle* (1681). Bossuet held that God caused all historical change on behalf of the progress of God's chosen people and the Church. His work ignored Muslim civilization and Asia and treated Greece and Rome as background to the life of Christ.<sup>24</sup>

As a deist, Voltaire could have referred to God as "The Supreme Being," including deism in his interpretation.<sup>25</sup> But instead he made a conscious attack on Bossuet<sup>26</sup> by completely rejecting divine interpretation and setting forth a rational interpretation of history. He declared that "the events of history were attributable not to design but to chance or fortuity," and this "helped to open the way for other rationalistic philosophies."<sup>27</sup> The way was open for historians to use secular, purely human interpretations.<sup>28</sup> Rather than centering on Judeo-Christian developments, in *Essai*, Voltaire included India and China. Rather than stressing kings and popes, he discussed themes of social, economic, and cultural history, including changes in clothing, the invention of clocks and windmills, and rise of the English woolen industry.<sup>29</sup> Voltaire wrote, "One demands of modern historians ... more attention

to customs, laws, [morals], commerce, finance, agriculture, [and] population. It is with history as it is with mathematics and physics. The scope has increased prodigiously.”<sup>30</sup> Lord Morley, Voltaire’s biographer, conceded, stating:

Voltaire was always conscious . . . of the great historical principle that besides the prominent men of a generation there is something at work underneath, a moving current on whose flood they are borne. He never fixed this current by any of the names which now fall so glibly from our lips,—tendency of the times, tenor of public opinion, spirit of the age, and the like, by which we give a collective name to groups of sentiments and forces, all making in what seems to be a single direction. But although unnamed, this singular and invisible concurrence of circumstances was yet a reality to him. The age was something besides its heroes, and something besides its noisiest and most resounding occurrences. . . . We are bound to recognize that a new way of regarding human action, as well as a new way of composing history, was being introduced.<sup>31</sup>

Voltaire’s “anticlerical” and “anti-Christian” view on a variety of topics caused bias in his historical interpretations, creating this and other weaknesses. He was not interested in psychology, and therefore when he wrote about Peter the Great, Charles XII, and other great men, this dimension was regretfully absent. Voltaire’s work also was influenced by a strong “Enlightenment philosophy” undertone; historians of historiography disagree and sometimes contradict themselves on how much Voltaire propagandized for the Enlightenment. Often he left conclusions to the reader, and he sometimes had as much impact with what he excluded as with what he included. *Charles XII* was openly didactic, but if Voltaire was expressing propaganda in his later works, it was with greater subtlety. Another weakness lies in his practice of ignoring variations in society and conduct throughout the centuries. He was biased against and disparaged the Middle Ages, a time that he viewed as brutal and harsh.<sup>32</sup>

On the other hand, Voltaire stands out as a prominent path-breaker in the writing of history. He was the first historian to declare that history is the record of all aspects of life. He gave history a new significance by overthrowing the old supernatural interpretation and allowing in the sunshine of brilliant reason.<sup>33</sup> Broadening the scope of historical inquiry beyond the study of great men and great battles, he initiated the study of universal history, social history, economic history, and cultural history. By asking significant questions and writing well he increased interest in the study of history and set a higher literacy standard for those who followed. In a letter on August 1, 1752, he wrote of *The Age of Louis XIV*: “My aim has been to make a great picture of events that are worthy of being painted, and to keep the reader’s eyes trained on the leading characters. History, like tragedy, requires an exposition, a central action, and a denouement. . . . My secret is to force the reader to wonder: Will Philip V ascend the throne? Will he be chased out of Spain? Will Holland be

destroyed? Will Louis XIV go under? In short, I have tried to move my reader, even in history.”<sup>34</sup> Voltaire was not the father of modern history, but with his open-minded approach, he was “the most typical and the most universal of the historians of the Enlightenment.”<sup>35</sup>

## *Endnotes*

1. The Bastille was designed as a fortress in the Middle Ages; however, by the eighteenth century it was a French prison.
2. The Huguenots were French Protestants.
3. Peyton Richter and Ilona Ricardo, *Voltaire* (Boston, 1980), 73.
4. J. H. Brumfitt, *Voltaire: Historian* (London, 1970), 8.
5. *Ibid.*, 9.
6. Arthur Marwick, *The Nature of History* (Chicago, 1989), 35.
7. Brumfitt. *Voltaire*, 13.
8. *Ibid.*, 10, 20.
9. *Ibid.*, 12.
10. Richter and Ricardo, *Voltaire*, 78-79; James Westfall Thompson and Bernard J. Holm, *A History of Historical Writing*, vol. 2, *The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 2 vols. (reprint; Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1967), 2: 67.
11. Marwick, *Nature of History*, 38.
12. J. H. Brumfitt, "Voltaire: Historian," in *Voltaire: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. William F. Bottiglia, (Englewood Cliffs, 1968), 81.
13. Brumfitt. *Voltaire*, 20-21, 24, 46.
14. In French—*Siècle de Louis XIV* (1751).
15. Brumfitt. *Voltaire*, 130.
16. *Ibid.*, 130-131.
17. Thompson and Holm, *Historical Writing*, 2: 66.
18. Brumfitt. *Voltaire*, 48.
19. *Ibid.*, 53.
20. Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Seekers: The Story of Man's Continuing Quest to Understand His World* (New York, 1988), 160.
21. It has been argued that Pangloss also represents mathematician Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz.
22. Boorstin, *Seekers*, 160-161.
23. Voltaire, *A Recapitulation of the Foregoing History, With the Point of View From Which it Ought to be Considered in Recapitulation*, in *Essays in The Works of Voltaire: A Contemporary Version*, vol. 16, part I, trans., William F. Flemming (New York, 1927), 133.

24. Allan Nevins. *The Gateway to History* (Chicago, 1963), 265.
25. Brumfitt. *Voltaire*, 104.
26. *Ibid.*, 30.
27. Nevins, *Gateway*, 265.
28. Thompson and Holm, *Historical Writing*, 2: 65.
29. Brumfitt, *Voltaire*, 67, 69.
30. Thompson and Holm, *Historical Writing*, 2: 67.
31. Nevins, *Gateway*, 278.
32. Brumfitt, *Voltaire*, 168.
33. Nevins, *Gateway*, 276
34. Lionel Gossman, "History and Literature," in Robert H. Canary and Henry Kozicki, eds., *The Writing of History: Literary Form and Historical Understanding* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1978), 13.
35. Brumfitt, *Voltaire*, 1.

# **Opportunity Lost: The Union Defeat at the Battle of the Crater**

by  
**Christopher Scherff**

In the early summer of 1864, Union General Ulysses S. Grant seemed out of options. His Army of the Potomac was in a stalemate at Cold Harbor, with both Union and Confederate forces dug in for the long haul. If he moved to his left, he would be facing the trenches of Richmond, a difficult and bloody task that Grant was unwilling to undergo. Moving to the right would make his supply lines vulnerable to Rebel cavalry. Yet there was still one move Grant could make, a move that would take his forces across the James River and towards the small railroad town of Petersburg.<sup>1</sup>

Petersburg was located on the south bank of the Appomattox River about 10 miles from where it flows into the James, and approximately twenty-one south of the Confederate capital at Richmond. Although seemingly unimportant, Petersburg had to be held by the South if they were to keep Richmond.<sup>2</sup> Petersburg was the rail center of the Confederate capital, and all but one of the railways, which supplied the capital, passed through here. These railways provided the supplies sent from the Carolinas, which would be needed by the defenders of Richmond in the event of an attempt on the city.<sup>3</sup>

By keeping the pressure on Lee at Petersburg, Grant could keep Lee immobile, which worked in Grant's favor. Robert E. Lee could do little without giving up his capital, and while Lee was forced to remain in place, Grant's numerical superiority only served to strengthen Union chances of victory.<sup>4</sup> Grant could afford to wait at Petersburg, just as he did outside of Vicksburg, and this is why he conducted the final nine months of the war virtually immobilized.<sup>5</sup>

Lee was very much aware of this problem and wrote:

We must destroy this army of Grant's before he gets to James River. If he gets there, it will become a siege, and then it will be a mere question of time.<sup>6</sup>

Lee knew that he had to hold his capital. Richmond was more than just the seat of the government, it was also a symbol of defiance for the Southern people. With its location a mere 110 miles from Washington, it was like a slap in the face to the

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Union. Perhaps more importantly, Richmond was a major center of logistics for the Confederate army in the field providing arms, supplies and other forms of support. Lee could not give up Richmond in order to preserve the army and keep the fight alive.<sup>7</sup> Lee knew this all too well, and so did Grant.

The key to the success of Grant's drive on Petersburg was speed and surprise. He had to get across the James River to Petersburg before Lee could shift his forces to defend the city. Under the cover of darkness, Grant moved his men out of Cold Harbor and towards the James. Meanwhile, engineers had cut an access road and laid a 2,100 foot pontoon bridge across the James River in order to facilitate the crossing. The Army of the Potomac was well on its way to Petersburg before Lee even knew where Grant was.<sup>8</sup> Lee sent several messages to his commanders in the field asking over and over again, "Where's Grant?"<sup>9</sup> It was possible that Grant could have swung around and come back up the north side of the James River, which is why Lee maintained his position at Cold Harbor for so long.<sup>10</sup> But Lee found out soon enough that his worst case scenario was about to become a reality.

Grant could have, and indeed should have, had the city by the fifteenth of June, long before Lee could have made it down in time to bolster the city's weak defenses. Instead, inept leadership cost Union forces greatly. The man in charge of the drive on Petersburg was General William Farrar "Baldy" Smith, who arrived on the scene and attacked, immediately overwhelming the Confederate forces under General Pierre G.T. Beauregard. It seems that everyone except Smith knew victory was his for the taking, as the Confederate commander sent frantic pleas for assistance to both Lee and Richmond.

Instead of pushing the attack and taking the city, Smith was satisfied to get a good fighting position and then wait for reinforcements. The only problem with this strategy was that the defenders of the city were getting reinforced at the same time. While the Union stalled and unleashed poorly thought-out and uncoordinated attacks, Lee was able to get his army down to Petersburg. When Grant arrived there five days after the city should have been taken, he called off all attacks and decided to conduct a siege.<sup>11</sup>

Technically it wasn't a real siege, as there were still roads and rail lines that went into the city and were still in Confederate hands.<sup>12</sup> The campaign settled down into a daily grind of hot, dirty and dangerous trench warfare. There were minor picket and artillery exchanges and sharpshooters on both sides were constantly at work picking off anyone who raised his head above the level of the earthworks.<sup>13</sup> The exchange of fire between the two sides was so great that both sides kept their soldiers occupied by gathering the thousands of pounds of enemy spent bullets and shells that littered the ground on a regular basis.<sup>14</sup>

The stalemate had not lasted long when a proposal came up the chain of command to run a mineshaft under Confederate lines, fill it with gunpowder, and explode it. General U.S. Grant heard of the plan from General George Meade, who in turn received it from the commander of the 9th Army Corps, General Ambrose Burnside, who had it passed on to him from the division commander, General

Robert Potter, who had it proposed to him from a Lieutenant Colonel of the 48th Pennsylvania regiment, named Harry Pleasants. It was not Pleasants' idea either as he had come across it when he overheard some of his enlisted men in the trenches talking about the idea.<sup>15</sup> Pleasants' 48th Pennsylvania regiment was made up of largely Schuylkill County volunteers from the coal mines in that area; Pleasants himself was a railroad engineer who had been employed planning and building tunnels.<sup>16</sup> Grant and Meade were somewhat less than enthusiastic about the plan, and it was widely ridiculed by the army's corps of engineers who felt that a tunnel of such length could not be built without proper ventilation. However, both generals realized that any activity was better than having the men simply ducking shells and exchanging tons of lead with the enemy every day. On this basis, approval was given for Pleasants to begin his mine.<sup>17</sup>

At noon on June 25, 1864, Pleasants and his regiment began digging into a steep railroad bank behind the Union lines.<sup>18</sup> The men were ill equipped for such a task, and the general staff's disdain for the project was revealed by how difficult it was to get proper mining tools for the operation. When mining picks were not available; entrenching versions were modified at the blacksmith's. Excavated material was carried out in improvised hand barrows made from cracker boxes and barrel hoops; lumber that was needed to shore up the galleries of the mine was first stripped from a local bridge and then Pleasants himself attained lumber from a commandeered sawmill six miles away. He borrowed special tools from Washington when none could be had through proper channels.<sup>19</sup> Through it all, Pleasants kept the project moving.

To properly coordinate and keep the mine on target, Pleasants used a complex triple triangulation system to assure accuracy; however, getting the bearings for this process continually put him on exposed sections of the Union line and placed him in danger from enemy sniper fire.<sup>20</sup> When he ran into heavy marl he had to adjust the depth of the mine to avoid that layer of earth. Ventilation, as predicted by the engineers, quickly became a problem as fresh air could not reach the workers; and gases coming from the earth, burning candles for light and the respiration of the workers greatly deteriorated the air quality. This problem, which engineers and experts claimed would make the project unfeasible, was solved in an ingenious manner. Pleasants ran a wooden trough the length of the shaft, with an area of sixty inches squared, and this led to a vertical chimney that broke the surface near the mouth of the mine. At the base of this chimney, a grate was placed and a large fire was kept burning at all times. The entrance to the cave was sealed by a makeshift door, through which the trough protruded. In effect the fire created a draft that pulled air from the area where the miners were working and out the chimney, while fresh air from the outside was being pulled inside the trough to the work area to replace the air being pulled up the chimney. At all times, Pleasants had a circular airflow moving throughout the shaft.<sup>21</sup>

Pleasants employed 210 men in rotating shifts around the clock. Only two men could dig at a time; the rest acted as support staff removing debris, preparing timbers and other functions.<sup>22</sup> There were times when those working could hear the

Confederate soldiers above them talking. At another time, the stability of one of the galleries was jeopardized because of the recoil of Rebel cannon overhead.<sup>23</sup> In spite of all difficulties encountered, not the least of which was the lack of support from Grant and Meade, Pleasants finished the main section of his mine in only 22 days on July 17. His men equipped with only shovels and spades had averaged over twenty-three feet per day, a total distance of 511 feet. They claimed they could have done it three times faster with the right equipment.<sup>24</sup>

The next day, the miners began digging the lateral galleries which would extend to the left and right of the main shaft and ran nearly parallel to the enemy's earthworks. These galleries stretched 37 and 38 feet respectively and were completed on July 23 making the mine ready to be charged.<sup>25</sup> Originally Burnside and Pleasants had requested five tons of blasting powder and 1,000 yards of safety fuse, but Meade countermanded the order.<sup>26</sup> Pleasants was given only 8,000 pounds to work with.<sup>27</sup> In addition a fuse the proper length was not obtained, forcing Pleasants to make do with two smaller fuses spliced together—a factor which the Union would regret later.<sup>28</sup> The mine was charged with 32 kegs of powder each weighing 25 pounds. These were placed in eight separate magazines connected by troughs filled with powder, four magazines on each lateral arm of the mine. Ten feet of the side galleries were tamped with some of the tens of thousands of sand bags Burnside had requested. In addition, 34 feet of the main gallery was designed to direct the full force of the 8,000 pounds of powder upwards.<sup>29</sup>

However, the Confederates were not completely unaware of the actions of the Union miners. Rumors quickly spread among those manning the Confederate trenches, which were dismissed by other higher-ranking soldiers. One of Lee's aides, Walter H. Taylor wrote in a letter:

Those scamps in the trenches...pass their time creating these preposterous stories and find some credulous enough to lend a listening ear, I should not omit to mention that Burnside has some thousands of Negroes under the ground-not dead and buried-mining our works. Some fellows actually overheard them digging some fifteen ft deep and about as many yards in front of our lines of entrenchment. At least so they say. No doubt these important facts will be announced to the public ere long.<sup>30</sup>

Actions were taken by the Confederate army to get to the bottom of these "preposterous stories." On July 11, 1864, Major General B.R. Johnson suggested that a listening gallery be constructed to determine if the enemy was mining.<sup>31</sup> Captain H.T. Douglass was placed in charge of the operation and began work on three shafts; work commenced on July 17. Two shafts were in the vicinity of Pegram's or Elliott's salient, the other was in the area around Colquitt's salient.<sup>32</sup> As the work progressed, priority was increasingly being given to the first shaft at Pegram's salient, which is exactly where the Union mine was heading.<sup>33</sup>

Given this information, it is very obvious that the Confederates knew something was up. The Union miners could hear the Confederate anti-miners working, and Burnside knew it was only a matter of time before the mine was found. In a letter to General Meade on July 26, Burnside wrote:

...It is all together probable that the enemy are cognizant of the fact that we are mining, because it is mentioned in their papers, and they have been heard at work on what are supposed to be shafts in close proximity to our galleries...The placing of the charges in the mine will not involve the necessity of making any noises. It is, nevertheless, highly important in my opinion, that the mine be exploded at the earliest possible moment...<sup>34</sup>

Meanwhile the Confederates worked around the clock attempting to find the Union mine. They began to use special augers on July 19 to search for the enemy mine by drilling into the ground around their shafts in all directions, hoping to bore into the enemy shaft.<sup>35</sup> Confederate miners working on the shaft at Colquitt's salient on the evening of July 21 actually heard what they thought were the Yankee miners, but the sound stopped and they were unable to trace it.<sup>36</sup> On July 23, only a week before the Union exploded their mine, the Confederates began to branch out at right angles from their initial shafts hoping to run into the Union mine in this manner.<sup>37</sup> Rain late in the month slowed down the Confederate miners who may well have eventually located the mine. When the Union army actually blew the magazines under Pegram's salient, the Confederates had men in the shafts still searching for the enemy mine.<sup>38</sup> And later reports, which have not been verified, claim that the two Confederate shafts, which originated from Pegram's salient, actually passed on either side of the Union shaft.<sup>39</sup>

With pressure mounting on Burnside to make an attack before the mine was discovered, a plan of action was submitted on July 26.<sup>40</sup> The mine would be exploded around 3:30 AM on the morning of July 30. The explosion would be the signal for the beginning of an artillery barrage for the 144 field pieces, mortars and siege guns, which were more pound for pound than had been gathered by both sides at the Battle of Gettysburg.<sup>41</sup> Burnside had been massing these guns, along with sandbags and blasting powder since June 25.<sup>42</sup> This would also be the signal for the advance of the ground attack which would be spearheaded by the African American troops of the 4th Division under General Edward Ferrero. These troops would drive for commanding positions behind the enemy lines of fortifications called Cemetery Hill while supporting divisions swept on the right and left flanks.<sup>43</sup>

The events that transpired from the 29th of July through the 30th, the day immediately preceding the attack and the day of attack, must have constituted some of the most disappointing days in the Union army's experience up to that point in the war. It began with Grant ordering Burnside to replace the black 4th division, with a white corps. Although Grant later admitted that the African American division was more prepared and probably could have succeeded in their task, he was very

politically savvy and knew that if things did go wrong and these black soldiers were slaughtered, that he and the Union army would be accused of racist actions by the northern abolitionists for sending these black troops in to conserve white lives and catch Confederate bullets.<sup>44</sup>

This move forced Burnside to choose a new lead position only twelve hours before the assault. There would be no time to brief and train the troops on what to expect and do, as the 4th division had been.<sup>45</sup> In a disastrous move, Burnside called his remaining division commanders and had them cast lots to determine the lead position! Newly commissioned General James Ledlie of the 1st division won the honor. As *The New York Times* later commented:

When such a mode of determining such a question is adopted, need it be wondered that fractious chance should turn up the poorest division of a poor corps—a division fitted neither in respect of its composition or its commander for such a duty as was assigned to it.<sup>46</sup>

Not only was Ledlie only six weeks into his current command, he was also in command of a division comprised mostly of heavy artillery and dismounted cavalry.<sup>47</sup>

Regardless of merit, Ledlie moved his division forward in the late evening of July 29th in preparation for the assault. Then further disaster occurred before the first shot was fired. The fuse to the magazines of the mine was lit at 3:15 AM on the morning of July 30th, in anticipation of a 3:30 AM detonation.<sup>48</sup> Instead the fuse went out, right at the splice that Pleasants had been forced to make due to his inability to get the proper materials. Two brave volunteers, Harry Reese and Jacob Douty, had to go into the gallery, find the problem and re-light the fuse. They emerged only moments before the mine detonated.<sup>49</sup> The actual detonation occurred somewhere around 4:45 AM, and was described as follows:

The noise of the explosion was a dull, rumbling thud, preceded, I am told, by a few seconds swaying and quaking of the ground in the immediate vicinity. The earth was rent along the entire course of the excavation, heaving slowly and majestically to the surface, and folding sideways to exhibit a deep and yawning chasm, comparable, as much as anything, to a river gorged with ice, and breaking up under the influence of a freshet... an immense mass of dull red earth was thrown high in the air, in three broad columns, diverging from a single base... Those near the spot say that clods of earth weighing at least a ton, and cannon, and human forms, and gun carriages and small arms were all distinctly seen shooting upwards in that fountain of horror, and fell again in shapeless and pulverized atoms.<sup>50</sup>

The mine did exactly what it was supposed to do in opening a gaping hole in the enemy's lines, and succeeded in catching the Confederates off guard.<sup>51</sup> All Burnside's men had to do was push through that hole and they could have the city.

As the Union advance began to push forward, they encountered yet another difficulty. Burnside had neglected to have the Union defensive works cleared to make way for the assaulting troops. As a result, the men had to climb over walls and other abatis to begin the charge. This immediately broke up the organization of the men moving towards the crater.<sup>52</sup> To make matters worse, as the men neared the crater many stopped to stare at the effects of the explosion leading to a bottlenecking of troops where the flanking maneuvers should have been executed.<sup>53</sup> The explosion had created a hole some 200 feet in length, 70 feet wide and 25 feet deep. When the men opted to move through the crater, rather than around, many of the Union men stopped advancing and began setting up defensive positions and digging out Confederate soldiers instead of continuing the drive.<sup>54</sup> The congestion around the crater only became worse as more troops headed into the area. Because the flanking movements never made it, the Confederates began to pour fire from the right and left sides of the crater pushing the Union advance into a small area around the edge of the crater and inside; more and more Union men began to duck into the hole seeking cover and soon the men stood shoulder to shoulder within its walls. Troops sent to relieve this pressure became confused in the labyrinth-like structure of the Confederate earthworks and they too were pushed in the area of the crater.<sup>55</sup>

As the Union forces continued to become disorganized, the Confederates sprang to action. Mortars were moved within fifty yards of the crater and began to pour murderous fire down on the huddled Union troops. Artillery began to fire from both sides of the crater, and soon the Yankee forces were caught in a deadly cross-fire.<sup>56</sup> At any time the Union commanders could have launched attacks from the left and right sides to divert the fire from the crater, but instead they insisted on sending more troops right up the middle.<sup>57</sup> There was only one division commander on the scene, and that was General Barret, who only had one leg.<sup>58</sup> Generals Ferrero and Ledlie were in a safe bombproof getting drunk behind the Union lines.<sup>59</sup> To worsen the matter, orders to withdraw were given by General Meade at 9:15 AM, but Burnside held the order and continued the “attack” until after 12:20 PM apparently hoping for divine intervention.<sup>60</sup>

The situation inside the crater was only worsening, as all parts of the crater were filled with dead and dying soldiers, and pools of blood formed at the bottom of the pit.<sup>61</sup> The men were dehydrated and running out of ammunition, and as the Rebels began to counterattack, only 100 men could be brought to bear against the tide of the assault as there was no more room on that side of the crater.<sup>62</sup> With realization that the Union was not going to attack on any other points, the Confederates began massing forces for the decisive assault on the Union forces. This occurred in mid-afternoon, and the Rebel forces overwhelmed those men left in the crater who were unable to withdraw, including General Barrett and his entire staff, and recovered all of their lost ground.<sup>63</sup> In the debacle, Union forces lost around 4,400 men compared to only 1,500 Confederates.<sup>64</sup>

In the aftermath of the battle, Burnside was almost court-martialed per General Meade’s wishes but instead resigned.<sup>65</sup> The loss at what became known as the Battle

of the Crater, heavily affected Northern morale as many began to doubt that the Rebels could be beaten. With the election looming, even Abraham Lincoln doubted he would be re-elected and wrote the following in a sealed letter:

This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to cooperate with the President-elect, as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration; as he will have secured his election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterward.<sup>66</sup>

The siege drug on for nine months, ending when Lee finally pulled out and began his last move, which would eventually result in his surrender at Appomatox.<sup>67</sup>

Grant remarked after it was all over that he had never before seen, and never expected again to see, such a wide open opportunity to carry an entrenched position. All that remained of the attempt, which could have been one of the most brilliant battles of the war, was the huge hole in the ground. The hole could be seen to represent what the Union army had been lacking for most of the war, competent leadership. It was also further illustration that fortified positions such as the ones which the Confederates manned could not be carried by frontal assault in the age of rifled barrels; once the initial diversion had failed, there was no point in committing further soldiers to battle. This was a lesson both sides of the war, but especially the Union, were slow to learn. This episode highlights the very best of Union innovation, and the very worst of Union ineptness. The Battle of the Crater, instead of being seen as an example of brilliance becomes yet another lost opportunity for the Union.

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# Women in India: Historical Perspective

By  
Tripta Desai

The purpose of this essay is to discuss the status of women in India today from a historical perspective. I was born and reared in India and earned both a bachelors and masters degree in history at the University of Delhi. I came to the United States in 1960 to study for a Ph.D. in history at Washington State University. I continued visiting India and taught briefly at the University of Delhi. By 1968, I began teaching at Northern Kentucky Community College, now Northern Kentucky University, and by 1979, I received my Ph.D. in history from the University of Indore.

My sisters and I were very fortunate to have parents who believed in the education and individual freedom of women. We knew that it was not the same in most Indian families. I have always wanted to do something to extend the opportunities in my life to the women of India. My starting point was writing the book *Women in India: A Brief Historical Survey*, published in 1992 in Delhi. On sabbatical leave in 1999 I conducted additional research in India and revised the book for the 2001 edition. In this essay I propose to summarize and update my findings and present my reflections on the history of women in India from the perspective of 2002.

The History of India begins with river valley civilizations around 7000 to 5000 B.C. Indo-European tribes called the Aryans migrated into India from central Asia about 3000 to 2000 B.C. History does not record where the Indo-Europeans came from or why they moved into central Asia. One theory is that they came from northern Siberia looking for a warmer climate. Regardless, after about 3000 B.C., they separated and moved in different directions. Some entered India; others went into Iran, and some passed between the Caspian Sea and the southern end of the Ural Mountains into southern Russia and Ukraine.

When the Aryan tribes-people entered India between 3000 and 2000 B.C., they encountered the people of the river valley civilization centered on the Indus Valley (now Pakistan). Probably, the Ayrans composed four Vedas or compilation of writings of the Vedic Age after their conquest of the Indus Valley. It is generally believed that the four Vedas were written by 1,000 B.C., long before the Christian era. Following one of the four Vedas, the *Rig Veda*, women were held in high esteem in the Vedic Age. Both boys and girls about five or six years old were initiated into the Vedic studies in the religious ceremony of *upanayana*. Like males, females completed the basic school by age sixteen, similar to completing high school today.

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From here, some girls married, and others chose to remain single and pursue further Vedic studies, comparable to attending university. Some went on to work as teachers and participate in intellectual debates.

Women in the Vedic Age wore no veils and they were encouraged to participate in public debates in the local assemblies. Widows were allowed to remarry, and wives participated in every religious ceremony along with their husbands. A husband could not enter Heaven unless accompanied by his wife. There were no child marriages, and the practice of *sati* (widow burning) was unknown.

Therefore, when the reform movement developed in the nineteenth century during British colonization, Indian reformers challenged society to reject the degradation of women that developed between 300 B.C. and the Muslim period from the twelfth century into the eighteenth century, and restore the status of women as it was in the Vedic Age. In the twentieth century, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister in 1947, and Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter and Prime Minister intermittently until her assassination in 1984, denounced the unjust treatment of women since 300 B.C. Gandhi described women as the spiritual force of a nation who up-lift the moral caliber of society. He heartily welcomed women into the India National Independence Movement against British rule.

After independence in 1947, women gained ground politically and economically. Some women were appointed to high positions, including governors of states. Madam Vijay Laxmi Pandit, Nehru's sister, served as India's ambassador to the United Nations. Many careers opened to women, in addition to the traditional occupations of nursing and teaching. The Indian Constitution, modeled after the British Constitution and the United States Bill of Rights, abolished inequalities and guaranteed Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, and Jain women rights to inheritance, divorce, remarriage, and equal opportunity in education.

Economically, the Indian government established five-year plans, similar to the five-year plans of the Soviet Union. The first five-year Plan began in 1951 and presumed that alleviating poverty through integrated community development would improve the status of women automatically. However, this did not take place. As is still the case today, India was a male-dominated society, and poor women in the villages continued giving their daylong earnings to their husbands who squandered much of it on locally produced liquor. Women cooked, cared for children, and performed all household chores. They suffered frequent thrashings from their husbands, a practice that is still socially acceptable in poorer sections in both rural and urban areas.

In the 1950s, the government created an elaborate bureaucracy to involve rural women in community programs. It began at the federal level with the Central Ministry of Rural Development and ended at the village level with an official known as the "V.L.W." The V.L.W. could be a man or woman, but regardless of gender, these individuals were responsible for more than one village and were always overworked. In addition, teachers were also employed in the program under similar

hardships. A village teacher had to teach children in day school, and then at night, teach adult literacy classes. The program failed to produce results, not only due to the dismal working conditions of officials but because of city arrogance toward illiterate villagers and a general bureaucratic callousness toward public welfare, a legacy of imperialism introduced by the Muslims and perpetuated by the British.

Another goal of the five-year plans was establishment or revitalization of historic village *Panchayats* (elected councils). The British had maintained such local councils to keep peace. However, they are not the true democratic institutions implied in their name. They were and are controlled by the upper castes. Five-year plans in the three decades beginning in the 1950s failed to change this—the *Panchayats* are still controlled by the same traditional families of the upper castes.

The United Nations declared 1975 to 1985 the Women's Decade to call attention to the low status of women in developing nations. Various UN studies and conferences pointed out that female children suffered from discriminatory malnutrition because traditionally male children receive preference in the allotment of limited food. The girl child was more likely to be withdrawn from elementary school and denied education so that she could help her mother to care for siblings and to perform housework. Studies concluded that a girl child was conditioned from an early age to accept that her main goal in life was to be a good mother and serve her husband obediently and passively.

The Indian government responded by appropriating funds for women's development in the five-year plans of the 1980s and 1990s. Only rural women below or near the poverty line qualified to participate in programs that were designed to generate income. The government encouraged rural women to form cooperatives to qualify more quickly for funds.

Experience in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s revealed that many rural women were not made aware of the importance of cooperatives or of the availability of funds in the five-year plans. Decades of failure prompted the Indian government to by-pass the *Panchayats* and the inadequately performing V.L.W.'s and heavily fund women's development through non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Central Ministry of Family Welfare was reorganized to create a new sub-unit called the Department of Women and Child Development. In the five-year plans of the 1980s and 1990s, special funds were appropriated for poor women in both rural and urban areas to create permanent assets or on-going income-generating activities such as cattle and poultry raising or handicrafts. Today, India is still working to improve the status of poor women in the villages. Currently, eighty percent of the Indian people live in villages, and there are over 500,000 villages throughout the nation.

The NGOs have performed successfully, a result of the selfless dedication of the people involved and its unique approach. Private women's organizations involve leaders from the village women themselves. Village women respond enthusiastically to leaders and teachers from their own ranks. NGOs give a small stipend to a local woman leader, and since the village women know her and know that she

understands their hardships and challenges, they respond positively. NGO leaders show women the practical value of learning to read and write. Once literate, the poor woman villager can visit a bank and apply for funds for economic development and then follow through in earning an income. NGO leaders have concluded that for reform to be successful on a continuing basis, village women must have incomes. Some NGO's have reported that when some wives have earned an income on a steady basis, their husbands have responded by volunteering to temporarily take care of the children and housework at times such as the delivery of goods to the wholesaler or marketing by a seasonal deadline.

NGOs have also worked to improve the political position of women in India. Since the 1980s, the *Panchayats* are required by law to include women as one-third of their membership, but in the traditional male-dominated world of politics, this requirement is totally ineffective. Leaders of the NGOs have recommended the creation of separate *Panchayats* for women's issues, but this has not been adopted. Instead, village women associations called *mahila mandals* are the action agencies of the NGOs that represent women's issues to the *Panchayats*.

*Mahila Mandals* also deal with the bureaucracy of the five-year plans. They organize protests of government policies harmful to women. They sponsor tours of other villages to give women a break from their crushing daily routine and provide social and entertainment activities. In Ahmedabad (Gujerat State), the Self-Employed Women Association (SEWA) is planning to lobby the central government to allow SEWA women to initiate a form of social security to provide economic security in retirement. If financial security could be provided to aging parents, this might contribute to population control. Indeed, population growth is one reason why poverty seems to overshadow the progress India has made in the last fifty years.

The impressive work of the NGOs has revealed that economic progress alone will not lift the status of women. Life-long social education beginning at home is required for women to be treated as equal partners in life. The NGOs recommend co-education in elementary and middle school so that boys will learn to respect girls as co-classmates. But this idea is opposed by tradition, which requires that males and females must be segregated, and insists that in classrooms even innocent socialization between the sexes must be avoided. The virginity of a girl is highly prized, and few men will marry a girl who has slept with a man before marriage. Villagers fear that social contact between males and females will lead to pre-marital sex.

Women's organizations and NGOs also take up issues involving non-Hindu women. India is over eighty percent Hindu, and the Constitution gives minority Christians and Muslims the right to follow their own religious code in regard to family and social affairs. This has the purpose of demonstrating that India is truly a secular democracy with equal protection of every religion. The All India Women Conference (AIWC) organized in 1925 and other women's organizations have sought since the late 1980s to amend this provision, which requires a 2/3 vote in the Indian Parliament. The proposed amendment would impose a uniform civil code on all Indian citizens regardless of religion. The purpose of the AIWC is to protect

Muslim women discriminated against under Islamic law. Members of the Indian Parliament hesitate to approve the amendment because of political reasons. They are unwilling to alienate male Muslim votes, as the personal laws of Muslims are part of the Koran.

In addition to involvement for equal rights for all of India's women, the AIWC has lobbied for a bill to reserve 1/3 of the seats in the Indian Parliament for women. AIWC declares that this is essential for the enactment of laws favorable to women. Male members of Parliament tabled the bill under the excuse that it raises questions about due representation for scheduled caste women. Scheduled castes are what used be the fourth caste in the old Indian caste structure and the untouchables who existed beyond the framework of the accepted four castes. The Indian Constitution grants special rights and privileges to the scheduled castes to bring them into the mainstream of life. This is similar to Affirmative Action in the United States. Women leaders point out that the real reason for opposition to the bill is male reluctance to share power with women.

India's legal system has produced many laws favoring women, but they are not enforced. For example, dowry is illegal with severe penalty. But the custom is in full operation because a girl's father would like to marry his daughter with dowry rather than have her live in his house for the rest of her life. Thus, demands for dowry are not reported. In general, laws are not enforced because policemen at the lowest rung of the structure are recruited from the same poor, lower classes where the suppression of women is rampant. Therefore, when a battered woman approaches the police station, the policeman is likely to tell her to go home and behave because he himself might be charged with a similar crime against his own wife. Members of the middle class avoid police work because of the fear of public embarrassment. They only apply for high positions. However, a solution is to recruit women into the police force. In the urban areas today women are working in traffic control and law enforcement. When a policewoman is harassed, the media provides sensational coverage. But today in the villages the policemen are still male, and women are left at the mercy of the vagaries of brutal policemen who believe in male domination and traditional Hindu and Muslim suppression of women.

Are the eighty percent of Indian women living in the villages condemned to a bleak future? Perhaps there is hope. Since the 1950s there have been changes for the better through NGOs, and some day they may take up the issue of policewomen in rural areas. Moreover, cities are the forerunners of change and hopefully recruitment of women as police and other gains by urban women will extend to the village poor as well. Let us hope and pray that equal rights will be extended to both males and females in India as guaranteed and practiced in the United States.

# Japanese Occupation of Indonesia

by

Ami M. Van De Ryt

Every occupied nation has a different story. Nations victimized by aggression have varied military and economic conditions and different reasons to resist or collaborate. Probably nowhere is this better illustrated than in Indonesia under Japanese Occupation in World War II. Japan proclaimed that its army was liberating Asia from the West and uniting Asians under *Hakko Ichiu*, the hierarchical theory of international relations that put “everyone under one roof” with Japan as the father of the Asian family. But this idea of “Asia as One” was a huge misconception because Asia was far more complex than its colonial legacy. Asia was a land with its own centuries of warfare fueled by vast differences in language, religion and history. Unifying these discrepancies proved impossible and instead of being a liberator, Japan became another oppressor. Though occupation of Asia proved disastrous for Japan, the occupation of Indonesia was truly unique because this is the only case in which Japan had the potential to be a true liberator. Occupation served up its share of brutality for Indonesia, but ironically created a complex situation that gave Indonesia momentum to achieve independence from the Netherlands.

To understand how Japan played a role in the liberation of Indonesia, one must understand the situation before the Japanese arrived. The Netherlands depended on Indonesia for one-seventh of its income, one of the highest ratios in the world.<sup>1</sup> The Dutch were overwhelmingly dependent on their large Indonesian colony. Indonesia’s land mass was six times greater, its population was seven times greater, and its budget was thirty percent higher than the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup> Because of this, Dutch development in Indonesia was advanced for the region. Twenty-six percent of Indonesia’s budget went to maintain a Dutch military presence in Indonesia, and the Dutch invested lavishly in its executive branch, providing for large elaborate courts.<sup>3</sup> Seventy-six regencies of Indonesian descent governed Indonesia and maintained their status hereditarily. Their power was questionable at best; Dutch residents could overrule regents at any time the rules did not suit them. Education reflected the European system, dividing society by social class. Some Indonesians took advantage of the education system and obtained positions within the bureaucracy but no Indonesian reached a level of true power. This was exclusively the territory of the Dutch.

There was never doubt about who held the upper hand in Indonesia. Indonesians did not profit from Dutch occupation and to assure that Dutch interests were always preserved, the Dutch formed the *Politieke Inlichtingen Dienst* (PID) or political

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intelligence service. Its success centered on turning everyone into potential spies, calling for existing officials within organizations and parties to monitor “what the natives were doing.”<sup>4</sup> The PID was abolished in 1919 only to be resurrected under a new name, the *Algemene Recherche* (AR) or General Investigation Service. Little tolerance was allowed for divergent views and after several communist uprisings in the 1920s, undesirables were deported to political camps in New Guinea-Boven Digue. The AR broke these undesirables, all considered communist, into five categories: Chinese, militant or messianic extremist, trade unions, foreign movements organized by Indonesian students in Holland including members of the Dutch communist movement, and Nationalist and Mohammedan movements that were both nationalist and communist.<sup>5</sup>

All elements of society became potential threats and the paranoia brought about by constant surveillance served as the breeding ground for hatred of the Dutch. This hatred would later give way to willingness to accept the Japanese liberators. Japan’s ability to test the Western authority in Asia coupled with Indonesian Islamic belief of deliverance from the Dutch set the stage for Japan’s entrance into Indonesia.

Japan was the only nation testing the will of the Western colonial powers. Challenging Social Darwinism’s theory that Asia was socially inferior to the West, Japan proclaimed itself the liberator of Asia from Western imperialism.<sup>6</sup> *Hakko Ichiu* would provide freedom and national identity for each nation, with the best rising to authority, and this idea would take shape in the formation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (GEACS). Headquartered in Tokyo, the GEACS was founded at the Imperial Conference of August 1, 1940 and it stressed “frugal premodern agrarian values as a countermeasure to the decadence of modern industrial nature.”<sup>7</sup> The GEACS would unify Asian states under Japanese guidance and would pave the way to a greater Asia without having to bend to Western rules.

This Japanese ideology of a united Asia was similar to the Indonesian Islamic teaching on deliverance. Javanese anticipated the arrival of Ratu Adil or the righteous king based on the Joyoboyo prophecy. In the eyes of many Indonesians, this prophecy was fulfilled in the Japanese conquest, the emergence of Sukarno and the Japanese defeat. Thamrin, a nationalist and founder of *Pendidikan Nasional* Indonesia, an educational organization that spread the message of revolt, brought up this prophecy before the Voksraad, predicting the fall of the Netherlands in Indonesia. He declared the time, as *djintan Djepang Itu Nanti Taklukkan Antero Nederland* or Japan will overcome the Netherlands.<sup>8</sup> This declaration led to his arrest in January of 1941 as a potential collaborator and he died in prison a few days later. Upon arrival, the Japanese were called Joyoboyo, and initially thought this meant that they were the gods of luck and happiness. Later, they realized that the prophecy of Joyoboyo predicted not only a quick arrival but also a quick departure, predicting that they would rule as long as the life of corn (*saumure jagu*) or four and half months.<sup>9</sup>

Japan hoped that taking Indonesia would solve its continual oil crisis. Since the early 1930s, Japan’s ability to export oil from Indonesia decreased due to restrictive

measures put in place by the Dutch after the Manchurian incident. This forced Japan to rely more on the United States, a relationship that was doomed for failure. Japan, after 1940, desired to make Indonesia part of the GEACS, asking the Dutch to increase its oil exports to Japan to 3,150,000 tonnes per annum, almost 40% of its total output in 1939.<sup>10</sup> The Dutch refused to acknowledge the GEACS and due to pressure from American petroleum companies, refused to negotiate an oil deal with Japan. After Japan's move into French Indochina in July 1941, Dutch Indonesia cut off all oil supplies to Japan. Attempts to bypass this ban failed, pushing the Japanese to attack.

On March 1, 1942, General Imamura Hitoshi and the Japanese 16<sup>th</sup> Army landed on Java. The conquest of Indonesia was rapid. After three engagements, Java was surrounded in three directions. Japan had full air control, launched from Singapore, and the Navy controlled the surrounding waters. Joyoboyo had arrived and the reception received by the Japanese in areas like Bantam was amazing. The streets were filled with thousands of Indonesians waving Japanese paper flags, shouting, Banzai, Merdeka! Liberation was here.

The Dutch military forces retreated to Bandung, leaving Jakarta open for occupation. Many Dutch stayed, thinking the Japanese would set up a Vichy-style occupation. Dutch authorities ordered all alcohol destroyed, sending thousands of bottles of whisky, gin, and Bols down the Tjiliwang River in the center of town. They hoped this would deter drunken destruction and rape by Japanese soldiers. Completely unprepared and uncoordinated in resisting a Japanese invasion, regular troops numbering 100,000, half Dutch, surrendered to Japanese forces of 40,000 after nine days of fighting, demonstrating the Japanese ability to obtain victory against numerical odds.<sup>11</sup>

Many Dutch, hoping for the same scenario their French counterparts experienced in French Indochina, found that their fate would not be so lucrative. Once occupied, Japanese military personnel rounded up Dutch, or mixed descent soldiers, encouraging them to enlist in the Japanese army or face execution. Those of mixed descent were persuaded to denounce Dutch citizenship or suffer a prison sentence. The Dutch and other Europeans were shipped to protection areas within the cities, separated by 10-foot high bamboo walls and barbed wire.

Eight types of camps were organized to house Westerners and undesirables. First, uncooperative soldiers or captured soldiers went to POW camps. POW's were treated like "military supplies" and were considered soulless, an idea perpetuated by the Gyokusai philosophy.<sup>12</sup> VIPs camps were used to house Dutch high officials. Boys, between the ages of nine and fourteen were separated from their families and housed in a Boys camp, and once they reached the age of fourteen, boys would be shipped to the Civilian Internment Camp and forced into work parties.

Janat camps housed victims of the *Kenpeitai*, the Japanese intelligence police, who were considered "bad" enemies. Most occupants were anti-Japanese guerilla fighters betrayed by the Indonesians, recaptured POWs, certain Allied units,<sup>13</sup> and spies. Most suffered intensive interrogation and decapitation. Prisons and jails

served as the sixth type of camp and continued to house the prisoners left over by the Dutch. It also became home to black marketers and resistance groups, many suffering a horrible death at the hands of the *Kenpeitai* throughout the occupation. Protection camps were also set up to house Axis nation members and neutral countries, such as Sweden and Switzerland, in order to ensure their citizens' safety.

The final type of camp were concentration camps, that housed women, boys under the age of nine, and old men. Occupants of concentration camps made up hard labor work parties such as garbage collection and sewage and drainage teams. Because of the military's support for comfort women as a form of controlled leisure for the soldiers, many Dutch women were told they were to work as waitresses in cities, but instead they were taken to military brothels.<sup>14</sup> Women in brothels were forced to work under a quota system, servicing twenty enlisted men in the morning, two NCOs in the afternoon, and one senior officer at night. The refusal to serve in a brothel meant torture, starvation, and death for those who dared to resist and for those who capitulated, a life of shame, depression, and often suicide. Overall, conditions in all camps were deplorable. They were rat-infested with minimal living arrangements. Most occupants were barely fed and wore their clothes until they fell off. Occupants suffered from lack of medical attention, and many died of Beriberi, Cholera, and Dysentery.<sup>15</sup>

For Indonesians who welcomed Japan, the situation was different. Many Indonesians considered the Japanese arrival a victory, but quickly realized that though Japan held open a door of escape from the Dutch, they would not eagerly hand over liberation. From the beginning, Japanese military and bureaucratic administration was tainted by lack of guidance. The guidelines set out by Tokyo for military administration in Indonesia in November of 1941 were vague and unorganized. All that was asked of the 16<sup>th</sup> army was to utilize the existing administrative structure without disturbing social customs. Working within the existing administrative structure was efficient but at the same time contrary to the Japanese belief of ridding its empire of anything Western. Either way, the Japanese did not realize that the Dutch removed most of their high-ranking bureaucrats out of Indonesia at the time of occupation, leaving little administrative structure. Those who stayed refused to pledge loyalty to Emperor Hirohito and were eventually removed. This put the Japanese military administration in a tenuous position and forced them to rule by trial and error.<sup>16</sup> Indonesia was divided administratively to quell friction between the Army and the Navy and the lack of coordination between the two military units led to further complications. Lack of military personnel also contributed to problems within administration; only three hundred military men were left for administration, spreading them thin across Indonesia.<sup>17</sup>

Two hundred Japanese civilian government officials joined the 16<sup>th</sup> Army at the time of occupation, a highly inadequate number to replace the 15,000 Dutch administrators gone.<sup>18</sup> As bureaucrats, the Japanese did not recognize the importance of Indonesian officials and were completely ignorant of economic and cultural conditions. The bureaucrats looked out for their own self-interest and were

inexperienced in the language and culture of Indonesia. Japan's own ignorance was further handicapped by dealing with Indonesians that were not part of the Dutch order. They were mainly religious figures and nationalists who lacked administrative experience and had their own agendas to advance.

Bureaucratic inefficiency is best illustrated by the mishandling of rice production. Indonesia suffered a rice shortage during the occupation solely based on poor administration by Japanese bureaucrats. Japan did not need rice from Indonesia because they received enough from other occupied territories like Korea and China. They needed oil and their shortsightedness regarding total economic planning for their occupied land meant neglect of procedures in handling anything outside of what Tokyo needed as war materials.<sup>19</sup> Rice distribution in the capitals of residencies, regencies and municipalities like Jakarta was 100-230 grams per person, insufficient compared to the 400 grams normally consumed. Because of drought conditions, Indonesians could not rely on padi (unmilled rice). In addition, bureaucratic confusion on how to handle distribution led to hoarding, increased levels of black-marketing, profiteering and theft, and overall mass starvation.<sup>20</sup>

Not only were Indonesians paying for bureaucratic inefficiency with their stomachs, like their Western counterparts in camps, they too were forced into working for the Japanese war effort. The Japanese used Indonesian male labor for construction and defense projects and treated them like slaves. Indonesian women were sent into forced prostitution and the youth were sent overseas to work "like oxen and horses."<sup>21</sup> The Japanese called Indonesian laborers *roomusha*, meaning "laborer in the war effort," and the number of *roomusha* under Japanese occupation are estimated between four to eight million workers.<sup>22</sup> Laborers would be rounded up secretly by officials calling for all young men to meet at a certain place and time in town. Many were expecting extra rations or a trip to a nearby town for a movie but instead were rounded up in trucks and sent overseas as laborers, given no idea when they would return and no opportunity to say goodbye to their families. The Japanese established compulsory delivery quotas for rice collection, and bureaucrats competed to meet their quotas, leaving *roomusha* to starve.<sup>23</sup> As the war effort began to turn against the Japanese, conditions grew worse for labor in Indonesia. In May 1944, a meeting of commanders of the 7<sup>th</sup> army in control from Malaya to Java agreed to restrict the native standard of living at the lowest possible standards to assist the military machine.<sup>24</sup>

Along with inefficiency, the complete disregard for cultural differences and the inhumane treatment by the *Kenpeitai* further alienated the Indonesian people, causing huge tensions. Major examples were hair length and face slapping. The head and hair are sacred in Javanese culture. The Japanese felt that a shaven head expressed commitment to retention of the old ways and expulsion of the Western barbarians. Longhaired Indonesians with no understanding of this philosophy would find themselves in conflict with the occupiers when asked to shave their heads. Slapping was also offensive. *Binta* or face slapping was a form of social control in Japanese relationships. The military felt it was an effective punishment

over demotion. The bureaucrats in Japan tried to warn soldiers not to slap Muslims but many chose to ignore the warning.<sup>25</sup>

The *Kenpeitai*<sup>26</sup> were responsible for a myriad of atrocities including the death of many people that they found questionable, usually with little to no evidence. They were very effective in limiting freedom of expression. They possessed unlimited authority and could influence any thought, behavior, movement or expression within any occupied territory. The *Kenpeitai* were so powerful that an officer up to three ranks above a *Kenpeitai* official could be arrested in the field on the spot and immediately disciplined, causing the military to take a very hands-off approach to the organization.

The conditions created by the Japanese convinced Indonesians to unite, serving as the force that led to liberation. This is what makes the occupation of Indonesia unique. The way the Indonesians chose to unite for liberation was not in resistance but in collaboration. Collaboration meant arms, organization, and morale to defeat the real enemy, the Dutch. In return, the Japanese enhanced the powers of the nationalist and Muslim sects, though they attempted to keep them separate. Under the leadership of Sukarno and Hatta, Indonesia pushed forth, not for the Co-prosperity sphere that Japan was waging a war over but their own holy war, *peran sutj*, the battle for independence.

It was difficult at times to determine who was using whom. The Japanese attempted to placate the Indonesians through the use of propaganda and committees, only to have these very tools used against them by the nationalists.<sup>27</sup> For instance, Sukarno was involved with the first propaganda campaign Tiga-A, pushing the slogan, “Nippon the Light of Asia, Nippon the Protector of Asia, Nippon the leader of Asia.”<sup>28</sup> The campaign was a failure except for the Indonesians who turned it into a social and education movement for independence. After the propaganda campaign proved useless, the Japanese attempted to funnel the nationalists’ energy into committees. The Japanese established the Commission for the Study of Customs and Polity (*Komisi Menyelediki Adatistiadat dan Tanahnegara*) and asked Nationalist leaders to inquire into Indonesian society, religion, administration, industry, and so on and submit a report to aid occupation policy.<sup>29</sup> The Japanese hoped that this would keep Indonesian leaders busy. This did not work either, and by August of 1943, the Japanese established the *Chuuoo Sangi in* (Central Advisory Council) to use Indonesians as symbolic advisors.<sup>30</sup> The Central Advisory Council had no teeth and the military treated the Indonesians like children, dictating what would be covered in the meetings. Though initially excited, the Indonesians quickly turned insurrectionary. It is from the roots of the *Chuuoo Sangi in*, that the first organized nationalist movement began.

The first organized nationalist movement, *Pusat Tenaga Rakjat*, meant the “center of the power of the people,” and was organized by Sukarno, Hatta and the Gunseikanbu (military affairs department) after two days of intense discussion.<sup>31</sup> Sukarno and Hatta wanted to be able to use the name Indonesia, its national flag and anthem, and wanted unlimited membership for Indonesians in the *Pusat Tenaga*

*Rakjat* or *Putera*. The Japanese decided against membership because it would be like a political party and eventually against the other terms because of the potential for loss of control. Despite these setbacks and further opposition from within the military administration, Internal affairs department, and the *Kenpeitai*, the *Putera* formed on March 8, 1943.<sup>32</sup> The *Putera* caught on quickly, though its goal of uniting the rich Indonesians with the poor did not come to fruition. By 1944, as the Allies closed in, *Putera* was extended to the Chinese, Arabs and Eurasians to compensate for weak Indonesian leadership.<sup>33</sup> This change, under the new name *Jawa Hookookai* (People's Service Association of Java) came under sharp attacks from Indonesian nationalists. Eventually, *Putera* was dissolved despite all attempts by Hatta and Sukarno to keep it alive.

The most important contribution the Japanese made for future Indonesia was PETA (Pembela Tanah Air or Defenders of the Fatherland).<sup>34</sup> PETA was a regular military training corps. PETA's origins were traceable to the 1943 Japanese contingency plans, established to handle the withdrawal of troops on Solomons-New Guinea that would reduce forces to 10,000.<sup>35</sup> The idea to arm came from General Inada, commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> army during a tour of Java. Prime Minister Toojoo in Tokyo approved PETA with no funding, and military training began with arms surrendered by the Dutch. Unarmed trained military units were called *Heiho*. The rate of volunteering was high despite early skepticism by the Japanese.

At first Sukarno and Hatta were not aware of the Japanese plan; they did not become aware until that spring and Sukarno had nothing to do with recruitment for the organization. This was left to Beppan, a special force unit that trained Indonesians for intelligence. The total enlistment was 38,000, four times the combat strength of the Japanese 16<sup>th</sup> army.<sup>36</sup> The purpose of PETA was to use Indonesians as a first line of defense at the beaches with the Japanese as a second line for frontal encounters and both sets of forces as guerilla fighters. Though the terms were not favorable to Indonesia, Hatta observed that this was a step for nationalism whether Japan intended so or not, because it trained Indonesians to deal with an enemy from without.<sup>37</sup> The action of arming Indonesians encouraged the revolution by teaching the Indonesians that they were as capable as the western man.

Though Indonesians through collaboration efforts attempted to acquire independence by playing by the rules, it still did not come easy. In January 1943, to the surprise of Indonesia, Prime Minister Toojoo granted independence to Burma and Philippines, two areas that were repeatedly uncooperative.<sup>38</sup> Furious, Sukarno with "tears in his eyes" said they had expected "priority" in approval of independence but "even the name Indonesia is completely left out . . . It's beyond our comprehension what evil we've done to be made to face such an insult."<sup>39</sup> In May 1943, nationalists protested the visit of Minister of Greater East Asia, Aoki Kazuo, and demanded use of the national flag and anthem to raise morale, communication with Sumatra, Borneo and Celebs, and reorganization of certain military administrations into one. At the following Imperial Liaison Conference, Premier Toojoo offered independence for consideration but was strongly opposed by the Army and Navy. Toojoo

compromised, offering political participation instead of independence. Japan still refused to recognize a united Indonesia and allowed the military to continue governing. This would only placate the Indonesians temporarily.

By mid-1944, Prime Minister Koiso Kuniaki replaced Tojo, and he gave in to Indonesia with a commitment that independence was on its way but gave no set time frame. The 16<sup>th</sup> army, hoping to take advantage of Indonesian fighting forces, downplayed the promise. The promise, known as the Koiso Declaration, was interpreted by the 16<sup>th</sup> army's chief of staff as allowing for the national anthem, flag and the name Indonesia.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, Japanese military officials wanted to nipponize Indonesia, treating the Indonesians not with hostility but as children or younger siblings, guiding them to understand the mistakes of their ways. In conjunction with this, Japan made unofficial increases in Indonesian production in military auxiliaries, food, and construction material and began using Indonesian labor to begin setting up defense positions to prepare for the Allied advance.<sup>41</sup>

Just as the 16<sup>th</sup> Army thought that the Koiso Declaration would be put to rest, U.S. pressure began to mount on Japan by mid-1945 and internally, an Indonesian PETA officers' rebellion at Blitar forced the military to take action to quell rising tensions. The military took the unusual step of creating an Investigatory Committee for Indonesian Independence, which would serve as the foundation for what would become Indonesia's independent government.

The first meeting of the Investigatory Committee for Indonesian Independence or *Badan Penyelidikan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* took place in May 1945 and quickly became a constitutional convention.<sup>42</sup> Though ineffective, the meeting served as a springboard for a series of debates that resumed with the July 15 meeting of the Investigatory Committee. The first debate was what kind of state Indonesia would be. A fight between a republic, monarchy, and an Islamic state resulted in a fifty-five to six vote in favor of a republic. A second debate surfaced over religious freedom resulting in no establishment of a state religion but a requirement that the president be Muslim, appeasing the ninety percent portion of the population that was Muslim. Also discussed at the meeting were territorial boundaries. Divisions existed here as well. Several participants supported leaving the current boundaries of Dutch Indonesia as it stood; others wanted expansion to include New Guinea, Timor, British Borneo, and Malaya up to the border of Thailand.<sup>43</sup>

By day two of the July 15 meetings, Sukarno proceeded to call and draft a constitution. The Japanese, completely caught off guard, could not disagree. Drafting a constitution presented problems for Indonesia. Indonesia was not racially homogenous and did not have a common scene of polity. They needed a common ideology in addition to a constitution. Sukarno drafted five elements that would serve as the basis of the constitution: nationalism, humanitarianism, democracy, social justice, and the belief in the almighty God.<sup>44</sup>

On July 16, 1945, the constitution of Indonesia was born. The Supreme War Council of Tokyo approved the constitution called the *Jawa Gunseikanbu*, and promised to support the Koiso Declaration for early independence of the Indies. The

target date was September 7, 1945, the anniversary of the Koiso Declaration. To accept the decree of independence, the military administration in Java appointed a delegation of four to travel to Saigon to receive the news. The party for Saigon left the night of August 8 unaware that the Soviet Union had declared war on Japan and invaded Manchuria. More importantly, they were unaware that Hiroshima had been bombed. Nagasaki was bombed on August 9 and Japan's fate was sealed. At noon on August 9 the ceremony was held in Saigon and Sukarno and Hatta accepted the agreement without hesitation.

The Saigon party returned to Jakarta on August 14. Sukarno stated that "Indonesia would have Merdeka (independence) not when the maize was ripe . . . but when it tasseled."<sup>45</sup> The following day, August 15, Japan surrendered. Sjahrir, leader of the independence youth movement, and Hatta pushed Sukarno to declare independence. Sukarno hesitated, wanting to insure that surrender was official. The youth movement, impatient with what they saw as lack of revolutionary spirit, wanted to revolt against the Japanese, but Hatta argued that the revolutionaries should save their strength for the Dutch who were sure to return. On August 16, the youth group abducted Sukarno, Hatta, Sukarno's wife, Fatmawati, and their son, Guntur. One of Sukarno's supporters, Subardjo, and Japanese officials got them released. Despite rising tensions to declare independence, the Japanese could not authorize the declaration of independence because the allies directed Japan to maintain the status quo. Sukarno, torn between his supporters and his will to placate the Japanese, declared independence August 17, raised a quickly stitched flag of red and white, and led the crowd in a national oath.<sup>46</sup>

No longer possessing the control as occupiers, the Japanese continued hostilities until August 22 in order to keep their own troops from going into chaos and to hold back Indonesian revolutionaries that were ready to fill the growing power vacuum.<sup>47</sup> Japan was split between suppressing and assisting the rebels. The army agreed to surrender their arms to rebels if everyone shot into the air; however, animosity in some areas caused rebels to shoot Japanese soldiers and the army reneged on its offer. The navy got behind the independence movement, offering munitions, personnel, and funds. The Japanese also turned over about 30 million guilders worth of diamonds, gold, and platinum, and though they did not really offer armed forces, several hundred Japanese soldiers deserted to fight with the Indonesians.<sup>48</sup> With the Japanese no longer a threat or an aid to independence, Indonesians turned their attention to the returning Western powers that were oblivious to the changes taking place. The British, upon arriving in Central Java, saw nationalist flags and armbands everywhere and were bewildered. An officer observed the Indonesians as, "Normally quite peaceful people, whose memories of the Dutch regime could only have been pleasant, but whose feelings had been exacerbated by three and a half years of Japanese rule, stood forth now as opponents of any form of Dutch infiltration and as champions of their own 'MERDEKA.'"<sup>49</sup> This type of attitude prevailed not only from forces there to maintain order but from the returning Dutch, who reacted with similar incomprehension.

Under the surrender agreements, the Allies prohibited the Indonesian flag and national anthem, and withdrew recognition of the BPKI. Yamamoto advised the Allies that to keep the peace in Indonesia, they should allow Indonesians to have their national flag and anthem, give them food and clothes, restore economic vitality, and help them realize their ultimate goal of independence. This would garner Indonesian cooperation. The Allies under Dutch guidance disagreed. They felt food was important but had no interest in pushing anything related to independence. They also refused to believe that nationalists, like Sukarno and Hatta, collaborated because they wanted independence not because they supported the Japanese war effort.<sup>50</sup>

The Allies and especially the Dutch, reasoned that the independence movement was a Japanese plot forced upon the Indonesians by the Japanese government and because of this, forced the Japanese to take the blame for the movement.<sup>51</sup> Yamamoto, as part of his surrender agreement, took the responsibility for the Indonesian independence campaign from start to finish, though this was completely untrue. This was evident in a cabled message sent by the British from the HMS Cumberland in Jakarta where local surrender terms were arranged. "Have just had Yamamoto on board to rub in his responsibilities which he assured us he fully realizes. Japanese control is undoubtedly deteriorating and new Indonesian nationalist flag is appearing in increasing numbers. Extremists continuing old Japanese-created organizations . . . are effecting a measure of terrorism and underground movements especially communists are coming to the surface."<sup>52</sup>

The occupation of Indonesia stands not as the end but the beginning of the story of the nation of Indonesia. The tools gained from the Japanese coupled with the ignorance and denial of the returning Dutch served as a formula for revolution. It would be four years before Indonesia would realize the freedom it sought from Japan. No one would argue that occupation is a positive experience, however, in the case of Indonesia, occupation gave a nation the ability to finally move against the real oppressors.

## Endnotes

1. Theodore Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy: Japan Against the West in Java and Luzon, 1942-1945* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1988), 17.

2. Ibid., 14.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 34-35.

5. Ibid., 39.

6. Ibid., 54; Bernhard Damn, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence* (New York, 1969), 223.

7. Ibid., 54.

8. Ibid., 76.

9. Ibid., 77; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle*, 1-20, 217.

10. Shigeru Sato, *War, Nationalism, and Peasants* (New York, 1994), 7.

11. Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy*, 54-59; Margaret Setz and Bonnie B. C. Oh, *Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II* (New York, 2001), 42.

12. General Yamagat Aritomo in WWI enforced the Gyokusai philosophy, which had no value for human life. Troops were ordered to face suicide over surrender, since if captured they would be soulless bodies walking the earth as dead men. Troops were to fight to the death for the Emperor. Yuki Tanaka, *Hidden Horrors: Japanese War Crimes in WWII* (Boulder, Colorado, 1998), 198.

13. "Certain Allied Units" included groups that gave the Japanese trouble, such as special forces or demolition forces. For a more detailed discussion, reference Jan Krancher, ed., *The Defining Years of the Dutch East Indies 1942-1949: Survivors Accounts of Japanese Invasion and Enslavement of Europeans and the Revolution that Created Free Indonesia* (Jefferson, North Carolina, 1996); Setz and Oh, *Legacies of the Comfort Women*, 48-52.

14. The Japanese military supported comfort women for several reasons. First, they felt that if the soldiers were given leisure to relieve themselves of sexual frustration, they would be less likely to rape civilians. This also was thought to make up for the fact that soldiers were not given leave or limited tours of duty. The military also felt that this system would control the outbreak of venereal disease through routine health checks of the women and the distribution of condoms. Prostitutes controlled by the military also had the advantage of the use of regular prostitutes as spies. Comfort women were taken of all races in Indonesia, not just Dutch, and many Indonesians and other European women suffered at brothels. Tanaka, *Hidden Horrors*, 198; Setz and Oh, *Legacies of the Comfort Women*, 12, 42-68.

15. For further discussion on camp conditions, see Krancher, *Defining Years*, 11-24.

16. Sato, *War, Nationalism, and Peasants*, 10-12.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., 22.

19. Ibid., 10-12.

20. Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy*, 157-162.

21. Ibid., 163.

22. Nationalist leaders did not see eye to eye on the use of *roomusha*. Hatta recognized it as forced labor. Sukarno sent many feeling that the sacrifice of a few thousand made up for the freedom of a few million. For more discussion, see Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy*, 162-168; Sato, *War, Nationalism, and Peasants*, 154-200.

23. Ibid.

24. Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy*, 162.

25. Ibid., 187-188.

26. The Kenpeitai was founded by the Meiji government in 1881 to police the army and control the populace. The Tokkooka was established in 1911 as the thought police, but the Kenpeitai also developed its own thought police division in the 1920s. Its primary focus was on students, socialists, communists, workers, and farmers who were pacifist, under the influence of foreign ideologies, or disrespectful of the Emperor. The Kenpeitai benefited from a 1939 anti-espionage law that made the death penalty a more common method of punishment for espionage, causing increased suspension and hatred of foreigners. The Kenpeitai played a very active role overseas in World War II in censorship, surveillance, monitoring of suspected subversives, and eradication of networks of spies. It numbered 36,000 both in Japan and overseas. At the end of the war, many Kenpeitai leaders refused surrender, burned files, and went to the hills to continue resistance. MacArthur abolished it in 1945. For further discussion, see Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy*, 185-210.

27. Ibid., 91-99.

28. Ibid; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle*, 221; Harry Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945* (Netherlands, 1958), 112-115.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle*, 241-247.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy*, 169-171.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid., 170.

37. Ibid., 171.

38. Ibid., 105; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle*, 239.

39. Ibid., 105.

40. Ibid., 107-108; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle*, 276-279.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., 113; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle*, 294-302.

43. Ibid., 113.

44. The five elements or Pancasila included: Nationalism, Humanitarianism or *kemanusiaan*, democracy or *mufakat*, social justice or *keadilan sosial*, and belief in almighty God or *Ketuhann yang Maha Esa*. Nationalism was the unity of a nation ordained by God of the early states of Srivijaya and Majapahit of the Japanese nations. To bring the Chinese into the fold, Sukarno said that Sun Yat-sen's principles that deal with Chinese nationalism were a major influence in his own youth. Humanitarianism was proposed to rescue Indonesia from Western materialism, like *hakko Ichiu*, without the necessity of Japanese leadership. Democracy means representation of all sides and deliberative discussion to result in collective agreement. Social justice was economic democracy versus western capitalism. Sukarno also emphasized a manifestation of the spirit of *Ratu Adil*, the mythological Indonesian "righteous king." Belief in almighty God was a belief in the God of all religions to whom each individual may turn for inspiration and belief. For further discussion, see Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy*, 113; Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle*, 295.

45. Ibid., 117.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid., 218-222.

48. Ibid.

49. Excerpt take from the Report of Wing Commander Tull, RAF, attached to RAPWU, on Operation "Salek Mastiff," September 10 to December 15, 1945. Friend, *The Blue-Eyed Enemy*, 222.

50. Ibid., 216-217.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., 215.

***In Search of the Cradle of Civilization***  
**by Georg Feuerstein, Subhash Kak,**  
**and David Frawley**  
**(Wheaton, 1995)**

review by  
**Robert K. Detmering**

The origins and development of certain human “civilizations” are often topics of debate among world historians, especially in relation to the Indus Valley, or “Harappan,” society of ancient India, where a great deal of historical, linguistic, and archeological evidence, such as that found in a Mesopotamia or an Egypt, is irretrievable or nonexistent. Due to a lack of concrete proof and an ethnocentric bias, many historians assumed the demise of Indus Valley society was the result of an “Aryan” invasion, in which nomadic conquerors pillaged and destroyed ancient cities such as Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. In their ground-breaking work *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization*, authors Georg Feuerstein, Subhash Kak, and David Frawley expertly refute the “Aryan” invasion theory with a new argument supported by literary, cultural, and archeological evidence found in the India of the past and present, therefore shedding new light on the possible birthplace of civilization, as well as the cultural significance of Harappan society to both modern Hindu culture, and the world as a whole.

Feuerstein, Kak, and Frawley organize their text into two parts, the first focusing on their primary thesis, to refute the “Aryan” invasion theory and provide evidence that Vedic Aryans actually lived in, and significantly contributed to, the success of Harappan civilization. Vedic Aryans were not its destroyers, but its builders. In simpler terms, the “Aryan” invasion never happened, and the fall of the Indus Valley cities was actually the result of ecological factors, which does not constitute the destruction of early Vedic culture, only a change in its location. Having outlined and effectively supported a new environmentally-based revisionist argument for the decline of the Indus Valley cities, the authors proceed in the second half of the text with a compelling series of chapters on the cultural and spiritual legacy of ancient India, countering the biased notion that nothing can be learned from a such a so-called “primitive” society. On the contrary, the authors provide ample evidence that Vedic culture has progressed in an unbroken, chronological line since its inception over eight-thousand years ago, and has made lasting contributions to religion, science, and technology that certainly rival those of Egypt and Mesopotamia, the ancient civilizations most often studied in world history.

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While focusing primarily on the refutation of the “Aryan” invasion model for the apparent demise of the Indus Valley civilization, which is an important and innovative contribution to world historical scholarship in and of itself, ultimately, Feuerstein, Kak, and Frawley attempt to achieve an even more lofty goal: to eliminate the gross misconception that ancient India lacks the historical significance of Egypt or Mesopotamia, a misconception widespread among a good portion of the academic community. *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization* was written as a first step in recognizing the full historical implications of revising the “Aryan” invasion theory, which includes questioning, as the book’s title implies, the previously accepted idea that the fertile crescent in Mesopotamia was the beginning of what is now called human “civilization.” Indeed, Feuerstein, Kak, and Frawley argue that the precursors to Harappan society in India may well be the true cradle of civilization, and in so doing, prove most previous works on the subject incorrect, therefore changing the face of world history as many know it. While the authors admittedly do not attempt to cover all the issues involved in transforming the outdated paradigm on ancient India, they provide fascinating discussions on the origin of yoga, the discovery of Mehrgarh (a Neolithic town with possibly four times the population of Catal Huyuk!), the deciphering of the Indus-Sarasvati language, and other integral subjects in the understanding of the Vedic life-way, all of which contribute a great deal to the validity of their argument, most notably showing that the Indus Valley culture may be the oldest, uninterrupted civilization still surviving in the world today.

From both an academic and lay perspective, the central goals of *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization* are admirable and incredibly significant to our understanding of world history, and they are written in an organized and highly effective manner. For example, in a rare move of historical simplification, though not overly so, the authors culminate their refutation of the “Aryan” invasion model into seventeen brief, but extremely powerful, arguments near the conclusion of the first half of the text. In only a few short pages, the book neatly consolidates what is essentially a complete revising of past historical “truth,” in only a few short pages. Having examined literary (i.e. the *Vedas*), archaeological (i.e. Mehrgarh), and linguistic (i.e. analysis of the Indus-Sarasvati script) evidence in the preceding chapters, this style proves to be quite effective, as it provides the reader with a concise summation of the book’s central thesis, and lays the framework for the detailed analysis of the cultural significance of ancient India in the second half.

Overall, *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization* makes quite a positive impression, as it summarizes a vast amount of highly-detailed research into a straightforward, easy-to-grasp format, applicable to both an academic and lay audience. As previously stated, its significance to world history is incredible, not only altering a popular, but ill-conceived and misguided conception of the past, but taking a giant leap in acknowledging and assessing the historical importance of the ancient Indus Valley civilization. Feuerstein, Kak, and Frawley are talented writers, and their fast-paced, non-cumbersome style makes *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization* an

enjoyable and interesting read for a wide audience, though predominantly for professionals and students in the fields of history, archeology, and possibly linguistics. Also, anyone engaged in research on ancient India will find this text essential and invaluable in their work. *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization* has changed the way we view early human history, thus altering the way world historians view the influence of ancient Indus Valley culture both in shaping the past, and on our lives today.

***Racial Violence in Kentucky, 1865-1940:  
Lynchings, Mob Rule, and “Legal Lynchings”***

**by George C. Wright  
(Baton Rouge, 1990)**

**review by  
John P. Davis**

The premise that Kentucky’s treatment of African Americans was somewhat more liberal than states in the Deep South has been shattered by University of Texas historian George C. Wright. This book is a comprehensive scholarly study of how whites treated blacks in Kentucky during the years between the Civil War and World War II. It reveals a hideous and shameful legacy for Kentuckians with few bright spots. Wright includes a list of 353 lynchings in the state during this period, breaks them down into chronological periods, and gives each victim’s name, race, county of occurrence, and crime allegedly committed. He lists 229 persons legally executed and familiarizes the reader with the concept of “legal lynching,” where the only factor preventing an illegal killing of a criminal defendant was the certainty of swift judicial proceeding and execution.

Wright analyzed the forcible removal of blacks from their property by white mobs such as the Night Riders and the Ku Klux Klan. The cowardly bullies stole or burned their property and drove them away. However, Wright portrays blacks as more than simply victims. He describes many cases in which blacks stood up to bushwhackers, killed members of white mobs attacking them, escaped from lynch mobs, litigated in court against their persecutors, and resisted efforts to dehumanize them or deny them their rights. Mostly, their resistance was futile, and they were usually driven away to more hospitable locales. The racial breakdown of Kentucky today reflects the severity of this unholy campaign. Wright points out that the black percentage of population in the Commonwealth decreased from 20.4 percent in 1860 to 6.9 percent in 1950. The overwhelming motivation behind transgressions on blacks by their white neighbors was economic—whites attacked African American prosperity and politically disenfranchised African Americans by denying them to right to vote or express their views. Nevertheless, the “official” reason given for most lynchings was that a black man allegedly raped a white woman or a black person assaulted a white person.

By contrasting the reactions of newspapers in the North with newspapers in Kentucky, Wright brings to life prevailing attitudes. *The New York Times*, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, and *Cincinnati Commercial* condemned the racial violence. The *Louisville Courier-Journal* and other Kentucky newspapers sometimes decried

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lynchings, but they often rationalized the attacks, and sometimes voiced support for mob action by “good citizens.” Wright used newspapers extensively as main sources of documentation for the incidents, which occurred throughout the state. Manuscript collections of the papers of Kentucky governors provided evidence of a few instances of courageous official resistance to these atrocities. In 1917 Governor Augustus Owsley Stanley faced down a lynch mob in Murray that was threatening not only a black defendant, but also a judge who had sent the man to Hopkinsville for safekeeping. After the mob surrounded his office, the judge reversed himself and ordered the defendant back to Murray. Stanley countermanded the order to return the man to Murray and wired the mob that he was on a train bound for Murray and if they chose, they could lynch him instead of the intended victim. Stanley’s courageous stand won the respect of local citizens in the mob and earned him national praise. Wright lauded Governor Augustus Wilson, Governor Edwin P. Morrow, and other governors for their courageous actions.

Wright’s research revised the previous rank of Kentucky as the ninth Southern state in lynching, previously listed at between 205 and 209. His conclusion that Kentucky had 353 lynchings moves the state up in the ranking to third place. Still, this is subject to change because the total number of lynchings throughout the South is probably higher than recorded. More research should be conducted to determine the extent of lynchings and legal lynchings in the South during these years, and the impact on migration of blacks to the North should be studied. Wright asks tough, previously unanswered questions that have significant impact on our understanding of the history of African Americans in Kentucky and the nation.

***For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer***  
**by Chana Kai Lee**  
**(Bloomington, 1999)**  
**review by**  
**Deborah Wriston**

Chana Kai Lee tells the incredible story of civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer and her battle to secure equality for African Americans in politics, economics, and in society. She researched contemporary newspapers, magazines, census records, statistics, convention reports, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) correspondence, personal letters, and convention reports. She consulted secondary sources and interviewed Hamer and members of her family. This is a well-researched book.

Hamer had only a sixth grade education, but white politicians feared her and African Americans respected her for her determination, courage, and perseverance. Her involvement in the civil rights movement began in 1962 when she attempted to vote for the first time at forty-four years of age. She was denied because she failed the literacy test, which required her to interpret a section of the Mississippi state constitution. This motivated her to get involved. She joined SNCC and became a key figure in registering African Americans to vote in Mississippi. Whites retaliated, and her husband was fired; they were evicted, threatened, harassed, and placed under surveillance. Yet, she persisted. She encouraged African Americans to take control of their lives and act to cause change. She organized food and clothing drives for families who had lost jobs because of involvement in the movement. At the 1964 Democratic National Convention she was one of the organizers of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party that attempted to unseat the all-white official Mississippi delegation. They failed, but succeeded in bringing the plight of African Americans in Mississippi into the national spotlight. She ran unsuccessfully for a state senate seat in Mississippi in 1971. White politicians and officials realized she was not going away, and though she seemed persistent and untiring in her fight, her activities took a toll on her life, emotionally and physically.

Lee depicts Hamer as a real person, with real problems and downfalls, and this enables the reader to empathize. In vivid detail she describes how Hamer was severely beaten by police in a Jackson jail. She was hospitalized several times for exhaustion, and she suffered a nervous breakdown. When her daughter became extremely ill she was refused treatment by three hospitals. Hamer drove the child to a hospital over one hundred miles away, and she died outside the hospital doors. Hamer was a very effective public speaker and successful fundraiser. On the

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platform, she told how her grandmother was repeatedly raped and how she herself was sterilized without her consent.

She became a national figure, but never ignored the needs in her own community. With a philosophy similar to Booker T. Washington's, of self-help and self-determination, she realized that African Americans would never be free from white oppression unless they took control of their own destiny and became land owners and business people. She realized that handouts would run out and people had to learn to take care of themselves, earn their own money, raise their own food, and buy their own house. She created the Freedom Farm, an organization to help blacks become empowered and self-sufficient. The Freedom Farm assisted with securing food stamps, low cost FHA and farm mortgages, loans for businesses, food, clothing, and other needs. I encourage everyone to read *For Freedom's Sake*; it will inspire you and compel you to admire the struggle of black people uplifting each other emotionally, spiritually, financially, and politically. This book provides an inspiring account of how black citizens seized the initiative and gained power and control over their lives.

***The Idea of Japan: Western Images, Western Myths***  
**by Ian Littlewood**  
**(Chicago, 1996)**  
**review by**  
**Ami M. Van De Ryt**

As communication and commerce continue to shrink our world, we in the West are becoming increasingly familiar with Japanese cars, Walkmans, sushi, and *anime*. Despite our burgeoning interest in all things Japanese, the one thing we have not gained familiarity with is the Japanese themselves and what *is* known is rooted in television, novels, and technical gadgets. We can drive a Honda or listen to a Walkman, but these items are physical and easily explained. However, we cannot easily explain the Japanese, and so we invoke stereotypes or half-truths about them. Every country or race we encounter has stereotypes. What is odd in the Japanese case is that the West insists on keeping alive certain stereotypes long after the stereotypes should have expired. This is the issue that Ian Littlewood attempts to address in *The Idea of Japan*. Littlewood's focus is not on all of the stereotypes that the West has about Japan but on only the stereotypes that are universally present. Four images are especially strong in the West and are the basis of the organization of his text: the Japanese as aliens, the Japanese aesthetic, Japanese women as butterflies, and the Japanese as samurais. By looking at what comprises the stereotypes of each of these categories, Littlewood illustrates that, though continually repackaged, no stereotype is truly new, and unfortunately, no stereotype has outlived its usefulness.

Littlewood places the four major categories in context of the history of the West's contact with Japan from 1540 to today. In this span of time, Japan has opened and closed its doors to outside influence several times, bringing in a new variety of ideas and people with every cycle. At the same time Japan was "taking in" new ideas, the West was "taking out" ideas of Japan. As Littlewood demonstrates, these ideas, in their various manifestations, have not drastically changed. The West's first encounter with Japan was a paradox. Usually the West represented civilization, but it was made perfectly clear to Westerners from the minute that they stepped onto the shore that *they* were the barbarians, *not* the Japanese. Yet, at the same time that Japan was civilized, it was savage. Unlike the other "savages," Japan could not easily be categorized, which made us simultaneously uncomfortable and captivated. As the West began to fraternize with Japan, introducing Christianity and developing trade relations with the Daimyo, unification of Japan was occurring, ultimately yielding to the rule of the Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Daimyo. With this victory came the Tokugawa Period in which Japan turned its back on the world, wiped out

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Christianity, and ejected the West. Two hundred years of “controlled” isolation followed, limiting the West to the island of Dejima and cutting off outside contact.

The Tokugawa period did not last forever, and the Meiji period reopened Japan to the West, rekindling the debate about the Japanese character. The trouble with Japan is that it could be simultaneously Oriental and Western, a society where farmers in loinclothes peddling rice and gentlemen in Western suits discussing Mozart coexist. Japan could also be effeminate and masculine, concurrently composing haikus while abiding by the Bushido code of the Samurai. Even more puzzling is that unlike other civilizations that could never quite “get” being Western, Japan was not only the master imitator, but it virtually assimilated the culture, to the point of being more Western than the Westerners. Hence, the beginning of Japan as a “contradiction” to the West, an idea that still serves as the groundwork of study for most books dealing with Japan today. Littlewood asserts that we use the language of polar opposites or paradox not only to explain Japanese culture and behavior, but also to reaffirm our own actions as being civilized. As Littlewood points out, we attempt to push Japan to the side of Orientalism that is attributed to Edward Said’s definition of “aberrant, undeveloped, inferior” (p. 11). It disturbs us that a society that is so civilized is so non-Western. This is what makes the Japanese “alien.”

The impulse to define Japan in contradictory terms continued into the twentieth century. Japan as a nation was responsible for World War II, down to the infant. This was not the case with our “good” enemy, Germany, where only the Nazis were responsible. The Germans also continued to retain their humanity. The Japanese, on the other hand, were portrayed on a scale from superhuman to subhuman. At the beginning of the war, Japanese victories over the West introduced an enemy that was super human, possessing a mysterious knowledge of warfare that the West lacked. By the time the Americans entered, Japan began to take on the persona of the subhuman. War propaganda referred to the Japanese as dogs, monkeys, cats, birds, mice, rats, and insects. To see a Japanese person as a monkey was to see him or her as a child and a primitive, a return to the Social Darwinist attitude that dominated the West’s mentality during the Meiji. Viewing the Japanese as animals also had another benefit; the West felt that if the Japanese were subhuman it would make it easier to exterminate them without bringing our own morals into question. The aspect of subhuman was further accentuated by the perception that the Japanese considered death and suicide a national pastime. If Western soldiers stayed in battle to the bitter end, they were crowned heroes; the Japanese, on the other hand, were considered fanatics. The attitude of the Japanese as subhuman still prevails, an image that changed from monkeys in World War II to robots living out a miserable existence in the automated anthill of modern day Tokyo. In short, the Japanese are still aliens and the West is still looking for reasons to explain why we are more human.

The second area of stereotypes Littlewood addresses deals with the West’s infatuation with Japan as the land of the exotic. Just review a travel brochure of

Japan, it shows that even today, the allure of a land filled with Zen gardens and geishas is what tourists expect when they visit. These kinds of images still portray Japan as the land of escape, an exotic place that aesthetically never changes, and the Japanese as the artists that preserve it for us. The West saw a miniature land of delicate, handcrafted goods and a refined people of immense culture, an image that reminded the West of a time that no longer existed in our own polluted, industrial landscape. As long as Japan stayed in political favor, Westerners admired Japan for its artistic qualities and ignored its industrialization; they dismissed the reality that Japan was just as modern and industrialized as the West. Antagonism surfaced when “dainty” Japan became “war machine” Japan and again when it became “economic powerhouse” Japan. For it is here that Japan is defying the world it exists in for the West’s pleasure. During these interruptions in the West’s dreamland, Japan’s artistic character goes from delicate and refined to cruel and inhuman. The Japanese are no longer seen as master gardeners; they are regarded as beasts that defy nature by forcing chrysanthemum petals open with wire racks. It was acceptable when the West bought every artistic offering of Japan; the same was not true for the Japanese who bought Western masterpieces during the 1980s. In such times when Japan stepped “out of line” in view of the West, the Western psyche could no longer observe Japan from a comfortable position of control – the Japanese became the observers and Westerners, who usually held that lofty position, felt uncomfortable as the observed.

Another area where stereotypes are plentiful is the Western view of Japanese women. Dressed in a kimono with a dainty umbrella and fan in hand, the Geisha is the image most associated with Japan, an image, that as Littlewood points out, is simultaneously “the aesthetic, the exotic, and the erotic” (111). Subordination is part of her appeal. She is obedient and can be dominated, attributes not shared by her Western counterparts. She is both a child and a highly trained sex professional. She is willing to accept desertion from her Western lover but is totally committed to him to the point of death. From Victorian fascination with the Madame Butterfly persona to soap lands and love hotels, the appeal surrounding the geisha and the freer sexual behavior accompanying it is still prevalent. However, as we are the first to partake in the eroticism, we are the first to condemn it. Mixed bathing, loose sexual morals, and immodest women served as both the attraction and the turn off to Japan, puzzling travelers as to how such a picturesque scene could be so immoral. Littlewood asserts that this love/hate relation with Japan’s sexual morals serves a two-fold purpose. First, going to Japan to take part in eroticism allowed for the Western traveler to shed his moral overcoat and partake in behavior that was repulsed at home. Second, to possess a Japanese woman is to possess Japan, a substitute for colonial exploitation. For in the eyes of the West, the stereotype of Japanese women as a submissive, doll-like creature of mystery and fantasy was analogous to Japan, an effeminate nation that would always be inferior to a moral, masculine West.

In contrast to the effeminate, docile Japan characterized by the Geisha is the hard,

cruel world of the Samurai, images that substitute each other depending on the favorable status of Japan with the West. The Samurai, as a stereotype, represents the male side of Japan that is both admired for its chivalric code and despised as a sadistic, cruel, and ruthless killer. The Samurai as an admired symbol of Japan represents a complete commitment to loyalty, honor, and politeness. He kills with total impassivity, as sign of supreme spirituality and skill. He walks the straight, moral line. These are things the West feels we have lost in our mechanized military might. At the same time, we see a Samurai that kills for pleasure; he is willing to kill or die on impulse. We see this total commitment a threat and a reason not to fully trust the Japanese. We compare this to our own warfare, which we see as a means of last resort. It makes us more human to believe that we turn to violence only when we can turn nowhere else. We are not like the Japanese; we cannot kill with indifference. This desire to place Japan on the side of aggression and us on the side of peace serves to this day as a basis of international relations between the West and Japan.

Japan's advancement as an economic superpower rekindles the image of the Samurai. We see the encroachment of Japan on our economic territory as a move by Japan to recoup their losses in World War II. Fanatical militarism has given way to fanatical economic development. Along with images of the Samurai come images of sadism which journalists and authors are eager to bring up by covering stories of extreme school violence in the Japanese education system or the occurrence of crony capitalism and favoritism in Japanese business dealings. We highlight minor pieces of pop culture such as sexually and violently graphic *anime* as an example of how Japanese society is obsessed with sex and violence, never mind that fact that we are lining up to see it ourselves. In short, as Littlewood indicates over and over, as the Japanese get closer to being on the same level of advancement as the West, the West immediately looks for ways to return Japan to the level of a savage. The tragedy is that despite instant communication and the tremendous amount of information available, these stereotypes persist. As Littlewood declares, nothing keeps us from learning and changing but ourselves.

***The Boundaries of Blackness:  
AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics***

**by Cathy J. Cohen**

**(Chicago, 1999)**

**review by**

**Brian K. Powell**

In *The Boundaries of Blackness*, Cathy Cohen examines a disheartening trend in the African American community. Specifically, while African Americans comprise only 13% of the total United States population, they continually account for 55% of all newly diagnosed HIV infections. More disturbing to Cohen are the virtually silent voices of black political organizations, the black press, the black church, and black community leaders. Within this leadership vacuum, Cohen asserts, has grown a factually void, stereotypically driven black psyche regarding AIDS and its transmission. Understanding the origin of such misconceptions and evaluating their tragic results are the foci of Cohen's work.

Historically in the United States, dominant (i.e., white) society has marginalized members of differing racial and ethnic backgrounds (African Americans, Native Americans, etc.). The results of such systematic oppression have denied – and continue to deny – these groups the access to prevailing decision-making processes and control over the resources that shape the quality of their lives. Group identification is stigmatized, and only conformity is rewarded. Within the African American community, such an emphasis on conformity has been institutionalized, as evident in growing aspirations of African Americans to join the middle class. Consequently, traditional civil rights groups and the black church increasingly tailor their messages to a burgeoning black middle class, thereby further marginalizing members of their own community: African American intravenous drug users, African American gay men, and poor African American women. This process of class stratification has replaced consensus issues – those owned by the entire community and seen as vital for its survival – with cross-cutting issues – those affecting only segments of the community who are subsequently the most vulnerable politically, economically, and socially. This internal divisiveness, Cohen asserts, stands ultimately to devastate black social identity if not addressed and corrected.

How have African American intravenous drug users, African American gay men, and African American women been secondarily marginalized? Cohen poignantly identifies institutionalized racism and sexism as primary factors. African American women, long the object of white male sexual desire (in slavery and

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beyond), have historically been denigrated as *lazy*, *promiscuous*, and *easy*. Such myths perpetuate today as the much derided welfare mother “bears child after child to maintain her government assistance.” In addition to these attitudes, institutions like the Centers for Disease Control and the legislative and executive branches of government have framed the topic of AIDS around the “young, gay, white, male” community, thereby determining what groups would and would not have access to the dominant resources allocated to combat the AIDS epidemic. Specifically, in 1978 when four men entered Los Angeles area hospitals with pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP), a rare and exceptionally virulent disease, the CDC emphasized lifestyle (homosexuality) over biology (viral infection) in its quest to identify causation. Ignoring a simultaneous occurrence of PCP pneumonia among intravenous drug users, who were coincidentally overwhelming African American, the CDC categorized this new syndrome as GRID (Gay-Related Immune Deficiency) in 1980, thereby framing the disease as one of the gay community – not the African American community. The medical term AIDS (Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome) was not universally adopted until 1983. Cohen maintains that such framing failed to mobilize the African American community around a consensus issue, resulting in decades-long ignorance and complacency. Already marginalized and forced to compete hand-over-fist for diminutive socio-political participation, these attitudes and actions forced the African American community to pass moral judgment on its own members (i.e., secondary marginalization) in order to determine who was and was not “worthy” of the “reputable” community agenda.

In her conclusion, Cohen admittedly breaks with her contemporary African American scholars. In her *Preface*, she acknowledges the criticism she has received from those in and out of the African American community who have condemned her work as “just another book by a black academic trashing black communities.” Much to her credit, Cohen is unflinching in the face of such contempt. Rather than shelter African American leaders and organizations from any blame or condemnation, she addresses their practices of secondary marginalization as insensitive and self-destructive. With the exception of nominal support from Congressional Representatives like Charles Rangel and Maxine Waters, where is the action on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus? Why do CORE, the SCLC, and the NAACP sit on the sidelines as AIDS has grown to be the leading killer of African American men and women ages twenty-five to forty-four? Why must black churches continue to deny the ubiquitous effects of AIDS on their congregations? Why have black publications like *Jet*, *Essence*, *Black Enterprise*, *Ebony*, the *New York Amsterdam News*, and others failed to address the issue of AIDS in the African American community? Why have the overwhelming majority of published articles focused on Arthur Ashe’s and Earvin “Magic” Johnson’s HIV disclosures when open discussions on AIDS education and prevention are sorely needed? Again and again, Cohen concludes that the collective emphasis of these institutions on the African American middle class has relegated – marginalized – poor, HIV-infected African American men and women to secondary, “undeserving” status.

Cohen substantiates her arguments with commendable, exhaustive research using, among other sources, the *Congressional Research Service*, the *Index to Black Periodicals*, the *Alternative Press Index*, and the *Vanderbilt University Television News Archive*. In addition to these secondary research sources, equally impressive are her personal conversations and interviews with noted African American leaders on the forefront (past and present) of the fight against AIDS: activists Gil Gerald and Tracy Gardner-Wright; Drs. Billy Jones, Helene Gayle, and James Rawlings; and countless others. Her rich, courageous depiction offers vital insight into how devastating AIDS has been to the African American community and the hurdles it must overcome to redress and redefine this plague. An AIDS activist myself (I volunteer with AIDS Volunteers Of Cincinnati [AVOC]), I have found this book to be the first comprehensive, in-depth analysis addressing AIDS, the African American community, and its response. *The Boundaries of Blackness* is an almost unsettling account of action vs. inaction, compassion vs. complacency, and it should prove instrumental in reshaping and rethinking our perspectives on AIDS in relation to gender, class, and race.

## ***The Philadelphia Experiment*** **(New World Pictures, 1984)**

review by  
**Carmen Stewart Elliott**

The 1984 film, *The Philadelphia Experiment*, depicts a series of bizarre and unexplainable events that were supposed to have happened in a Naval shipyard in October 1943. According to the legend, the United States Navy at the height of World War II was seeking a means of making ships invisible to radar patrolling the seas. The U.S.S. Eldridge, a 1240-ton Cannon Class destroyer escort commissioned in August 1943, was the test ship. As the story goes, the experiment caused the ship and her crew to disappear from the Philadelphia harbor, materialize in the Norfolk, Virginia shipyards, and then reappear in Philadelphia several minutes later. When the ship returned, many of the crewmembers had died; their bodies fused into the bulkheads of the ship. Two men are reported to have disappeared entirely. The movie opens with a prologue that states:

In 1943, the U.S. Navy conducted a series of tests to render Allied ships invisible to enemy radar. The results of these tests have never been made public. The final test, which resulted in the project's termination, has come to be known as . . . *The Philadelphia Experiment*.

Though the prologue sets the stage for the events to follow, it does not present the audience with the understanding that what they are about to view is based on urban legend not fact. This makes *The Philadelphia Experiment's* impact troublesome because it purposely misleads its audience about its historical accuracy.

The movie focuses on two sailors: David Herzeg, a ladies man, and Jimmy Parker, an expectant father. The sailors are stationed aboard the U.S.S. Eldridge, expecting to go into a six- month quarantine before joining the experiment. The sailors are unaware, however, that the experiment has already begun. Scientists working on the project start up generators to create a magnetic field, and ask Herzeg to start the generator on the Eldridge. As Herzeg starts the generator, an eerie purplish light is cast over the crew, and some of the sailors are electrocuted trying to engage different mechanics on the ship. Parker is disabled by electricity, and Herzeg tries to rescue him. Herzeg suggests that he and Parker abandon ship. The two jump overboard, and spiral into an abyss that represents the time space continuum. Witnesses in the harbor are amazed to see that the U.S.S. Eldridge has disappeared from view. Everything following the generator scene departs from the urban legend and becomes pure science fiction fantasy.

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As Herzeg and Parker are hurtling through space and time, they pass a town that has been sucked into the same vortex. Herzeg and Parker land in the salt flats of Nevada in 1984. David Herzeg finds a German beer bottle buried in the sand and fears the worst, which is that the United States lost World War II. Jimmy Parker, who sustained injuries prior to the jump through time, is suffering from a burned hand. It changes color and whenever lightning strikes his hand fades, which it does frequently throughout the movie, as a portent of what is to come.

Parker and Herzeg walk until they encounter a roadside diner, where they are inundated by all things modern: Coca Cola, punk rockers, video games, 18 wheeler trucks, helicopters, and jets. The two displaced sailors accidentally skip out on a breakfast tab, steal a car, kidnap its female driver, and run from the local sheriff. Meanwhile, on the military base where Herzeg and Parker first appeared, the aged scientist of the earlier Philadelphia experiment is investigating some scrap ship metal that has been found on the desert floor. He deduces that the ship metal looks familiar, and connects the scrap metal to the U.S.S. Eldridge. Then he sends a team of military police to search for Herzeg and Parker, who were seen escaping from the military base the previous evening.

The female kidnap victim questions the sanity of Parker and Herzeg, but miraculously decides to drive them to Santa Paula, California so that they may locate family members. A huge vortex appears in the sky over Nevada, and steadily worsens, as Parker and Herzeg get farther and farther from their point of entry into 1984. The lightning that plagues the two men strikes Parker, and he is disabled and hospitalized. His body evaporates in the presence of physicians, and the military tracks Herzeg to the hospital. Herzeg escapes with the assistance of his kidnap victim and is able to return to Santa Paula to look for his father.

In one humorous scene, Herzeg asks why Ronald Reagan is speaking on the television, and is informed that Reagan is the president. To which he responds, "Oh, I know that guy," suggesting that he knew Reagan due to shared military service. When Herzeg arrives in Santa Paula, he is able to show his kidnap victim a photo of himself with his father from the early 1940s. He then suggests that he try to contact the wife of Jimmy Parker, who had been expecting when they departed for their mission.

Herzeg finds Mrs. Parker, but also discovers that Jimmy Parker, upon disappearing from the hospital, had been sent back to 1943. He lived his life never knowing what happened to David Herzeg. Mrs. Parker informs him that Mr. Parker was institutionalized for speaking of his experiences with Herzeg in 1984. Mrs. Parker tells Herzeg that he never returned after 1943, and that no one knew his whereabouts. Just as Herzeg begins to think that he must remain in 1984, he is captured by the military and convinced to jettison himself into the vortex swirling over Nevada in order to save the crew members of the Eldridge, and the citizens of a town that the Philadelphia scientist caused to disappear using the same methods as were used on the ship in 1943.

Herzeg dons a copper lined space suit, and is informed that he must turn off the

generator aboard the U.S.S. Eldridge to make the ship reappear in the harbor. However, Herzeg has developed an emotional attachment to the woman that he and Parker kidnapped, and he does not want to return to 1943. After much arm twisting and special effects, Herzeg is propelled back to 1943, where he disconnects the generator, saves Parker, and leaps forward, returning to 1984. The ship reappears in the harbor with most of the crew suffering from radiation burns. The movie ends with Herzeg and his female companion kissing in the restored city that has returned from its trip through time and space.

*The Philadelphia Experiment* is utter nonsense. The filmmakers present the story as if it is based on actual events, and they *never* explain that their story is fiction. The average viewer would be able to discern the fiction of the story, but would believe that the historical backdrop was true. According to the United States Navy, the experiment never happened.

In detailed records from the United States Naval History Department, the *U.S.S. Eldridge* was commissioned in August of 1943, where it was employed in escort duties in the Atlantic Ocean until 1945, when it departed for service in the Pacific. The ship's deck logs place the ship in New York from early October 1943 to December 1943. The event that allegedly occurred in October could not have happened, as the *Eldridge* was never in Philadelphia. In a letter from the master of the *U.S.S. Andrew Furuseth* (Lieutenant Junior Grade William S. Dodge USNR Ret.), Dodge categorically denies that anything unusual happened in the harbor while he and his crew were stationed in Norfolk.

The Office of Naval Research has stated that the use of force fields to render a ship and her crew invisible does not conform to known physical laws, and that the Navy would not have wasted its time. The Navy believes that the threads of the Philadelphia Experiment myth stem from an erroneous connection between the real “degaussing” experiments that the Navy was conducting, and invisibility. Degaussing is a technique of extending electrical cables on both sides of a ship from bow to stern, and passing an electrical current through the cables. The theory is that the electricity passed through the cables and cancelled out the ship's magnetic field. Degaussing equipment was used when a ship was in water that might contain magnetic mines in high combat areas. Degaussing, if done correctly, could render a ship “invisible” to the sensors of magnetic mines, but the ship would remain visible to the human eye, radar, and underwater listening devices.

Operation Archives and independent researchers have never located any official documents that support the assertion that invisibility, or teleportation experiments involving any Naval ship, ever occurred. Sceptics, on the other hand, believe that the Navy is participating in a cover-up. Andrew Warinner of *UrbanLegends.com*, stated that the Philadelphia Experiment myth began with the book *The Case for UFO's* by Morris K. Jessup. Jessup is an astronomer who claims that Carl Allen, a witness in the Philadelphia harbor, came to him with stories of what surviving sailors related to him. Allen reported to Jessup that survivors experienced time distortions—extended periods where they would cease to exist in this dimension.

Other survivors reported being able to walk through walls and that two sailors reportedly burned steadily for eighteen days, baffling medical personnel. There is no evidence, however, that supports the claims made by Carl Allen.

Mark Bean, a supporter of the Philadelphia Experiment myth, points to the Manhattan Project as a perfect example of when the government has lied to the American people in order to protect national security interests. The Manhattan Project produced the atom bomb, which was denied until its use in 1945. Sceptics claim that the nature of the Philadelphia Experiment proved that Dr. Albert Einstein had completed his work on the Unified Field Theory, which the Navy vehemently denies. The Unified Field Theory is the idea that gravity and magnetism are connected, just as mass and energy are connected in the equation  $E=MC^2$ . The theory is that if an object's magnetism can be affected, its gravity will also be affected. Conspiracy theorists believe that the Navy is protecting the Unified Field Theory because it allows space travel without the use of rockets.

Another prominent scientist involved with Project Rainbow, the supposed code name for the experiment, factors into the sceptics' argument that the government is keeping secrets. Dr. John von Neuman, who is supposed to have led the research on the Philadelphia Experiment, inexplicably put an end to Project Rainbow after a closed Congressional hearing. His next research, Project Phoenix, focused on the effects of inter-dimensional travel on the human mind. Sceptics argue that the issue of inter-dimensional travel was raised by the disastrous outcome of the previous project in Philadelphia.

The Navy refutes these claims by pointing to the historical archives of 1943. The United States was at war with the Axis Powers of Europe. Project Rainbow was a code name for Rome, Berlin and Tokyo. The Navy also claims that Einstein never finished his research into the Unified Field Theory. The Navy's researchers believe that the basis for the experiment is heavily reliant upon theories presented by Dr. Nikola Tesla, whose radio frequency studies reportedly created a large hole in the earth in Tunguska, Russia. However, these theories are impracticable, according to researchers who have studied the supposed methods of "invisibility" proposed by Morris K. Jessup.

There is much debate about what actually occurred during the war. The United States was desperate to win World War II. There is very little evidence that proves any of the claims made by supporters of the Philadelphia Experiment myth. For these reasons, the filmmakers are liable for their assertions that the events that they espouse are fact. I must admit, until I did my own research, I believed that the basic premise for the story was true, and that it was possible that a ship in the Philadelphia harbour had been made to disappear. The film is guilty of *creating* history in order to tell a fictionalized story. One cannot even say that the filmmakers are using dramatic license when so much of their story is based on events that, in all probability, never occurred. I would only use this film in a history class to emphasize the power of myth, and to show how a filmmaker can take the barest of truths—the name of a ship for example—and create a totally fictionalized account that re-writes

history for the purpose of entertainment. There is no disclaimer on this film, and at no point is the Navy's disavowal mentioned. This film is a reckless undermining of history, and is only useful in demonstrating to students that they must remain ever vigilant when viewing films that present themselves as historical revelations.

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