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Gettysburg Historical Journal 2023

Abstract

Complete Issue of the Gettysburg Historical Journal 2023

Keywords

Working Class, Mexican-Americans, Jews, American Revolution, Joseph de Maistre, Edmund Burke, Conservatism, South Africa, Apartheid, Nelson Mandela, Loyalism, Revolution, Reintegration, History

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Letter from the Editors

We are proud to present this year's twenty-second edition of *The Gettysburg Historical Journal*. Having finally overcome the Covid-19 pandemic, the editors of the journal have had the opportunity to work together and with professors in person that we did not experience in the past two years. Coming out of the pandemic invigorated and ready to work, *The Gettysburg Historical Journal* received a plethora of submissions from both Gettysburg College students and other students around the country. The works accepted this semester offer a wide range of research spanning topics from Revolutionary America to postcolonial efforts in Vietnam.

The Gettysburg Historical Journal is a student-run organization, providing undergraduate students with an opportunity to gain valuable experience in reviewing, editing, and organizing academic articles for publication. In all cases, authors and editors have also had the opportunity to apply these skills to their future careers, or their work as graduate students. With the assistance of The Cupola, Gettysburg College's online research repository, and the distinguished college faculty, our authors' work has received both serious scholarly and national attention. Past authors have even published follow-up work in refereed journals and presented their work at undergraduate and professional conferences.

The following works we have selected for this year's edition of *The Gettysburg Historical Journal* demonstrate the varied interests and abilities of undergraduate historians, as well as their dedication to examining history from different perspectives:

Patrick J. Artur's paper, "Huelgas en el Campo: Mexican Workers, Strikes and Political Radicalism in the US Southwest, 1920-1934," aims to give a summary of the struggles and efforts towards self-organization of workers of Mexican ancestry in the US Southwest during the Interwar Period, or around 1920-1934. They were in a unique context, many of them having experienced first-hand or knowing people who lived through the tumultuous events of the Mexican Revolution from 1910-1920. The class battles on melon farms in the late 1920s and early 1930s between sometimes politicized and often undocumented Mexican workers and field-owners who employed violent strike-breaking tactics, all against the backdrop of a world economic crisis, are not only of value for historians, but they are also of value for the lessons which we may extract from them, in a world where such large-scale class battles appear on the horizon.

Ziv R. Carmi's paper, "To Bigotry No Sanction, To Persecution No Assistance: Jews in the American Revolutionary Period," aims to evaluate the role of Jewish people in the conflict, contextualizing the experiences of this small minority within the larger narrative of the American Revolution and establishing their importance in the development of religious freedom in the United

States. While Jews were a small minority in the American colonies, they nonetheless participated in the American Revolution on both sides. Through the examination of these topics, this paper aims to explore the Revolutionary period from the perspective of the Jewish-American, discussing their often-overlooked experiences in this watershed period within U.S. history.

Carl J. DeMarco Jr's paper, "A Historical and Philosophical Comparison: Joseph de Maistre & Edmund Burke," aims to show that Maistre was just as influential in the development of conservatism as Burke during the Revolutionary years in Europe. Most historians have focused on the British thinker and statesman Edmund Burke, when discussing the development of Conservatism. He is often considered the "Father of Conservatism" as his principal work *Reflections on the Revolution in France* inspired generations of conservative thinkers. The paper will also demonstrate that Joseph de Maistre developed conservative thought at the same time as Burke but has received little to no credit for the influence he held, and that he was not an extremist as many historians have portrayed him to be.

Reese W. Hollister's paper, "Postcolonial Museums and National Identity in Vietnam," investigates the colonial origins of Vietnam's museum landscape, stemming from French ethnographic museums in colonial Indochina. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* then serves as the theoretical framework to understand

the Vietnamese nation's collective, historical memory of the French and American Wars. This paper concludes that the Vietnamese national identity is based on the shared trauma and socialist solidarity that arise from anti-colonial resistance. Museums both construct and preserve this national identity, and it leads Vietnamese nationals to imagine a community between space and time with people they may never meet.

Marco J. Lloyd’s paper, “The Reintegration of the Loyalists in Post-Revolutionary America,” discusses how most White Loyalists were able to successfully reintegrate into society after the American Revolution. They made their case through decisions to stay and petition for amnesty, which was helped by demonstrating that they embodied republican civic virtues and by making amends with their community. Americans were willing to accept them back into society because of republican ideals, exhaustion from the war, the desire to repair community cohesion, and the social ties that prevailed between both sides throughout the war.

Jordan Cerone and Carly Jensen

Acknowledgments

The editors of *The Gettysburg Historical Journal* would like to thank all the professors of the History Department for encouraging our majors to produce excellent work. In particular, we would like to thank Professor Timothy J. Shannon for providing guidance to the journal staff as our faculty advisor. We also express our gratitude towards Mary Elmquist, Scholarly Communications Librarian at Musselman Library, and Kari Greenwalt, Administrative Assistant of the History Department, for helping the staff prepare this year's edition for publication. Additionally, we would like to thank Ziv Carmi '23, who gave us permission to use his photography for our cover photo.

Featured Piece

This year's featured piece was written by Timothy Shannon, a professor in the History department. Professor Shannon teaches early American, Native American, and British history at Gettysburg College and serves as the faculty adviser for the *Gettysburg Historical Journal*. His research focuses on Native American-European relations in eighteenth-century North America.

1619, 1776, 2023

Timothy Shannon, Professor of History, Gettysburg College

It is an honor to be asked to write an opening essay for the 2023 edition of the *Gettysburg Historical Journal*. As faculty adviser for the journal for the past several years, I have been consistently impressed by the caliber and range of essays published in it every year and by the care with which the editors-in-chief and editorial board conduct their work. This year's edition follows in that tradition, with authors from both within and beyond Gettysburg College.

* * *

Over the past year, the media has been telling us that these are tough times for the humanities. Enrollments in undergraduate History courses have been trending downward nationally, as has

the number of undergraduate History majors and minors. The same news applies at the graduate level, with declining applications to Ph.D. programs and fewer entry-level jobs advertised in the field. These circumstances suggest a self-perpetuating cycle that could be fatal to the academic discipline: fewer undergraduate enrollments means fewer jobs in teaching, which means budget reductions for graduate programs, which means fewer professional historians . . . and so on until the whole industry gets farmed out to AI chat bots and would-be historians instead become the shabby figures muttering to themselves in the back corners of coffee shops (okay, yes, some of us are already there).

Is it really all that bad? Are the groves of academe turning into the graves of academe? I like to tell students who are interested in graduate school that there may be fewer jobs out there in coming years, but as long as there are colleges and universities, there will be History Departments. Meanwhile, out in the real world, History remains a popular endeavor. People still enjoy visiting museums and historic sites, and historical tourism is big business among domestic and international audiences. Publishers still churn out History books, and biographies of historical figures occasionally become bestsellers (and maybe even a Broadway hit). Genealogy, once the pastime of WASPy retirees in local historical societies, has democratized with the advent of Ancestry.com and

similar online research services. History, in short, remains in high demand, regardless of the struggles within higher education.

Even more comforting, History has become downright controversial. While Americans have always fought over how they interpret the past, rarely have they been as attuned to how it is taught as they are now, thanks to the emergence of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in our public discourse. Developed by legal scholars during the 1970s as a way of analyzing how racism is embedded in social institutions, CRT became a focal point of right-wing criticism of K-12 education in the early 2020s. Suddenly, people who nodded off during their own History classes back in middle and high school took a keen interest in the curricula and textbooks of their children, convinced that teachers were using the past as cover for brainwashing the rising generation with left-wing ideology.

This controversy, like so much of our contemporary politics, has sparked more heat than light, but it has thus far had some very real consequences for teachers and students. Personally, I have enjoyed the pro-History memes making the rounds on social media, such as "If studying history doesn't make you uncomfortable, you're not doing it right" and "If I can indoctrinate students, why can't I get them to use an apostrophe the right way?" But when teachers strike content from their lesson plans about slavery or the Civil Rights movement because of mandates about avoiding divisive topics or unpatriotic material, the

costs of such meddling becomes obvious. History without conflict—be it political debates, protests, or war—is inherently less interesting than History with all the nasty stuff left in.

In my field of early American history, the throw down over CRT has played out in the controversy surrounding the 1619 Project, an initiative by the *New York Times* to influence how our schools teach about slavery and racism in American History courses. Published in 2019 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first Africans in Jamestown, the 1619 Project immediately drew criticism about its historical accuracy and focus, but its defenders have remained committed to their interpretation of America's origins and have expanded their work into a book and television series. In 2020, conservatives responded with the 1776 Commission, sponsored by the Trump administration to promote a more traditional History curriculum based on the veneration of the Founders and American liberty. President Biden dissolved the 1776 Commission shortly after his inauguration, and its work faded quickly thereafter. However, the ideas embodied by its proposals remain central to right-wing criticisms of our educational institutions and the historical profession. The appropriation of Revolutionary War symbols such as the Gadsden flag ("Don't Tread on Me") by the January 6th insurrectionists and others on the far right is one example of how our current political polarization has reshaped the meaning of our shared past.

So where does that leave us in 2023? The teaching of History in America has never been more politicized and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Students in higher education are studying History less, but everyone else seems to want more of it. Perhaps this is a good sign. Controversy sparks interest much more effectively than consensus, and for that reason, our current over 1619 v. 1776 may help revitalize the study of History in our colleges and universities. Students of all ages do not like being told what to think, and the brightest ones learn early on to question the knowledge imparted by their parents, teachers, and elders. Properly taught, History should encourage skepticism, not subservience, and that is a social good in its own right.

Huelgas en el Campo: Mexican Workers, Strikes and Political Radicalism in the US Southwest, 1920-1934

***Patrick J. Artur** | Gettysburg College '24*

Workers of Mexican origin or ancestry in the US formed a significant part of the US working class by 1900.[1] Concentrated in Southwestern agriculture, they constituted a ruthlessly exploited section of the working class, enduring long hours and low wages even relative to the contemporary poor conditions of workers. They were regarded as a pool of cheap labor, and those who held the reins of political and economic power chose to invite them in and dispense them out based on how they perceived a profit could best be realized. Mexican workers in the US, rather than acting as passive objects in the Interwar Period, fought to become conscious subjects, wielding their collective power with other workers as a class through strikes wherever they were located. Their relationships with mainstream unions and political parties, such as the AFL and the Republicans and Democrats, were often tenuous, and it was often the case that more radical options, such as the IWW, RILU, and CPUSA, as well as Mexican radical political

[1] Throughout this paper, various terms (such as Mexican-American, Mexican immigrant, Mexican migrant, etc.) will be used to describe workers of Mexican descent in the US Southwest. Although each of these words has a different meaning, for simplicity's sake they will be used interchangeably unless otherwise specified.

traditions, were more appealing to them as they entered into the field of class conflict.[2] Over the course of the 1920s and early 1930s, Mexican workers in the Southwest, particularly in agriculture, demonstrated a growing radicalism and militancy, culminating in a wave of wildcat strikes in the early 1930s.

During the first decades of the 20th century, Mexican immigrants began to represent an increasingly large portion of the overall immigrant body coming into the US. According to US Census Bureau numbers, from 1900-1910 their numbers grew from 1-1.6% of the immigrant population, and from 1910-1920 continued growing to 3.5%.[3] By 1930, the number of Mexican immigrants had jumped 31.9%, from slightly under 500,000 to almost 650,000.[4] The 1920s therefore was a decade in which Mexican immigration to the US expanded noticeably. Mexican

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[2] The acronyms in this sentence stand for: American Federation of Labor, Industrial Workers of the World, Red International of Labor Unions, and Communist Party of the United States of America, respectively. For the latter, various terms and acronyms will be used to refer to the CPUSA, including Communist Party of America, Communist Party, the Party, the aforementioned acronym, as well as 'Communists' to refer to the members of the Party.
[3] For 1900-1910, see U.S. Census Bureau, *1910 Census: Volume 1. Population, General Report and Analysis*, 1913, 781, https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1913/dec/vol-1-population.html; for 1910-1920, see U.S. Census Bureau, *1920 Census: Volume 3. Population, Composition and Characteristics of the Population by States*, 1922, 18, https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1922/dec/vol-03-population.html.
[4] U.S. Census Bureau, *1930 Census: Volume 3. Population, Reports by States*, 1932, 225, https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1932/dec/1930a-vol-03-population.html.

immigrants to the US were drawn there for a variety of reasons, some pushing them and some pulling them. The disruptions caused to life in Mexico by the industrialization programs of dictator Porfirio Díaz as well as the Mexican Revolution caused a steadily growing exodus of Mexicans to leave the country, most often to the US. The US as a destination was attractive beyond its proximity. Industrial and agricultural jobs opened during WWI, as the nation tightened restrictions for European immigrants while loosening them for Mexican ones.[5]

Most of the immigrants from Mexico who arrived in the US ended up in the Southwest, both for the proximity of the region to Mexico as well as for the jobs there. By 1920 Mexican immigrants already composed large portions of the foreign-born white population of those states, with Mexican immigrants composing 68.5 and 69.2%[6] of those populations in New Mexico and Texas respectively. Although they made up only 12.7% of the foreign-born white population in California, Mexican immigrants still numbered nearly 90,000 in the state.[7] Over the course of the 1920s, due to immigration restrictions such as the Immigration Act of

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[5] Brian Gratton and Emily Merchant, "Immigration, Repatriation, and Deportation: The Mexican-Origin Population in the United States, 1920-1950," *The International Migration Review* 47, no. 4 (2013): 946.
[6] In the U.S. Census Bureau, Mexicans were listed as part of the 'Foreign-Born White' population; numbers in U.S. Census Bureau, *1920 Census*, 667, 987.
[7] U.S. Census Bureau, *1920 Census*, 109.

1924 which set up strict quotas for immigrants from various countries, workers from Mexico took up an increasingly large share of the migratory workforce, with "Mexicans [comprising] the vast majority of agricultural workers" in California by the mid-1920s.[8] Once they had arrived in the Southwest, Mexican immigrants often took up jobs in agriculture, particularly in the Imperial and San Joaquin Valleys, California's largest agricultural belts, although they also increasingly began to fill blue-collar roles in urban spaces.[9]

While conditions for the entire working class during this period were inadequate across the board, workers from Mexico endured a particularly exacting exploitation. Agricultural labor itself was harsh, and in addition to being required to perform grueling physical labor for long hours, Mexican workers were often paid the "Mexican wage," a substantially lower wage than their fellow workers in the fields or elsewhere.[10] In one instance, Southern Pacific railroad paid Greek, Japanese, and Mexican

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[8] Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra!: A history of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 24, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.33876.
[9] Justin Akers Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio: Magonistas, Socialists, Wobblies, and Communists in the Mexican American Working Class* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2018), 9792, Kindle; Elliot Robert Barkan, "From 'Reoccupation' to Repatriation: Mexicans in the Southwest between the Wars," in *From All Points: America's Immigrant West, 1870s-1952* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 326, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt2005wmq.39.
[10] Barkan, "From 'Reoccupation' to Repatriation," 326.

workers $1.60, $1.45 and $1.25 per day, respectively.[11] Generalized economic crises which affected all workers, such as the Great Depression, compounded their problems. Not only did Mexican workers receive a lower wage than their white or fellow non-white workers, as was sometimes the case with Japanese workers for instance, but when the Great Depression struck, agricultural workers were hit particularly hard. During President Herbert Hoover's last years from 1931-1933, the daily wages of agricultural workers dropped more than a third, going from $1.87 per day in January 1931 to $1.06 per day in January 1933. Their wages also plummeted at a more extreme pace than their urban counterparts, with the daily wages of agricultural workers in January 1931 amounting to 65% of those of urban workers, and by January 1933 amounting to 41%. Workers in agriculture faced a slower recovery pace than workers in cities, with their income continuing to fall in proportion to urban workers until the summer of 1934, in addition to an unsteady path to pre-Depression wages, as wages fell repeatedly after slowly rising during FDR's first term. Even in the instances in which wages rose for agricultural workers, they continued to rise at a sluggish pace from 1933-1935, suggesting to many that a return to the conditions before the

[11] David M. Struthers, "Economic Development, Immigration, and the 'Labors of Expropriation,'" in *The World in a City: Multiethnic Radicalism in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2019), 30, https://doi.org/10.5406/j.ctvh8r1s3.5.

Depression might not be possible.[12] Mexican workers were among the hardest hit agricultural workers in large part because of their racialized economic exploitation, as well as the fact that due to their non-citizen status, they often could not qualify for most, if not all, New Deal programs.

Nationally, Mexican workers were regarded above all else as a source of cheap labor. At times, the wielders of economic and political power saw this as a benefit and worked to either stimulate Mexican immigration to the US or at least retain the presence of those already in the country. In fact, Mexican immigrant workers held a unique status among foreign-born workers in the US at the time. The 1920s was a period of rising nativism in the US, and political leaders worked to both tighten the domestic labor market and direct popular outrage to the bogeyman of foreign-born radicals in the wake of the international revolutionary upheaval with the end of the First World War. One of the most significant pieces of legislation which enforced this nativism was the Immigration Act of 1924, which established strict quotas for immigrants entering the country, fixed at 2% of the population of immigrants of a given country in the US in 1890.[13] Despite the fact that this measure was intended not only to limit immigration as a

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[12] Numbers are found in Sidney C. Sufrin, "Labor Organization in Agricultural America, 1930-35," *American Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 4 (1938): 551, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2768483.

[13] *Immigration Act of 1924*, Public Law 68-139, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 43 (1924): 5, https://loveman.sdsu.edu/docs/1924ImmigrationAct.pdf.

whole but also to curtail the number of non-white immigrants, the law excluded, among other nationalities, Mexicans. Political leaders at the time reconciled their white supremacist views on immigration with their tolerance for Mexican immigration by arguing that they mostly kept to the Southwest and that they were useful economically. The economic logic of this unique status for Mexican immigrant workers was summarized by the Dillingham Commission when it stated that they "[provided] a fairly acceptable supply of labor in a limited territory in which it [was] difficult to secure others."[14]

On the other hand, more trying times of economic crisis caused political leaders to reverse their position of granting somewhat favored status to Mexican immigrant workers, opting for the employment of tools of state repression to restrict them from the labor market. This is the very reason for which the Border Patrol was created in 1924, as the nativist climate was beginning to extend to Mexicans after they had been excluded from the 1924 Immigration Act.[15] When provisions were created in 1925 for the Border Patrol's actual enforcement powers, they named them as acting as the enforcers of "the laws regulating immigration of

[14] Katherine Benton-Cohen, "Other Immigrants: Mexicans and the Dillingham Commission of 1907-1911," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 30, no. 2 (2011): 38, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jamerethnhist.30.2.0033.
[15] Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra!*, 28-9.

aliens into the United States, including the contract labor laws," among other responsibilities.[16] In other words, whereas US immigration law served as one of the means by which the labor market could be regulated, the Border Patrol was conceived as a new tool to enforce that regulation in a world that, after the First World War, saw increasing global interconnectedness and sustained labor unrest. When economic crisis struck, as happened with the Great Depression in 1929, the Border Patrol was called upon to tighten the labor market by removing around one million Mexicans from the country between 1929-1939.[17] As already low-paid workers in the agricultural sectors of the Southwest, Mexican immigrant workers were an easy scapegoat blamed by political and economic leaders as a cause for the distress of American workers. Popular outrage, instead of being directed towards the bosses themselves, could be channeled against Mexican workers for competing with American workers for jobs and using up valuable national resources.[18] These moves to deport Mexican workers were supported widely at least within the bourgeois political realm, with

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[16] *An Act Making Appropriations for the Departments of State and Justice and for the Judiciary and or Departments of Commerce and Labor, for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1926, and for Other Purposes*, Public Law 502, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 43 (1925): 1049.
[17] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 9710.
[18] Gratton and Merchant, "Immigration, Repatriation, and Deportation," 949.

support from the two mainstream political parties to the AFL itself.[19]

The fact that these political forces viewed Mexican immigrant workers essentially as profit-making objects to be manipulated for the sake of the national economy speaks to the alienation that existed between that population and the mainstream political parties and unions. In the Southwest, the interests of Mexican immigrant workers were opposed by those of the grower companies, who wielded extensive influence within the local Democratic and Republican parties. Working within these parties to advance their own economic interests, the grower companies of the region worked to prevent their immigrant laborers from having the right to unionize, despite the national political climate which was increasingly accepting the usefulness of unions as a tool of mediation between capital and labor.[20] Intimately connected with the economic logic of exploiting these workers was a racist ideology that viewed Mexicans as inferior to whites, and which served as another means to fortify the economic control over these workers. This ideology was shared by both local mainstream parties, particularly so with the Democrats, composed of a large number of landowners from the South who transferred their Jim Crow ideology into the Southwestern context.[21] Both parties

[19] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 9701.
[20] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 9623-31.
[21] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 9639-48.

during this period paid little attention to seeking the support of Mexican immigrant workers, viewed more as an economic tool than as a valuable constituency.

Even more so than the Democratic and Republican parties, the AFL during the Interwar Period distinguished itself as a veritable opponent of Mexican immigrant workers. Throughout the 1920s, one of the most strident campaigners for including Mexicans within the 1924 Immigration Act was the AFL and its president, Samuel Gompers.[22] The AFL had always been a conservative union that opposed immigration from various countries, and as larger numbers of Mexican workers began arriving in the US during and after the First World War, Gompers and his post-1924 successor, William Green, acted as vocal opponents to their continued entry. Whereas Gompers mainly pursued a restrictionist strategy based on forcing the US government to keep out Mexican immigrants, Green pursued a different strategy. His strategy was based on forming an alliance with the *Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana* in Mexico to pressure the government there to restrict emigration from the country.[23] However, this strategy ultimately bore little success and

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[22] Harvey A. Levenstein, "The AFL and Mexican Immigration in the 1920s: An Experiment in Labor Diplomacy," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 48, no. 2 (1968): 207, https://doi.org/10.2307/2510743.
[23] Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers, or CROM.

the AFL returned to advocating restriction by the end of the 1920s.[24] The antagonism of the AFL to Mexican immigrant workers was amplified during the Great Depression, when the AFL joined in the state attacks on those workers, calling for them to be sent back to Mexico and for jobs to be given to whites, rather than Mexicans.[25] The attacks of the AFL against Mexican workers reflects their preoccupations that they held about their further employment; they were seen as not only threatening the position of native-born white American workers through displacing them from jobs and causing a downward shift in wages, but they were also seen as a potential liability in industrial organizing, such as strikes.[26] This was a scenario which did occur at times, such as during the Steel Strike of 1919 when the employers brought in Mexican workers, among other non-white workers, to act as strikebreakers.[27] For traditional unions like the AFL that were intent on regulating, and not overthrowing, the labor-capital

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[24] Levenstein, "The AFL and Mexican Immigration," 207, 218.
[25] Robert Lazo, "Latinos and the AFL-CIO: The California Immigrant Workers Association as an Important New Development" (Thesis M.A., Stanford University, 1990), 28, https://lawcat.berkeley.edu/record/1113982/files/fulltext.pdf.
[26] Lazo, "Latinos and the AFL-CIO," 25.
[27] William Z. Foster, "National and Racial Elements," in The Great Steel Strike And Its Lessons (New York: B. W. Huebsch Publishers, 1920), https://www.marxists.org/archive/foster/1920/great-steel-strike-its-lessons/ch11.htm.

relationship, opposition to Mexican immigrant workers seemed like a strategy for survival.

In contrast to their exclusion from the AFL throughout most of the Interwar Period and the twin tools of economic exploitation and political repression that the mainstream parties wielded against them, Mexican immigrant workers found a much more welcoming political home in the various organizations of the labor movement's radical wing.[28] By the early 1920s, Mexican workers in the Southwest had already had at least two decades' worth of experience in the radical sections of the US labor movement, and their participation in it was continuing to grow. The primary vehicles through which they had done this were the Socialist Party of America[29] and the Industrial Workers of the World[30] union, although the latter tended to be a much more responsive and potent force for addressing their concerns, due to the SPA's relative neglect of Mexican workers.[31] An internationalist union composed of a large number of immigrants

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[28] William Z. Foster, "National and Racial Elements," in The Great Steel Strike And Its Lessons (New York: B. W. Huebsch Publishers, 1920), https://www.marxists.org/archive/foster/1920/great-steel-strike-its-lessons/ch11.htm; The AFL did begin to direct some attention to Mexican workers in the Southwest starting in the late 1930s, although even this was mostly undertaken by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), rather than the AFL as a whole. For more information, see Lazo, "Latinos and the AFL-CIO," 30-1.

[29] SPA.

[30] IWW.

[31] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 4705.

from many countries, the IWW was dedicated to organizing workers regardless of their "race, creed, sex, ethnicity or citizenship."[32] The IWW's peak prominence occurred during the first two decades of the 20th century, and during that time it directed much attention to organizing those workers that the AFL either ignored or campaigned to have deported. In California for example, the IWW worked to organize "unskilled workers in mining, lumber, and farm industries" which were left out of the official labor movement.[33] Many of these workers, especially those in agriculture, were Mexican immigrants, and their portion of those industries would only grow over time as their immigration to the US increased.[34]

The IWW also served as a conduit by which Mexicans in the US could maintain ties to their own country's recently strengthened radical political traditions and vice versa, as Mexican immigrants brought their radical political sensibilities north of the border. The Mexican Revolution from 1910 to around 1920 was a decade of political awakening for the poorest sectors of workers and peasants across the country, as those in the fields turned to the radical ideas of land distribution promoted by Emiliano Zapata, and as those in the factories increasingly turned to the anarchist

[32] Lazo, "Latinos and the AFL-CIO," 29.
[33] Lazo, "Latinos and the AFL-CIO," 29.
[34] See previous U.S. Census Bureau numbers.

syndicalism promoted by Ricardo Flores Magón and others.[35] While both of these ideologies were carried to the US by Mexican immigrants during the decades succeeding the Mexican Revolution, the anarchist syndicalist ideas and movement proved to be particularly influential in the Southwest. The followers of Magón, known as magonistas, organized themselves into the anarchist *Partido Liberal Mexicano*,[36] a party which had tendencies ranging from radical liberalism to anarchist communism but which, significantly, expanded their work beyond the Mexican border and into the Mexican immigrant worker communities of the Southwest.[37] Not only were there significant numbers of PLM branches espousing "worker dignity, livable wages, and women's rights" that sprouted up along the border region in the US, but they also frequently collaborated with the IWW.[38] The IWW and PLM collaborated in numerous ways,

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[35] Arturo Warman and Judith Brister, "The Political Project of Zapatismo," in *Riot, Rebellion, and Revolution: Rural Social Conflict in Mexico*, edited by Friedrich Katz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7ztqzt.14; Sonia Hernández, "Caritina M. Piña and Anarcho-Syndicalism: Labor Activism in the Greater Mexican Borderlands, 1910-1930," in *Writing Revolution: Hispanic Anarchism in the United States*, eds. Christopher J. Castañeda and M. Montserrat Feu López (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2019): 137-8, https://doi.org/10.5406/j.ctvscxs19.13.
[36] Mexican Liberal Party, or PLM. Despite their name, they were a largely anarchist organization.
[37] Juan Gómez Quiñonez, "Sin frontera, sin cuartel. Los anarcocomunistas del PLM, 1900-1930," *Tzintzun: Revista de Estudios Históricos*, no. 47 (2008), https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A370214177/IFME?u=gett36723&sid=bookmark-IFME&xid=ccc5d4e4.
[38] Sonia Hernández, "Caritina M. Piña," 140.

holding joint meetings and events throughout their periods of activity, as well as coordinating industrial actions with each other and giving positive press coverage to each other's organizing efforts, as the PLM did with an IWW miners' strike in Arizona in 1917 for example.[39] While both the IWW and PLM would reach their peaks by around 1920, their years of collaboration had inculcated the Mexican-American and immigrant workers in the region with valuable political lessons on class organization which would reveal itself in future class battles.[40]

The successors to the legacies of the IWW and PLM, and to a lesser extent the SPA, in the Southwest for Mexican workers largely fell into two camps; on the one hand the newly formed Communist Party of America made inroads with Mexican agricultural workers while promoting an anti-capitalist vision of society; on the other hand, the Mexican government inherited from

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[39] Christopher J. Castañeda, "Moving West: Jaime Vidal, Anarchy, and the Mexican Revolution, 1904-1918," in *Writing Revolution: Hispanic Anarchism in the United States*, eds. Christopher J. Castañeda and M. Montserrat Feu López (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2019): 131, https://doi.org/10.5406/j.ctvscxs19.12; "Hablan los mineros," *Regeneración*, September 1, 1917, Archivo Digital de Ricardo Flores Magón, 2, http://archivomagon.net/wp-content/uploads/e4n259.pdf.

[40] Devra Anne Weber, "Mexican Workers in the IWW and the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM)," *IWW History Project: Industrial Workers of the World 1905-1935*, University of Washington, 2016, https://depts.washington.edu/iww/mexicaniwws.shtml; Phil Melanger, "How the IWW Lost Its Western Heartland: Western Labor History Revisited," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1996): 304, https://doi.org/10.2307/970142.

the Revolution of the 1910s tried to continue exerting influence over Mexican workers in the region. The CPUSA had been formed in 1919 as the result of a split by the radical members of the SPA who desired to emulate the recent successes of the Bolsheviks.[41] From the beginning, the young party worked to express solidarity with the working class in Mexico through opposing American intervention in the country.[42] Additionally, at the time of its infancy in 1920 the Communist International[43] pronounced that it was a fundamental task for communists in all countries to organize the "agricultural proletariat."[44] By the late 1920s, the Party was paying specific attention to workers of Latin American heritage in the US, noting their numerical strength of around four million and that it reflected a fault of the communists if those workers remained unorganized.[45]

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[41] "The Communist Party of America (1919-1946)," *Marxists Internet Archive*, https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/eam/cpa/communistparty.html.
[42] Linn A. E. Gale, "Intervention in Mexico and the Class Struggle," *The Worker*, December 15, 1919, 10, https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/mass-worker/v1n5-dec-15-1919-ma-worker.pdf.
[43] An international communist organization and network of communist parties set up by the Bolsheviks and revolutionaries of other countries in 1919 to spread international workers' revolution globally.
[44] Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "Preliminary Draft Theses on the Agrarian Question," *Marxists Internet Archive*, June 1920, https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/jun/x01.htm.
[45] Harrison George, "For a Real Fight on Imperialism," *Labor Unity*, December 1928, 10, https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/labor-unity/v2n11-w30-dec-1928-TUUL-labor-unity.pdf.

All of these factors combined, this translated into active efforts by the CPUSA to organize the Mexican agricultural workers in the US. However, this effort only really picked up pace with the onset of both the announcement of the 'Third Period' by the Communist International in 1928, and the Great Depression in 1929.[46] A fundamental consequence of the former was that the CPUSA, under the aegis of the RILU, now began to create its own 'red' unions in the fields of the Southwest in the form of its Trade Union Unity League.[47] Partly due to the AFL's near-total refusal to even acknowledge these Mexican immigrant workers, the CPUSA was able to make significant inroads into these communities during the Depression years.[48] In addition, understanding the continued deterioration in the conditions of those workers even with the introduction of the New Deal, the CPUSA correctly "anticipated the possibility for renewed struggle in agriculture" and acted accordingly in their organizing efforts among Mexican immigrant workers in the region.[49] The most significant Communist Party-affiliated union which emerged in the fields of the Southwest

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[46] This was a period from 1928-1935 in which the Communist International took an ultra-left position and denounced collaboration with non-communist 'workers'' parties. For more context, see Earl Browder, "Economic Crisis and the Third Period," *The Communist*, March 1930, 236-8, https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/communist/v09n03-mar-1930-communist.pdf.

[47] TUUL.

[48] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 9882.

[49] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10320.

during this period was the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union,[50] a union which brought together workers of all races, ethnicities, and national backgrounds in multiple strikes from 1930 until the mid-1930s.[51] The union was founded against the backdrop of a wave of strikes in the region beginning in 1928, and critically, from the start it involved a great degree of participation from Mexican workers in the US and attention to their significance within the working class.[52] During the first half of the Depression, “there were seven predominantly Mexican branches formed along the agricultural corridor,” and the rest of the party’s growth throughout the Southwest had a significant number of Mexicans and Mexican Americans.[53]

The other principal successor in the region to the political legacy of the IWW and PLM, but especially the latter, took the form of both the Mexican government, as well as Mexican-American militants adhering to the more radical political trends of the revolutionary period. In Mexico, the ‘revolutionary’ government developed an increasingly conservative character,[54] as the governments of Álvaro Obregón and, after 1924, Plutarco

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[50] CAWIU.
[51] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 9924.
[52] Gilbert G. González, “Company Unions, the Mexican Consulate, and the Imperial Valley Agricultural Strikes, 1928-1934,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 27, no. 1 (1996): 56. https://doi.org/10.2307/969921.
[53] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10468, 10443.
[54] Excluding the government’s strident state atheism.

Calles took increasingly repressive measures against labor militancy and radicalism.[55] Part of their strategy was to control organized labor through state-sponsored labor organizations, the most important of these being the aforementioned CROM. Calles and his clique from 1924-1934 used the CROM as a way to "[ensure] labor allegiance" from workers in Mexico to strengthen the "corporatist state" that had emerged after the Revolution, but the Calles government applied this strategy to Mexican workers outside of the country as well.[56]

Beginning in 1928 and continuing until 1936, the Calles government helped bolster the *Confederación de Uniones Obreros Mexicanos*[57] as the CROM's sister organization for Mexican migrant workers in the agricultural areas of the Southwestern US, but particularly California.[58] Calles and his government recognized the necessity of both using revolutionary language to gain the support of workers and improving Mexican migrant workers' conditions so that the US could act as an "outlet for displaced and impoverished workers" in Mexico, while also controlling labor so that its militancy wouldn't spread into Mexico.[59] This union

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[55] Manuel Reyna, Laura Palomares, and Guadalupe Cortez, "El Control Del Movimiento Obrero Como Una Necesidad Del Estado de México (1917-1936)," *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 34, no. 3/4 (1972): 795-7. https://doi.org/10.2307/3539258.
[56] González, "Company Unions," 55.
[57] Confederation of Mexican Workers' Unions, or CUOM.
[58] González, "Company Unions," 55.
[59] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10059.

confederation was not entirely monolithic in terms of ideology or aims. On the one hand, the Calles government worked to exercise as much control as it possibly could over the organization, with the effect of pushing the CUOM into a more conservative direction. In its intervention in and involvement with the labor struggles of Mexican agricultural workers, the CUOM, unlike the Communists, acted to "counteract a revival of radicalism and labor conflict."[60] On the other hand, a key cohort of the CUOM's membership, particularly its founders, was made up of radicals of the Mexican and labor traditions of the 1910s, former and veteran members of the PLM and IWW, as well as a few Communists.[61] These radicals worked to push the CUOM to the left, causing the organization to proclaim that "the exploited class . . . is right in establishing a class struggle in order to affect . . . its complete freedom from capitalist tyranny," among other statements using revolutionary phraseology. However, due to the influence of the Calles government, revolutionary phraseology was often all that the CUOM was able to muster in the labor battles that took place in the California fields.[62] Additionally, those elements in the strikes aligned with the Mexican government were often engaged in simultaneous struggles against the Communists, the two parties competing for

[60] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10067.
[61] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10035-42.
[62] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10042-51.

the allegiance of the workers involved. While the CUOM and other such bodies worked to tame the labor unrest so as not to pose a direct threat to capital, the Communist Party denounced these groups, such as the *mutualistas*,[63] as gangsters, class collaborators, and instigators of racial animosity between Mexican and non-Mexican workers, such as Filipinos.[64]

During most of the 1920s, class peace reigned on the fields of the Southwest. However, the 1922 Mexicali-Imperial Valley strike stands out as an early exception to this trend. In that strike, Mexican migrant cantaloupe harvesters struck along with their companions on the southern side of the border, demanding a raise of four cents per crate, from twelve to sixteen. The strike was quickly repressed, both with the use of state repression, as well as through the Mexican workers' replacement with Filipino workers.[65] Despite its failure, the strike nevertheless acted as a precursor for future conflicts between workers and management in the region, and also imbued the workers of the region with lessons on organization. Additionally, one pattern which was present in the

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[63] The *mutualistas* were class-collaborationist organizations among Mexican-Americans supported by the Mexican government.

[64] Frank Spector, *Story of the Imperial Valley* (New York City: International Labor Defense, 1931), 15, https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/labordefender/pamphlets/imperial-valley.pdf.

[65] Spector, *Story of the Imperial Valley*; "Strike Perils Cantaloupes in Valley," *Santa Ana Register*, May 25, 1922, 1, https://newspaperarchive.com/santa-ana-register-may-25-1922-p-1/.

1922 strike, and which would appear in others was the participation of veteran Mexican radicals in the struggle. These veterans "[brought] their experiences and skills into farm labor organization," and furthermore capitalized on the as-yet unfulfilled promises of the Mexican Revolution, such as land redistribution from powerful landlords and US companies to those that worked the soil.[66]

For approximately six years following the 1922 strike, a period of relative class peace on the part of Mexican immigrant workers emerged in the Southwest, with an absence of major strikes in the agricultural sector. However, by 1928 large numbers of Mexicans had settled more permanently into the Southwest, driven out of the country by the Mexican government's refusal to adequately carry out land redistribution as well as by the state of near-civil war during the Cristero Revolt.[67] This influx of more permanent workers from Mexico in the US set the stage for a rise in strikes and labor militancy on the part of these workers, which is what occurred in 1928 with the wildcat strikes by workers in the cantaloupe fields of the Imperial Valley. In contrast to future strikes, the Communists were largely absent in any organized

[66] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 9984.
[67] The Cristero Revolt was a widespread rebellion in the Mexican countryside during the late 1920s on the part of Mexican Catholics in response to the government's state atheist policies. Information found at Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10018.

fashion; instead, the primary political force in the events was the *Unión de Trabajadores del Valle Imperial*,[68] affiliated to the CUOM.[69] With its CUOM affiliation, the union both excluded non-Mexican workers, and additionally positioned itself as an anti-communist and class-collaborationist force, with "the union head, Filemon González . . . a labor contractor."[70] The lack of any significant organized Communist force among these workers at this time gave the union an advantage in attempting to shift worker militancy away from any direct confrontation with the employers, and towards the negotiating table instead. After the representatives of the union failed in negotiating with the heads of the farms for a raise from fourteen cents to between fifteen and twenty cents per crate, up to three thousand of the Mexican workers that they claimed to represent took strike action despite the union's wishes. However, the strike was defeated due to a combination of state repression, the union's denunciation of the actions, and the lack of participation by non-Mexican workers, such as Filipino laborers.[71]

The primary lesson learned by Mexican agricultural workers in the 1928 wildcat strikes was the need for coordination between themselves and workers of other ethnicities and national backgrounds. This lesson was applied by them two years later in

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[68] Workers' Union of the Imperial Valley.
[69] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10091.
[70] González, "Company Unions," 56.
[71] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10100-26; González, "Company Unions," 56-57.

January of 1930, as the agricultural workers of the region again began taking strike action, again in the Imperial Valley, this time at a greater tempo than 1928, largely due to the effects of the Depression and a more stable population of Mexican workers. Both Mexican and Filipino lettuce workers suffered from being paid a lower wage than their white counterparts; this formed the principal grievance of the strike that emerged that month. Despite being separated by union membership, with the Mexican workers belonging to the CUOM affiliate, the workers were able to coordinate between each other and went on strike after the growers refused to negotiate.[72] This strike was notable for the shift in political forces influencing the strike. Not only were the political forces of the Mexican state and middle-class diaspora either absent or against the strike; beginning in 1930, and extending throughout the decade, the Communist Party made a concerted effort to intervene in and strengthen the strikes involving Mexican agricultural workers in the region.[73] This strike was the first in which that strategy was applied. Through the organizational infrastructure of the TUUL, Communist organizers formed the Agricultural Workers Industrial League[74] as a method to gain leadership in the strike.[75] The bold demands of the AWIL,

[72] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10170.
[73] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10177.
[74] AWIL.
[75] González, "Company Unions," 57.

including "doubling the hourly wage to 50 cents for all workers" and an end to "discrimination based on race or sex" put them in stark contrast with the anti-strike *mutualistas* supported by the Mexican government, and allowed them to win the support of the workers involved.[76]

The strike, in addition to marking Communist Party inroads into the community of Mexican agricultural workers in the Southwest, also marked the beginning of a recognition on the part of business, the state, and the Mexican government of communist influence on labor. These forces acted decisively to repress, weaken, and isolate the striking workers and radical political elements, a trend which would be reflected in successive labor disputes in the region. One of the main means by which the state was able to crack down on the strike was through the use of California's Criminal Syndicalism Act, which "allowed for the arrest of labor activists who purportedly advocated for crime, sabotage, violence, or any other unlawful method as part of conducting a strike."[77] The local law enforcement sided with the grower companies, and through the application of the act, were able to arrest the three main AWIL organizers in the strike.[78] The highest levels of the state were aware of the strike and the danger posed by it to their interests through its communist influence. The

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[76] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10202-11.
[77] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10211.
[78] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10228.

Department of Labor's representative in the dispute, Charles T. Connell, made clear to his employers his intention to side with the growers, as well as to weaken the AWIL through both refusing to recognize them and strengthening their competitors, the CROM and Mexican government-affiliated political forces among the workers. The Mexican government, for its part, worked to communicate to their allies present in the strike to strive to bring the workers back to passivity.[79] The strike was defeated after only a few weeks due to the combination of state repression, isolation, and political inexperience on the part of the Communist organizers. While another wildcat strike emerged a few months later in April, this too was repressed in a similar fashion, although the Communist Party again played a significant role and gained valuable experience. Nevertheless, the crushing of these strikes in 1930 presaged a period of about two years in which Mexican workers in the region largely refrained from striking.[80]

Although state repression was able to temporarily forestall the will of Mexican (and non-Mexican) agricultural workers to strike in 1930, it was unable to alleviate their economic suffering that came from the Depression and their already intense economic exploitation at the hands of the grower companies.[81] As their

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[79] González, "Company Unions," 57-8.
[80] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10252-320.
[81] See earlier information on the effects of the Depression on Mexicans in the US in Sufrin, "Labor Organization," 551.

conditions continued to deteriorate, and as Communist organizers in the CAWIU continued to maintain an active presence amongst the workers in the fields, strikes again exploded in 1933-1934. Against the backdrop of the broader class conflict during the Depression, the strikes in the Southwest were some of the "bloodiest" and most intense.[82] The strikes that arose during this strike wave mirrored some of the aspects of the strikes in 1930 and earlier. The grower companies, through the state, continued to deploy its arsenal of repression against the strikers, particularly the Communists.[83] The Mexican government continued to exercise its influence through its CUOM and *mutualista* associations, with the aim of diluting the demands and unity of the workers through organizing Mexicans along racial, rather than class, lines, and of having their unions negotiate for the workers. These forces backed by the Mexican government again frequently acted as bulwarks against the Communists.[84]

What shifted with the strikes of 1933-1934 in contrast to earlier ones was the extent of Communist influence within the largely Mexican workforce. Not only were the Communists merely active amongst the workers, but they frequently held leadership in

[82] Manuel G. Gonzales, "The Depression: 1930–1940," In *Mexicanos, Third Edition: A History of Mexicans in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), 176, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvgs0bsc.10.
[83] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 9623-31; González, "Company Unions," 61.
[84] González, "Company Unions," 60-61.

the strikes. In the most prominent agricultural regions of California between 1933-1934 for example, the CAWIU led 21 out of the 25 strikes that arose.[85] The Communists were the "most active in providing leadership" amongst the workers, and they were able to do this as a result of their by that point years-long effort at forming connections and organizing in the fields of the Southwest.[86] By the time of the 1933-1934 strikes, Mexican agricultural workers were increasingly receptive to the ideas espoused by the Communist Party. Dorothy Healy, a powerful Communist Party organizer in these strikes, recalled how after speaking to some Mexican workers about communism they responded positively to her, saying "Just tell us when the revolution is ready, we'll be there."[87] This interaction also demonstrated how Mexican workers continued to draw on the radical political traditions from the era of the Revolution. Mexican workers went beyond continuing to reject the forces of the CUOM and *mutualistas* which preached a more conservative vision of the Mexican Revolution.[88] They began to more fully imagine themselves as belonging to more radical political tendencies from their country, particularly Anarcho-syndicalism.[89]

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[85] González, "Company Unions," 59.
[86] Gonzales, "The Depression," 179.
[87] As quoted in Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10468.
[88] González, "Company Unions," 61.
[89] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10468.

Mexican workers in the US Southwest composed a significant part of the working class in the region and suffered immense economic oppression both before and after the Great Depression struck. Some political forces, such as the AFL and the two major parties, maintained attitudes of either indifference or outright hostility to them, whereas others, mostly emanating from the radical wing of the workers' movement, eagerly accepted them and worked to organize them. Over the course of the 1920s and early 1930s these efforts bore increasing fruit, as strikes among Mexican agricultural workers steadily grew up to the strike wave of 1933-1934. Ultimately however, despite the gains won by Mexican workers in the strikes of 1933-1934, these strikes represented the zenith of political radicalism among Mexican workers in the Southwest during the 1930s.[90] The Communist Party, obeying dictates from Moscow, abandoned its project of creating red unions in the Southwest and in general, following along with the Popular Front strategy which necessarily involved rapprochement with certain left-wing elements of capital. This meant the CAWIU and other CPUSA unions were disbanded, with Party members then opting to work within more 'official' unions such as the CIO and others.[91] The CIO and even the AFL would begin paying more attention to Mexican workers starting in the late

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[90] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10975.
[91] Chacón, *Radicals in the Barrio*, 10975-83.

1930s and continuing onwards.[92] Nevertheless, the cessation of the Communist Party's work amongst Mexican workers in the Southwest, based on the momentary needs of Soviet foreign policy, necessarily meant a setback not only for the Party's influence among Mexican workers in the US, but also for those workers themselves in their organizing efforts. The no-strike policy of the Party during the Second World War would only further limit its ability to make inroads with the most intensely exploited workers, such as those Mexican workers of the Southwest.[93]

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[92] Lazo, "Latinos and the AFL-CIO," 30-1.

[93] Joel Seidman, "Labor Policy of the Communist Party during World War II," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 4, no. 1 (1950): 62, https://doi.org/10.2307/2519321.

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To Bigotry No Sanction, To Persecution No Assistance: Jews in the American Revolutionary Period

Ziv R. Carmi | Gettysburg College '23

By 1776, there was a fairly small but active Jewish community within the American colonies. While Jews consisted of about 0.1% of the total population, they nevertheless were well integrated into colonial economies and societies, attaining a level of tolerance unseen in the Old World, where antisemitism remained strong. As the crisis in the American colonies exacerbated, Jews, despite their small numbers, played a significant role in the Revolutionary conflict. Indeed, the Jewish story of the Revolutionary period largely mirrored the experiences of their Gentile counterparts, with Jewish colonists trying to navigate a world turned upside-down. Jews participated on both sides of the conflict, firmly establishing this small minority within the larger narrative of the American Revolution, particularly their importance in the development of religious freedom in the United States.

There are two main historiographical arguments about the role of Jewish citizens in the American Revolution. First, the question of why Jews primarily supported the Patriots, and second, the discrimination Jews faced at the state levels after the war,

despite the enlightened equality promised by the founding of America.

Many historians argued that most Jews sided with the colonists in support of the Enlightenment ideologies that the Revolution was based upon. Samuel Rezneck wrote that the promise of political and intellectual equality of republicanism gave Jews a hope of integrating into American society. Compared to European society, where Jews remained politically and legally alienated, Rezneck argued, the potential of being included within a society that emphasized equality under the law appealed to the Jewish citizens who supported the Patriots.[1] However, Jonathan Sarna challenged this claim in 1981, arguing that most colonies gave Jews the right to work and worship, making their conditions much better than other regions of the Jewish diaspora. As such, Sarna argued that the treatment of Jews was not the major factor determining their loyalties, but rather, individual pragmatism.[2] Hasia Diner's 2004 history of American Jews concurred with Sarna's argument, suggesting that economic motivations were behind the choice of which side to join for many Jews, whether Patriot or Loyalist.[3] It appears that, like the general historiography

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[1] Samuel Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots: The Jews in the American Revolution* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975), 5-6.
[2] Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Impact of the American Revolution on American Jews," *Modern Judaism* 1, no. 2 (1981): 149, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1396058.
[3] Hasia R. Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 44-45.

of the American Revolutionary period, the examination of Jewish motivations can fall in two separate schools: the Whiggish interpretation, focusing on the ideologies of the Revolutionary period, which Rezneck seemed to take in his argument, and the Progressive interpretation that examines economic interests, which can be seen in Sarna and Diner's arguments.

Additionally most secondary sources about Jews in the Revolutionary period also focused on is whether Jewish citizens received increased rights and equality following the war. Rezneck called the Revolution an "emancipating event," writing that the Jews were beneficiaries of the equal rights bestowed upon Americans following independence.[4] However, he noted that these rights were mostly restricted to the federal level, discussing the struggles and antisemitism faced by Jews across the states. Sarna concurred with this argument, noting the paradoxical nature of these legal restrictions which allowed Jews to hold federal office but not anything lower in the states.[5] Diner, on the other hand, questioned the nature of this codified antisemitism, pointing out that most states did not even have any open Jews residing in them, let alone an active Jewish community. She asserted that the establishment of religious oaths prior to taking office could have been more of a response to Enlightenment-inspired secularism than

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[4] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots,* 11.
[5] Sarna, "The Impact," 154.

motivated by antisemitism.[6] On the other hand, Howard Sachar argued that, by the 1820s and 1830s, politicians in state legislatures had become openly antisemitic in their support for legislation requiring religious oaths, suggesting that, indeed, these policies were intended to block Jews from holding office.[7] Unlike the historiographical debates about why Jews fought, all historians agree that the ideals of equality espoused by the Revolution were not fully extended to the Jews in the Early Republic Period, although the extent of which does seem to be the subject of debate.

Jews in the Colonial Period

Jews had been a part of colonial society beginning in the mid-seventeenth century. In 1654, Jews of both Sephardi (Iberian) and Ashkenazi (Central and Eastern Europe) origin began immigrating to the New World. Like many who came to America, religious freedom motivated them. While many European settlers adopted rural, agricultural careers, most Jews stayed in urban areas and adopted trades. Overwhelmingly, Jewish colonists were merchants and retailers, using their cultural connections to establish a trading network with other colonial and European Jews. This network extended beyond economic practice into the trade of religious connections, ensuring that Judaism in the New World

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[6] Diner, *The Jews*, 49-50.
[7] Howard M Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 26-27.

could thrive. For example, Jews would often trade kosher meat across the American and Caribbean colonies to ensure that their dietary laws would remain unbroken. There have even been records that Torah scrolls were sent around the colonies, from Savannah to New York, who lent it to the newly built synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island (another large Jewish community in the mid-seventeenth century), showing the strength of the connections between Jews across America.[8]

Because of the relative tolerance in the colonies, the Jewish community continued to grow through the mid-eighteenth century, despite remaining a small minority. By 1770, about 1,500-2,500 Jews lived in America, about 0.1% of the total colonial population.[9] Most of these Jews lived in five cities typically considered to be the center of colonial Jewish life: New York City, Philadelphia, Newport, Savannah, and Charles Town (later Charleston). While there were Jews in other urban areas across the colonies, including Lancaster, Providence, and New Haven, about 60% of all Jews lived in these five cities.[10] These five areas likely became Jewish centers due to the economic opportunities they afforded and the more liberal laws of the colonies to which they belonged. By the outbreak of the Revolution, these large Jewish communities had become quite prosperous participating in the

[8] Diner, *The Jews,* 13, 21-22.
[9] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 3.
[10] Sachar, *A History*, 21.

local economies. In Newport, the New England port town, Jews served not only as merchants or shippers but also as a large part of the whaling industry, whereas in Charleston, the second-most populous Jewish community, Jews participated in the slave trade and plantation system.[11] In other words, like Protestant colonists, Jews were equally active in the local economies, showing a level of equality that separated colonial society from that of Europe.

Despite increased equality in the colonies, Jews still faced discrimination. For example, in 1761, several Jews of Rhode Island, by far one of the most religiously liberal colonies, petitioned the legislature and Superior Court for citizenship under the provisions of Britain's Naturalization Act of 1740 and were rejected by both institutions despite having met the conditions established by Parliament (New York and Massachusetts ultimately granted these Jews citizenship despite ostensibly being less religiously tolerant than Roger Williams' colony).[12] By the mid-eighteenth century, Jews were barred from voting or holding public office in most areas, establishing them as a clearly separate group from the Christian colonists. The one exception to this was in New York City, where fifty-seven Jews were able to vote for the colony's legislature between 1688 and 1770, although they were banned from voting in elections for colony-wide office after 1737

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[11] Sachar, *A History*, 21-22.
[12] Diner, *The Jews*, 23.

(they continued voting in municipal elections afterwards, however).[13]

In the broader image of colonial society, though, Jews were not targeted by antisemitic legislation. While there were restrictions directed specifically against Catholics, no laws were passed to exclude the Jewish population explicitly. Perhaps this lack of explicit discrimination against Jews was due to the small population of Jewish colonists, and thus, a smaller perception of them as a "threat" to Protestant Christianity. No matter the reason, it is clear that, in the hierarchy of colonial society, Jewish people were considered higher than other groups (namely Catholics and Africans), likely due to their participation in colonial economic activities. Most historians concur that, during this period, American Jews faced the best conditions and most tolerance of anywhere in the Western world, with some, including Sachar, even claiming that, by 1776, colonial Jews "unquestionably were the freest Jews on earth".[14] While Sachar's claims might be contested within the larger historiography of eighteenth century Jews, it is clear that, nevertheless, on the eve of the Revolution, American Jews were mostly integrated into colonial society and treated far better than their European counterparts.

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[13]Eli Faber, "America's Earliest Jewish Settlers, 1654-1820," in *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America,* ed. Marc Lee Raphael (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 36.
[14] Sachar, *A History,* 23.

Jews on the Eve of Revolution (1754-1775)

During the Seven Years War, American Jews aided the British war effort against France. For example, Sampson Simpson, Jacob Franks, Judah Hayes, and Hayman Levy, four New York Jews, purchased several ships and lent them to the Royal Navy to use as privateers against the French.[15] Indeed, Moses Franks, one of the most prominent of the New York Jews at the time, entered in a contract with the Crown where he financed £32,169 and sixteen shillings for supplies.[16] After the war, Jews capitalized on the newly conquered territories, settling in western Pennsylvania and establishing businesses in the trade of goods to the frontiers in exchange for furs.[17] However, this desire to profit in the West was stifled by the Proclamation of 1763, planting the first seeds of resentment in many colonists, including the Jews who wished to settle and trade there.

This resentment grew with the imperial crisis of the 1760s and 70s, as Jews participated in the expression of their discontent with British legislation. Jewish merchants played a role in the boycotts against British goods to protest taxation. Among the 375

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[15] Sachar, *A History*, 21.
[16] "King George's Warrant," in *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States,* ed. Moris U. Schappes (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), 34.
[17]Jacob R Marcus, *The American Jew, 1585-1990, (*Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Inc, 1995), 22-23.

signatories of the Non-Importation Agreement of Philadelphia of October 1765, nine Jews signed the document.[18] As the crisis continued, Jewish merchants continued to participate in these boycotts and protests of British policy. In both Philadelphia and New York, there is record of Jewish merchants protesting the Townshend Acts. Jewish merchants such as Isaac Adolphus of New York eagerly advertised American made goods, touting them as “equal in price and superior in goodness to British goods,” calling for the “patriotic American” to purchase them in large quantities, for example.[19] While this did, of course, further the ideological principles of Patriots by assisting their boycott, it also showed how some Jewish merchants took advantage of the political circumstances to profit. Perhaps no source, however, encapsulates the resentment of Jewish merchants better than a January 1770 letter from Barnard Gratz, a prominent Philadelphia merchant visiting London to his brother Michael back home in Pennsylvania. In this letter, Gratz, a Silesian-born Jew who had signed the Non-Importation Resolution, wrote that King George’s speech to Parliament about the imperial crisis was such "*narishkeit*” (Yiddish for "foolishness”) that it was not worth paying the postage to enclose a transcript.[20]

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[18] "The Non-Importation Agreement of Philadelphia, October 25, 1765,” in Schappes, *A Documentary History,* 38-40.
[19] Jacob R Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew, 1492-1776,* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), 1264.
[20] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew,* 1262-63.

Despite the resentment to acts such as the Stamp Act and Townshend Duties, by early 1770, there seemed to be a shift in attitudes amongst Jewish merchants. Even though they still sympathized with the Whiggish colonists in their frustration towards British taxation, several prominent Jewish merchants decided to place their profits over their politics. The correspondence of various Jewish merchants show that they had grown tired of the nonimportation resolutions, which deeply affected their business even if they had initially capitalized from selling American-made goods. Indeed, even before the repeal of the Townshend Duties in the early spring of 1770, Jewish merchants had landed in Boston with English goods and sent several of their ships to England to trade.[21] This exhaustion with boycotts, however, was not unique to Jewish merchants; records show that Christian merchants felt that profits superseded their ideological principles, and, across the colonies, many traders felt frustration at the length of these boycotts.

Military Experiences of Jews in the Revolutionary War (1775-1783)

Despite the backlash to the boycotts, as the imperial crisis escalated, most Jews remained loyal to the colonial cause. However, as seen by the resistance to boycotts in the early 1770s,

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[21] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1263.

Jews at large were not extraordinarily radical in their ideologies and thus were more nuanced in their loyalty to the Patriot cause. The motives of Jews in supporting the Patriots are equally complex. Some historians believe that many were indeed enamored with the ideas of republicanism and equality. Others argued that they supported the American cause for profit and pragmatic purposes, while another historiographic argument claimed that the support for the Patriots occurred more out of loyalty to their local governments over the Crown. While ideological motivations were likely the reasons for some colonists, it is unlikely that this was the driving reason for most Jews, given that their economic and social circumstances were far better than that in the Old World. It is possible that these republican ideals did encourage some to support the Patriot cause, but it is equally likely that these ideals were too high-minded for some of the less educated, working-class Jewish citizens. Economic purposes were likely a stronger motivator, given the large number of Jewish merchants who had lost a significant amount of money as a result of the British taxation, and the number of Jews who wanted to expand their businesses to the West.[22] It is also possible that Jews supported the Patriot cause out of a simultaneous loyalty to their local, continental governments and a lack thereof to the Crown. This theory is supported by the fact that most these Jews were

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[22] Diner, *The Jews*, 44-45.

either born natively in the colonies to a family that had been in America for multiple generations or immigrated from a non-English country (often from one of the German states or Poland), and thus, had more loyalty to America than they did a distant country they had never been to.[23]

Some reactions to the outbreak of war, despite sympathies with the Patriot cause, also remained mixed. Even after the first shots of Lexington and Concord, some Jews wished to avoid an outright war. In accordance with the day of prayer occurring on May 17, 1776, an event prescribed by the Continental Congress, the Jews of New York's Mill Street Synagogue prayed for their "Sovereign Lord, George III... to turn away their fierce wrath from against North America," repeating several biblical phrases wishing for peace, including Isaiah 2:4 ("and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares"). With the prayers of the Mill Street Jews for peace and reconciliation with the Crown in mind, it is worth noting that no Jews held any political influence within state legislatures or the Continental Congress, and thus, had no role in supporting or opposing the severance of ties with Great Britain. However, other Jews, like Philadelphian Jonas Phillips, who took a holiday to celebrate from July 3rd to July 7th, rejoiced after the vote for independence. In 1776, the Fourth of July happened to coincide with the Seventeenth of Tammuz, a fast day commemorating the

[23] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1258.

breach of Jerusalem's walls by Babylonian (587 BCE) and Roman (69 CE) forces, precipitating the destruction of the Holy Temples and the Jewish diasporas three weeks later. Many Jews, including Philips, went to services for this sad and holy day, reflecting on how this commemoration of the loss of their ancestral homeland fell on the same day as the foundation of a new nation that they could call home.[24]

While reactions to the Declaration of Independence and war were mixed, as the Revolutionary War escalated, about a hundred Jews served with the Continental Army across all theatres of battle. Francis Salvador of South Carolina is one notable case; a former member of the First and Second Provincial Congresses of South Carolina and General Assembly (the first open Jew to sit in a legislative body in America), Salvador, serving with the South Carolina Militia, was shot and scalped by Cherokee warriors allied with Britain the morning of August 1, 1776, becoming the first Jew to die for the newly independent United States.[25] Due to his role in the legislature, Salvador was the only Jew to have made any policy decisions, with what little influence he had, setting him apart from other American Jews of both Patriot and Loyalist leanings but could not express them in a political body.

While Salvador served as a militiaman, other Jews enlisted in the Continental Army, both as privates and as officers. Many of

[24] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1266, 1279.
[25] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1307-08.

Charleston's Jews deemed able to serve enlisted in Captain Richard Lushington's company, aptly nicknamed the "Jew Company."[26] Years after the Treaty of Paris, one of these Jews, proud of his service, wrote in a local newspaper that "the conduct of the Hebrews [during the war]… their steady adherence to the American cause... are substantial proofs of their patriotism and attachment."[27] This company was not purposely segregated, but rather consisted of Jewish citizens due to Charleston's geography. Since militias were mustered by district, it just happened that many of the Jews lived and worked in Lushington's, which extended through the business district. Jews were not even a majority within this group, despite its nickname. James Bentham, another Charleston merchant, also commanded a regiment containing Jews, suggesting that integrated military units were not unusual during the war.[28] Charleston was not an isolated case; plenty of Pennsylvania and New York Jews also enlisted.

There are numerous stories of Jewish bravery during the war. One of the more dramatic experiences was that of Lieutenant Colonel Solomon Bush, the deputy adjutant general of the Pennsylvania militia, who was wounded and captured by the

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[26]Young adult males of fighting fitness; Sachar, *A History,* 24.
[27] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1306-07.
[28]George H. McDaniel, "Looking for Lushington: the Lost Quaker Commander of Charleston's Revolutionary Jewish Militia," *The Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 27, No. 2 (Fall 2022): 6, https://irp.cdn-website.com/bb67d73b/files/uploaded/JHSSC_fall_2022_magazine_cover%26pp6-7.pdf

British. During his imprisonment, he learned of a spy infiltrating Washington's headquarters, escaped with this knowledge, and successfully informed the Continental Army. Bush was not the only Jew to be captured and held as a prisoner of war. Isaac Franks, also of Philadelphia, served as Washington's aide-de-camp on Long Island and was captured on the retreat from New York City before escaping captivity in the Hudson River during winter in a leaky boat with only one paddle. Franks' cousin David served as the aide-de-camp of Benedict Arnold and was investigated and acquitted of collusion in Arnold's treasonous scheme.[29] While these men are all significant in their bravery and the actions taken during their service, there were other Jews whose stories were never recorded, and it is worth noting their sacrifice for the United States as well.

Jews serving the American cause also faced antisemitism at the hands of the British. For example, Mordecai Sheftall, a wealthy Jew in Savannah, received blatant antisemitic treatment from the British while being a POW. Sheftall had organized a Patriot group before the Revolution and assisted in the smuggling of gunpowder to Boston in 1776, provoking the ire of Britain.[30] Sheftall was later appointed as the Commissary General for the Continental Army in

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[29]Later, near the end of the war, David Franks would serve as a diplomat to Europe, helping deliver the approved Treaty of Paris to the American negotiators in France; Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew,* 1311-1312.
[30] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 41.

Georgia, a position he held until his capture during the December 1778 fall of Savannah.[31] In the account of his capture, Sheftall wrote that, upon the first night of his imprisonment on the prison hulk *Nancy*, he and his son, Sheftall Sheftall, along with the other POWs, were fed a half-gill of rice and about seven ounces of boiled beef for dinner; however, these conditions would quickly change.[32] One of his fellow prisoners, Reverend Moses Allen, wrote that after Mordecai and Sheftall Sheftall refused to eat the pork they were served due to their adherence to the Jewish dietary laws of *kashrut*, the British guards ordered their knives and forks greased with pork fat. As Professor Jonathan Sarna noted, the adherence to *kashrut* was a hallmark of the Jewish identity, simultaneously showing the strength of the faith of Mordecai and Sheftall Sheftall and the explicit antisemitism of British guards aboard the *Nancy*.[33] Mordecai and Sheftall would later escape the prison hulk, get captured again and be sent to the Caribbean until their parole in 1780, after which they spent the remainder of the war in the North.[34] While there are not any other extant accounts of

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[31] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 41.
[32] "Capture of Mordecai Sheftall, Deputy Commissary-General of issues to the Continental Troops for the state of Georgia, viz., 1778, December 29th," in Schappes, *A Documentary History,* 55.
[33]Rafael Hoffman, "Uncovered Documents Show the Spiritual Heroism of a Jewish Patriot in the American Revolution," May 25, 2020, https://www.raabcollection.com/blog/uncovered-documents-show-the-spiritual-heroism-of-a-jewish-patriot-in-the-american-revolution
[34] Mordecai Sheftall papers, P-12, collection of the American Jewish Historical Society, New York, NY, https://archives.cjh.org/repositories/3/resources/1659

antisemitism directed at Jews serving in the Revolution, it is possible that the Sheftalls' experience was not unique, and that other Jewish men were singled out for their faith.

Jews at Home: Economic Support, Relocation, and Loyalism

Jewish support for the war extended beyond military service to the home front. Many wealthy Jewish citizens sympathetic to the Patriots opted to financially support the cause of the United States. As early as 1776, men such as the Gratz brothers and Hayman Levy of New York served as de facto bankers to the Continental Army and militias, loaning money and paying for rations and then collecting certificates from Congress for their reimbursement.[35] While these early gestures of support were fairly minor in the general financing of the war, they demonstrated a clear support of Jewish merchants and bankers towards the newly independent country and a confidence in the credit worthiness of the fledgling government.

The financial support of the American cause only increased as the war continued. Many merchants shifted their attention to creating supplies for the military. For example, the Gratz brothers utilized local manpower to make uniforms for soldiers, while Joseph Simon of Lancaster manufactured rifles.[36] Most significantly, however, was the lease of ships to be used as

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[35] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1315.
[36] Sachar, *A History*, 24.

privateer vessels. Isaac Moses, a prominent New York merchant who fled to Philadelphia after the British capture of the city, requested two or three hundred "weight of powder" from Congress, telling them that he had outfitted a "schooner under a letter of marque with every necessary (but gunpowder) in a warlike manner."[37] Throughout the war, Moses entered eight privateering ventures, operated ships that ran British blockades, and frequently offered his credit to Congress, working closely with Robert Morris, who became Congress's Superintendent of Finance in 1781, throughout the war.[38]

Of the financiers of the Revolution, however, Haym Salomon remains undoubtedly the best-known. An immigrant from Poland, Salomon immigrated to New York in 1775 and built his wealth brokering international trade.[39] After the outbreak of war, Salomon served as a sutler to Continental troops and a spy in British-occupied New York before a death sentence was placed on his head for his espionage-related activities.[40] Salomon fled for his life to Philadelphia, leaving his family behind and losing a significant amount of his wealth as he did.[41] In the American

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[37] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 70.
[38] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 70-71.
[39] James A. Percoco, "Haym Salomon: Revolutionary Financier," *American Battlefield Trust, a*ccessed November 7, 2022, https://www.battlefields.org/learn/biographies/haym-salomon.
[40] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 82-83.
[41] "Haym Salomon's Memorial to the Continental Congress, Philadelphia, August 25, 1778," in Schappes, *A Documentary History,* 52-53.

capital, Salomon's financial services to the United States became significant; Salomon's name appeared frequently in Morris' official records as Superintendent of Finance, demonstrating his significant contributions to the American war effort.[42] Throughout the war, Salomon negotiated the sale of Continental bills of exchange for hard French and Dutch currency at almost no personal profit (he asked for 0.25% for himself), receiving the title of "Broker to the Office of Finance of the United States" from Congress and "Treasurer of the French Army in America" from the French consulate.[43] Morris' diary described Salomon's role not only in the sale of bills of exchange and finance of the war, but as an advisor and negotiator in American financial dealings, demonstrating how, unlike many other Jews, Salomon had a fairly broad role in the affairs of the government.[44]

Salomon's most famous contribution occurred during the Yorktown campaign as funds remained scarce. In response to Morris' letter that there was no money to finance the campaign, Washington wrote that he should "Send for Haym Salomon," where, indeed, the financier was able to obtain the requested $20,000 and assist in bringing about the American victory.[45] The American Battlefield Trust estimates that Salomon personally

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[42] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots,* 84.
[43] Sachar, *A History*, 25.
[44] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 85.
[45] Percoco, "Haym Salomon."

loaned about $650,000, showing his own incredible sacrifice; the new American government never repaid their debt, leaving him destitute when he died in 1785.[46]

Salomon was not the only Jew to leave his home due to the British capture and occupation of cities. After the capture of New York, many Patriot sympathizers left the city for Philadelphia, returning after the conclusion of the war.[47] Upon their return to the city in 1783, Congregation Shearith Israel resolved to write a letter to Governor Clinton, describing themselves as "lately returned from Exile," and "look[ing] forward, with Pleasure to the happy days we expect to enjoy under a Constitution, Wisely framed to preserve the inestimable Blessings of Civil and Religious Liberty."[48] Similarly, after the fall of Savannah, most of the Jewish community fled to Charleston, and later, moved further north through the Southern states to establish new Jewish communities.[49] While some Jews stayed in these communities, including Baltimore and Richmond, the Jewish communities in Savannah and especially Charleston remained very large and active. In fact, Charleston became the largest and most active Jewish community

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[46] Percoco, "Haym Salomon."
[47] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 14-15.
[48] "Address of Israelites to Governor Clinton, signed and presented by Hayman Levy, Myer Myers, and Isaac Moses, in January 1784, pursuant to a Resolution of Congregation Shearith Israel, December 9, 1783," in Schappes, *A Documentary History*, 66-67.
[49] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1300.

in the generation following the Revolution, showing how, despite the relocation of many of its citizens during the war, the city was able to recover both economically and demographically from the effects of the war on its population.[50]

While Charleston's Jewish community remained mostly intact despite the relocation of Jews during the war, Newport was not as fortunate. After its capture by the British, approximately half of all Jewish property owners fled the city, permanently affecting the Jewish community in the town.[51] Many Jews, including Aaron Lopez, one of the wealthiest businessmen in the community, lost much of their fortune because of their flight and the subsequent confiscation of their ships and other properties by the British.[52] By the early nineteenth century, as a result of the economic losses and especially, the dispersion of Jewish residents, the Newport Synagogue closed for regular services. It did not reopen for regular practice until the influx of Jewish immigrants in the 1880s.[53]

While many of the Patriot sympathizers of Newport left, several Loyalists remained. Most notable of these Newport Tories was Rabbi Isaac Touro, who followed the British Army to New York when they left Rhode Island and later went to Jamaica in

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[50] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots,* 18.
[51] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1290.
[52] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew*, 1289-90.
[53] Touro Synagogue, "History of Touro Synagogue," accessed November 10, 2022, https://tourosynagogue.org/history.

1782 after it became evident that Britain would withdraw from the American colonies.[54] Similarly to Touro, Myer Polock and Isaac Hart left Newport for Long Island, building and defending Fort St. George, where Hart ultimately died in 1780. Historian Samuel Rezneck suggests that this Loyalism was economically motivated, noting that the Hart family of Newport had financially supported the British government during the Seven Years War.[55] These economic motivations contrasted with other Jewish merchants like Hayman Levy, who had eagerly supported the British cause during the Seven Years War but grew disillusioned with the Crown during the imperial crisis of the 1760s, showing the variance in political ideology amongst the Jewish-American community.

As illustrated by the case of the Newport Jews, New York became a center for Jewish Loyalists just as it did Gentiles. In October 1776, shortly after the capture of New York, nearly 950 men, including seventeen Jews signed an oath of loyalty addressed to General Howe.[56] While some of these could have been genuine sentiments of loyalty to Britain, in the case of these Jews as was with all Loyalists, there were likely some who were not completely loyal to the Crown. Indeed, there were men aligned with the

[54] Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew,* 1290.
[55] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 138.
[56] "Address of Loyalty to the Conquerors, Admiral Richard Howe and General William Howe, New York, October 16, 1776," in Schappes, *A Documentary History*, 50-51.

British whose loyalties changed, such as the Hessian soldier Alexander Zunz, who became highly respected and integrated within the Jewish community, and, after the war, remained a citizen in the United States.[57] The case of Zunz, who stayed in America due to the connections he had forged with other Jews while living in New York, and other Jewish citizens whose loyalties to Britain were relatively weak, demonstrated a spectrum within Jewish Loyalists akin to those of Gentile Tories.

The Aftermath of War: Jews in the Early Republican Period

The sentiment of the Jews of New York in their letter to Clinton reflected the expectations and hopes of Jews across the victorious United States. As early as 1781, Jews began to advocate for equal rights. Gershom Seixas, a Philadelphia Rabbi, compiled a list of discriminatory clauses within state constitutions, the first sign of the movement for equality that would grow throughout the 1780s.[58] As the Constitutional Convention got underway, Jonas Phillips wrote them a letter, asking the Framers to instate a policy ensuring religious equality on the federal level (since the Constitutional Convention had met in secret, Philips was unaware that the delegates had already passed Article VI, Clause 3, which

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[57] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots,* 141.
[58] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots,* 158.

barred religious tests as a requirement for holding office).[59] In Philadelphia's 1788 Independence Day celebration, which also commemorated the ratification of the Constitution, Jewish rabbis walked arm in arm with Christian reverends, and, more significantly, ate separately at a special kosher table made to accommodate their dietary restrictions.[60] On a federal level, religious equality had become the policy of the land; this can be best illustrated by President Washington's famous letter to the Newport Jews (see appendix), where he wrote that the United States government "happily [gave] bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance."[61]

On the state level, however, Jews faced significant opposition in the form of codified discrimination. While New York's 1777 constitution eliminated all religious limitations to being incorporated into society, other states took longer to grant Jews equal rights.[62] Sarna recognized how absurd this paradigm was; it was legal for a Jew to be elected President but illegal for him to be the mayor of the smallest town in Maryland.[63] Until

[59] "Letter from Jonas Phillips to the Federal Constitutional Convention, September 7, 1787," in Schappes, *A Documentary History*, 68-69.
[60] Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Revolution in American Judaism," in A*merican Judaism: A History, Second Edition*, (Yale University Press, 2019.), 38, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvhrczf4.7.
[61] "Correspondence Between the Jews and Washington," in Schappes, *A Documentary History*, 80.
[62] Diner, *The Jews,* 48.
[63] Sarna, "The Impact," 153.

1790, the oath that all officeholders in Pennsylvania required them to swear that the "Scriptures of the old and new Testament" were "divine inspiration," essentially gatekeeping public office to only Christians.[64] Indeed, it took until the Fourteenth Amendment and Reconstruction for North Carolina (1868) and New Hampshire (1876) to remove religious language from their constitutions, showing the difficulties in attaining true religious equality across the United States.[65]

Maryland's legislation, however, remained the most controversial and difficult in the generation following the Revolution. As Baltimore's Jewish community grew, so did the attempts of Jewish citizens to integrate into civil society. In 1797, Solomon Etting, a Baltimore merchant, tried to remove the bar on Jews holding office, but failed. The issue was raised again in 1818 by banker Jacob Cohen, where antisemites openly admitted that they feared a "Jew bill" allowing Jewish men to hold office would "dilute the strength of Christianity" in the state.[66] Thomas Kennedy, the man who wrote and argued for the passage of this bill, was called a "Judas," and an "enemy of Christianity," ultimately losing his seat in the legislature for his attempts to grant Jews equality.[67] With all

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[64] Diner, *The Jews*, 48.
[65]Rufus Learsi, *The Jews in America: A History* (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1954), 49.
[66] Diner, *The Jews*, 49.
[67] Sachar, *A History*, 27.

the controversy and backlash to the legislation, it was not until 1826 that the "Jew bill" finally passed in Maryland, allowing Jewish citizens to hold office.[68] It is worth noting that, almost immediately after the repeal of religious tests in Maryland, both Etting and Cohen were elected to the Baltimore City Council, and each presided over the Council for several years.[69]

Conclusion

The Jewish experience in the American Colonies can be seen as one of emancipation from the intolerance and oppression of Europe. Even before the Revolution, Jewish people were met with a significant amount of tolerance within the American Colonies, establishing an environment for Jewish communities to grow and freely practice by the late colonial period.

As the Revolution began, despite the small size of their demographic, Jewish citizens participated in nearly all aspects of the war on both sides. From Mordecai Sheftall, the quartermaster, to Haym Salomon, the financier, to Isaac Touro, the Tory, it is clear that, while they were few, Jews played a role in the narrative of American Independence.

Enticed by the ideals of republicanism, the many Jews who supported the Patriots saw hope in the new country, a government that finally granted them the religious equality that Jewish people

[68] Diner, *The Jews,* 49.
[69] Rezneck, *Unrecognized Patriots*, 161.

had not had for centuries. While, at first, this ideal was not realized, Jews continued to fight for their rights into the Early Republic period, showing that, for them, the Revolution was not yet over.

In the larger picture of the American Revolutionary era and afterwards, Jewish people remained an overwhelming minority of the population. However, through their struggle to gain equality well into the nineteenth century, it is clear that they were significant in the establishment of a government that recognized religious freedom as a natural right and, even though it took decades if not a century, one that did indeed "[give] to bigotry no sanction."

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Appendix

Letter from George Washington to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, 18 August 1790

Gentlemen:

While I receive, with much satisfaction, your Address replete with expressions of affection and esteem; I rejoice in the opportunity of assuring you, that I shall always retain a grateful remembrance of the cordial welcome I experienced in my visit to Newport, from all classes of Citizens.

The reflection on the days of difficulty and danger which are past is rendered the more sweet, from a consciousness that they are succeeded by days of uncommon prosperity and security. If we have wisdom to make the best use of the advantages with which we are now favored, we cannot fail, under the just administration of a good Government, to become a great and a happy people.

The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the

exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

It would be inconsistent with the frankness of my character not to avow that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my Administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy

A Historical and Philosophical Comparison: Joseph de Maistre & Edmund Burke

Carl J. DeMarco Jr.* | *Gettysburg College '25

The French Revolution shook Europe's political elite and thinkers to the core. Not since the Protestant Reformation a few centuries earlier had the continent witnessed such a profound change in the political and social landscape. Naturally, many of Europe's thinkers reacted to this attempt to radically alter European society, by questioning the revolutionaries' motives and the legacies of the revolution altogether. Two thinkers emerged during those revolutionary years who would profoundly shape the conservative ideology. Edmund Burke in the United Kingdom and Joseph de Maistre, a Savoyard, émigré, and diplomat. They unknowingly laid the foundation for conservative philosophy to take hold in European society. However, while Burke is lauded for being "the father of modern-day conservativism," Maistre has been relegated to the backwaters of counter-revolution reactionary conservatism. Further study of both Maistre and Burke demonstrates that they shared such similar beliefs. Tossing Maistre to the side does a disservice to the historical development of conservatism as an ideology. Both Burke and Maistre are the fathers of conservatism and analyzing one without the other leaves

the story of European conservatism incomplete, as they developed the ideology virtually simultaneously.

The history of conservative thought has traditionally always begun with Edmund Burke and his book *Reflections on the Revolution in France.* Jesse Norman wrote one of the most recent books on the historic development of the political life and the thought of Edmund Burke in the last decade. In his book appropriately titled *Edmund Burke, The First Conservative*, Norman continued the academic argument that Burke was without a doubt the first conservative intellectual in the wake of the French Revolution.[1] Norman argues that despite Burke never using the term conservative, and being a member of the Whig Party, his intellectual tendencies to affirm tradition, place society over the individual, and emphasize slow and gradual change earn him the title of "the first conservative."[2] It is because Burke wrote these ideas down first and influenced generations of Anglo-American politicians and thinkers that this title is warranted. However, Norman acknowledged that Burke bequeaths a blueprint for conservatism that would eventually evolve into the modern factions that political scientists study to this day.[3] Yet, in the course of his biography and argument naming Burke "the first

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[1] Jesse Norman, *Edmund Burke: The First Conservative* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 238.
[2] Norman, *The First Conservative,* 238.
[3] Norman, *The First Conservative,* 238.

conservative", Norman failed to even acknowledge the existence of Joseph de Maistre and his contribution to the development of conservative intellectual thought.

While many other historians have neglected to include Maistre in the cumulative history of the development of conservativism as a political ideology, Edmund Fawcett incorporated the dueling narratives into his book *Conservatism: The Fight for a Tradition*, while embracing the intellectual tradition passed down by academic Isaiah Berlin. Fawcett brought Maistre into the fold in a dialogue between him and Burke, all while emphasizing Maistre's connection with "right-wing authoritarians and fascists."[4] Yet, Fawcett was not the first to make this argument. As previously mentioned, the political philosopher and academic Isaiah Berlin first argued this point in the mid-1960s. For both Fawcett and Berlin, Burke represented the tamer and more sensible Anglo-American conservative tradition, while Maistre embodied the irrational and reactionary continental strand of conservatism dedicated to repression.[5]

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[4] Edmund Fawcett, *Conservatism: The Fight for Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022), 1.

[5] Isaiah Berlin, "Joseph de Maistre and the Origins of Fascism (Isaiah Berlin," accessed October 30, 2022, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1990/09/27/joseph-de-maistre-and-the-origins-of-fascism).

In the first chapter, Fawcett's main argument is that Maistre took positions similar to Burke but pushed them to a more irrational and theological conclusion. Maistre is portrayed more irrationally compared to Burke, with Fawcett emphasizing his strong belief in Catholicism as an irrational philosophical explanation for his political thought.

While Fawcett and Berlin saw a threatening precursor to modern fascist authoritarian thinkers and regimes, historian Owen Bradley sought to place Maistre into a more positive light.[6] He highlighted the similarities in his work to modern thinkers, while simultaneously arguing that his views were far more complex than many have previously considered. Throughout his work, Bradley aimed to redraw Maistre's image and bring him into the mainstream political tradition of conservative thought. Bradley argued that Maistre's work was far more complex than what modern political philosophers and historians have previously mentioned. While other historians have analyzed Maistre's work and placed him in the chorus of right-wing ideologues, Bradley's analysis found that his thought often countered these thinkers and criticized what would become the nascent fascist tradition.[7] Bradley engaged Berlin's argument in the opening pages of his

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[6] Owen Bradley, *A Modern Maistre* (Lincoln University of Nebraska Press, 1999), XVIII.
[7] Bradley, *A Modern Maistre,* XVII.

work, arguing that while Maistre was more of an irrationalist than other thinkers of his time through, tracing the roots of fascism back to him ignores what Maistre believed. Maistre was an early critic of what would become fascism by critiquing the revolutionaries but never advocating for policies or pre-fascist philosophical ideas, Bradley argued.

Although many historians have dedicated their lives to researching the historical significance of both Burke and Maistre, there are relatively few historiographical pieces comparing the two men and their political philosophies. Often, as in the case of Edmund Fawcett's work, when the two men are compared, they are deemed so different that their similarities are glanced over while their differences are exhaustedly discussed. Historian Richard Lebrun is one of the few who has taken the position that a comparison of these two men shows that their similarities outweigh their differences. In his work *Joseph de Maistre's Life, Thought, and Influence*, Lebrun dedicated a chapter to comparing the lives, work, and thoughts of both men. He concluded that Burke had a potentially measurable influence on Maistre's philosophical development, as Maistre utilized his writings in his work and praised *Reflections on the Revolution in France* to various colleagues.[8] Lebrun drew comparisons between the two

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[8] Richard Lebrun, *Joseph de Maistre's Life, Thought and Influence Selected Studies* (Montreal ; McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).

even going as far as to say that Maistre's early works "echo" many of Burke's beliefs. Turning away from the French Revolution, Lebrun argued that "themes common to conservatism, in general, may be found in both."[9] Themes such as a reverence for tradition, defense of sovereignty, and the belief that wisdom was formed from the collective thought of past generations. Yet, Lebrun also acknowledged that these men come to the same conclusions by different means; Burke tending to be more empiricist and Maistre drawing on "providential or sociological" grounds. Lebrun also demonstrates that the two disagreed on a variety of topics including social contract theory.[10] However, overall, Lebrun drew a favorable comparison of the two men while noting that both held very complex belief systems that did not always align.

Joseph de Maistre's political thought is very complex and influenced from a variety of sources. Maistre was first and foremost a devout Roman Catholic who centered much of his political thought around concepts developed by Church Doctors and the Church's rich intellectual tradition.[11] Maistre's political philosophy was heavily influenced not only by his deep religiosity but also the life that he lived. He was trained as a lawyer and at a young age and would become a member of the Senate of the

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[9] Lebrun, *Joseph de Maistre's Life,* 167.
[10] Lebrun, *Joseph de Maistre's Life*, 169.
[11] Richard Lebrun, *Throne and Altar; the Political and Religious Thought of Joseph de Maistre.* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1965), 8.

Kingdom of Savoy. He would dedicate his entire life to the service to the King of Savoy. Originally sympathetic to the reforms trying to be made in France prior to the Revolution of 1789, it was Frances unprovoked invasion of Savoy in 1792 that set Maistre's political mind truly ablaze. He was forced to emigrate from his home to Turin and then to Switzerland making him a part of a community of intellectuals, royalty, and antirevolutionaries who were forced to flee Revolutionary France in fear for their lives.[12] Maistre's forced emigration would have a profound impact on Maistre's political thought as it gave him yet another reason to oppose the revolution, but on a more personal level as he saw what radical change can do to the individual. Maistre was certainly a product of his life and the events that he witnessed and lived through would go on to shape his political thought, and thus the development of conservatism as an ideology in the wake of the French Revolution.

Perhaps one of the most prevailing philosophical thoughts that influenced the French Revolution was the eighteenth-century liberal idea of the social contract. The social contract was a philosophical answer to the question of why men form governments, by thinkers such as England's John Locke and Frances Jean-Jacque Rosseau. The general theory stated that man

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[12] Lebrun, *Throne and Altar,* 9.

voluntarily gives up some of his freedoms and rights in order to form a government that protects each individual from each other and the collective as a whole. It is on this philosophical battleground that Maistre began to develop his conservative political philosophy. For Maistre, man did not come together to form governments, but that these governments and communities developed naturally because men are naturally social creatures. The idea of a utopian "savage" that Rousseau developed was nonsensical to Maistre because there was no historical evidence or tradition to support Rousseau's claims. Government was a naturally occurring phenomena. Maistre's adherence to tradition and historical evidence is clearly demonstrated by his argument against the social contract and Rousseau.[13]

When the Revolution in France began, it was understood by many in the Enlightenment and liberal tradition that the revolution was nothing more than the people exercising their right to determine their government. However, Maistre saw this in a very different light. The revolution was releasing nothing but pure anarchy occurring in a flawed, but stable system, according to Maistre.[14] Revolutions breed destruction of institutions and customs, could be taken off their original target of reform (such as in France), and were rarely successful in gaining the goals desired.

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[13] Lebrun, *Throne and Altar,* 47–48.
[14] Lebrun, *Throne and Altar*, 54.

The events occurring in France at the time were to an extent unnatural and a betrayal to God and one another in Maistre's eyes. He firmly believed that the monarchies in Europe were the most stable and natural form of government that man could have. In December of 1816 he wrote that "if one asks which government is the most natural for man, history is there to answer it is monarchy,"[15] once again demonstrating the idea that an adherence to history and tradition can prevent the bloodshed that he was witnessing in France. Of course, Maistre believed that the monarchy needed be morally sound and "established on good laws"[16] in order to prevent upheaval from the people.

Tradition, order, and stability were the pillars to Maistre's political philosophy. His deep devotion to God and the Roman Catholic Church led him to believe that these pillars were the key to a successful society. Yes, men had free will and deserved to be free, but God and his divine providence has bound them to his will. In his most famous work, *Considerations on France,* Maistre demonstrated this idea when he wrote that "We are all bound to the throne of the Supreme being by a flexible chain which restrains without enslaving us. The most wonderful aspect of the universal scheme of things is the action of free beings under divine

[15] Lebrun, *Throne and Altar*, 84–85.
[16] Lebrun, *Throne and Altar,* 85.

guidance."[17] In Maistre's view, the Revolution occurred under the supervision of God, but only because it was the result of the sinful and fallen nature of man. The bloodshed, death, and destruction were a result of "man's wickedness"[18] and the existence of original sin. The wickedness of man is why the sovereign as it existed as it did in the late Eighteenth century. For Maistre, reason and rationalism had pushed men to the breaking point and was counter what was natural. This new founded rationality was driving the reforms that Maistre thought were deteriorating society. In a piece titled *On God and Sovereignty,* Maistre wrote that "the word reform, by itself and prior to any scrutiny, will always be suspect to wisdom, and the experience of every generation justifies this instinct."[19] It was this suspicion that Maistre detested. The wisdom and tradition handed down by history and God were not to be manipulated at the will of man, for when that happened destruction and decay was sure to follow.

In 1790, Edmund Burke's *Reflection on the Revolution in France* was published for audiences throughout Europe. It would become the cornerstone for conservatism and the blueprint for the ideology moving forward. Just like Maistre, Burke's opinions would be shaped by his life and the time that he lived. Born in

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[17] Jack Lively, *The Works of Joseph de Maistre* (The Macmillan Company, 1965), 47.
[18] Lively, *The Works of Joseph de Maistre*, 12.
[19] Lebrun, *Throne and Altar*, 62.

Dublin in 1729, Burke was the son of an Irish attorney and an Irish Catholic mother from a prominent family. Growing up he was exposed to both the Church of England of which he was a member, and the majority Roman Catholic faith of which half of his family belonged. This caused Burke to have a sincere respect for the Roman Catholic Church and other religions that were in the minority.[20] He attended Trinity College in Dublin and received a liberal arts education, and then to London to study law just as his father had done. While in school he studied the classic literature, ancient and current philosophical texts, and was exposed to what would become classical liberalism which promoted individual rights, limited government, and freedom. From 1766 until 1794, Burke served an extensive and influential career in the British House of Commons as a member of the Rockingham sect of the liberal Whig Party.[21] A writer, politician, and philosopher, Burke's expansive career and experiences gave him the tools to develop conservativism during the early days of the French Revolution.

Like Maistre, Burke was concerned with France's attempt to develop an ideal society based solely off the ideals of the enlightenment. He thought man was "incapable of adequately discerning the full meanings and modes of operation of social and

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[20] Edmund Burke, *Edmund Burke: Selected Writings and Speeches*, ed. Peter Stanlis (Regnery Publishing, 1963), 1.
[21] Burke, *Edmund Burke: Selected Writings and Speeches*, 18.

political institutions and processes."[22] Man lacked the ability to rationally think out the reform that were being instituted in France at this time. The reason for this, Burke thought, was because the historical tradition and collective wisdom of previous generations superseded any rational thought that group of individuals could develop in one lifetime. In essence, he believed that tradition was superior to human reason, similar to Maistre's belief. The rights the revolution claimed to support were abstract and potentially unattainable, whereas looking to tradition showed what works and what does not. Prior to the writing of *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* Burke wrote a letter responding to a colleague in France requesting his opinion on the establishment of the National Assembly in 1789 in which he demonstrated his thoughts about the idea of creating new governments and rights out of thin air and abandoning tradition. He writes that "you may have made a revolution, but not a reformation. You may have subverted monarchy, but not recovered freedom,"[23] arguing that while the monarchy's power has been subverted and power supposedly given to the people, until France instituted ordered liberty based off tradition, the oppression, they experienced under the *Ancien*

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[22] David Dwan and Christopher J. Insole, *The Cambridge Companion to Edmund Burke*, Cambridge Companions to Literature (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 199, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9780511794315.
[23] Burke, *Edmund Burke: Selected Writings and Speeches*, 510.

Regime will continue, but under a new government. In *Reflections* he expanded his views on this issue when he wrote that "The science of government being therefore so practical in itself and intended for such practical purposes—a matter which requires experience, and even more experience than any person can gain in his whole life."[24] It is their common belief in the supremacy of tradition and collective human wisdom is superior to Enlightenment reason that make Maistre and Burke so similar.

Burke was not solely opposed to change but believed that it needed to have a historical basis for it to occur and that it must be gradual over time. Instituting drastic reform should be the last case scenario for a group, requiring a level of proof so large that he believed that the events in France did not meet it. In *Reflections* he wrote that "is it, then, true that the French government was such as to be incapable or undeserving of reform, so that it was of absolute necessity that the whole fabric should be at once pulled down and the area cleared for the erection of a theoretic, experimental edifice in its place?"[25] Similar to Maistre, Burke believed that there was no justifiable reason for the revolution to take place the way it had. In fact both men agreed that the French monarchy had grown in

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[24] Edmund Burke, "Reflections On The Revolution in France ," *Reflections On The Revolution in France - McMaster Social Sciences*, accessed November 30, 2022, https://socialsciences.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/burke/revfrance.pdf, 52.
[25] Edmund Burke, "Reflections On The Revolution in France."

excess and that certain freedoms were being curtailed, but instead of a complete destruction of the current order, a reformation was needed. Both men questioned the Enlightenment rationality and reasoning that helped spur the French Revolution. Men's minds could not build a new society and abandon generations of knowledge without there being unforeseen consequences that could destroy a people.

Burke was highly critical of the revolution's attack on the aristocracy and the Catholic clergy in France. In *Reflections* he writes "Nothing is more certain than that our manners, our civilization, and all the good things which are connected with manners and with civilization have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles and were, indeed, the result of both combined: I mean the spirit of a gentleman and the spirit of religion."[26] Where the revolutionaries saw these institutions as evil, Burke saw them as a force of unity and good. Throughout his writings, Burke argued that a social order existed for the purpose of keeping society together.[27] This social order was natural and tied to the idea that those who owned land had the ability to nurture, grow, and protect culture which was vital for the survival of a society. Inherited wealth and titles also brought stability and continuity to a country that could be rocked with change. Now,

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[26] Edmund Burke, "Reflections On The Revolution in France ,"66.
[27] Dwan and Insole, *The Cambridge Companion to Edmund Burke*, 204.

unlike Maistre who saw the aristocracy in a more religious and solidified view, Burke believed in the idea that families could rise up and eventually join the ranks of the aristocracy.

Burke and Maistre were horrified with the complete and total abandonment of religion in what was one of Europe's most devout nations. For Burke, the Church and religion in general provided a moral compass that along with tradition guided nations. It was his belief that the attack on the clergy was affront to the moral order and that without them France would be lead astray. He also saw the attack on the religion as the revolutions objective in order to bring down the institution of the Church as a whole in France.[28] The revolution brought atheism to the state and to the people in Burke's view. As historians analyzing Burke's work argued "it was a religious war – not a war between religions but a war between religion and atheism."[29] Religion brought serious social benefits to a society, including social cohesion, morality and stability. The Church and Christianity in general provided a non-governmental pillar that all subjects of the nation or kingdom could look too for guidance. Christianity for Burke was a hallmark of a civilized society and more importantly of civilized Europe.[30] The Revolutions temporal beliefs were perhaps more of a threat to

[28] Dwan and Insole, *The Cambridge Companion to Edmund Burke*, 204.
[29] Dwan and Insole, *The Cambridge Companion to Edmund Burke*, 218.
[30] Dwan and Insole, *The Cambridge Companion to Edmund Burke*, 100.

France and Europe as a whole, than the destruction of the social order an government.

Maistre and Burke were contemporaries who were cut from the same philosophical cloth. Their beliefs and principles led them to believe that French Revolution was a threat to the moral and political balance in Europe. There is no doubt that Maistre was influenced by Burke's writings, as historian Richard Lebrun pointed out in his work. After reading *Reflections* was published and read by Maistre, he praised it for reinforcing his anti-French sentiments and conclusions that he would make.[31] As Lebrun pointed out "the important point is that reading Burke appears to have stimulated Maistre's own thinking on these important issues"[32] and while some conclusions were different, overall, the trended in the same direction. The revolution was an attempt to systematically alter the fabric of France and Europe. Transformations occurred in the way people thought about rights, government, and religion. They were contradictory to the historic way Europeans viewed the world, and it was this change that forced Burke and Maistre to pick up the pen and develop what would become conservativism. These men were not afraid of rights or believed that people should be oppressed, but that the

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[31] Lebrun, *Joseph de Maistre's Life, Thought and Influence Selected Studies*, 153.
[32] Lebrun, *Maistre Selected Studies,* 158.

revolution's reasoning and hatred for traditional institutions would lead to the destruction of society.

While Burke receives most of the historical and political credit for developing conservative thought, a closer reading of Maistre has shown that he too helped develop the ideology. Maistre was not, as some historians have argued, a precursor to fascism for he believed many of the same ideas that Burke did but justified them by different means. Both men questioned the Enlightenment's rationality, they questioned the revolution's desire to destroy tradition, and both were defenders of the Christian faith. If one judges who should be the father of conservative thought based solely on a historical timeline of who came first, then Burke deserves that title. The overlap in their writing and the development of their thoughts occurred so simultaneously that excluding Maistre only tells part of the story. Political ideologies are influenced and developed by a wide range of thinkers and events, and conservatism is no different.

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Postcolonial Museums and National Identity in Vietnam

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In his influential 1983 monograph *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson analyzed the origins of nationalism as a social construction. Anderson came to the conclusion that nations were collectively imagined communities based on common languages, cultures, ethnicities, and territories. The community is imagined because a country's subjects believe they live in fraternity with those who share their nation, despite the fact they will never meet most of their fellow countrymen.[1] In this sense, the nation is both designed by collective experience and shaped into a tool of political power. The imagined nation is a modern concept, and it has been reinvented in the postcolonial age. While it may not always be obvious, nationalism enlaces our collective psyches and our society.

In one chapter, Anderson investigated how nations use maps, censuses, and museums to establish themselves more concretely. While he concluded that "together, they profoundly shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion -

[1] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 6-7.

the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry," this paper argues that postcolonial nation-states use these three means to the same end.[2] Within Vietnam, museums have been significant channels to reimagine the united Vietnamese nation's collective identity and historical memory.[3] After North and South Vietnam merged to form the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the newly unified state used museums and monuments to reimagine its identity and shape the historical memory of the nation. The three major tenets that arise from Vietnam's "official" history of the French and American wars are anti-colonialism, shared trauma, and socialist solidarity, all which construct the modern Vietnamese identity and its linear national history.

Colonial Origins of Vietnam's Postcolonial Museums

The modern museum is a product of colonial society, for ethnographic collections arose from the Orientalist desire to extensively catalog subject races in the name of anthropology.

[2] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 163-164.
[3] Because this project explores museums and monuments inaccessible by both spatial and language barriers, I heavily rely on academics' and tourists' reports of these memorialized spaces as secondary sources. I am treating the official websites of each museum and memorial as primary sources, for they provide photographs alongside official institutional histories, interpretations, and descriptions of their exhibits.

Benedict Anderson claimed that colonial rulers in Southeast Asia were seldom interested in antique remnants of subjected civilizations before the early 1800s. Eventually, “Colonial Archeological Services became powerful and prestigious institutions, calling on the services of some exceptionally capable scholar-officials.”[4] Metropolitan museums collected and showcased antiques from across the empire, further justifying imperial action in the name of world culture and social science. In the peripheries, museums and archeological restorations were a similarly powerful tool for domination: “the formal ideological programme of the reconstructions always placing the builders of the monuments and the colonial natives in a certain hierarchy. (...) Seen in this light, the reconstructed monuments, juxtaposed with the surrounding rural poverty, said to the natives: Our very presence shows that you have always been, or have long become, incapable of either greatness or self-rule.”[5] Many of today’s museums in post-independence Vietnam were originally colonial institutions, but with a new, nationalist ethos instead of a colonial one.

The History Museum of Ho Chi Minh City was formerly known as the Museum of (Paul) Blanchard de la Brosse, a French colonial governor in 1929’s Cochinchina. The building is beautiful,

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[4] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 178-179.
[5] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 181.

built in an "innovative Vietnamese style" by the French, and it incorporates both Western and Southeast Asian architecture styles. The museum was renamed to the "Vietnam National Museum" in Saigon after the expulsion of the French in 1954, and twenty-five years later, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City gave the institution its current title.[6] The museum's changing names demonstrate how the regions' identity transformed from a colonial one to a national one.

This trend of colonial institutions turned Vietnamese is not exclusive to the South; the Vietnam National Museum of History (VNMH) in Hanoi was founded on the grounds of the Louis Finot Museum, a 1926 museum owned by the *École Française d'Extrême-Orient* (EFEO). Academic Orientalists created the EFEO in 1898 "to encourage researchers to stay on the ground in Asia - like what is done already in Athens, Rome or Cairo - the second wants the foundation of an institution that can take charge of the inventory and preservation of Indochinese cultural heritage." Their main goal was archeological exploration, monument conservation, manuscript collection, and the philological and ethnographic study of Vietnamese ethnic groups. The EFEO even overlooked the restoration of Angkor Wat in modern-day

[6] The History Museum of Ho Chi Minh City, "About Us," *Bao Tang Lich Su Thanh Pho Ho Chi Minh*, http://www.baotanglichsutphcm.com.vn/en-US/about-us#intro-1 (accessed November, 2021).

Cambodia.[7] By every means, the Louis Finot Museum was an Orientalist and imperial undertaking. So after Vietnam earned its first taste of independence, the Vietnam Government overtook and renamed the institution in 1958. The VNMH is also composed of a second museum that opened the same year: The National Museum of the Vietnamese Revolution, which inhabits the original building of the Department of Indochinese Commerce.[8] While Vietnam, of course, has a multitude of original museums founded in its post-war and *Doi Moi* eras, the nation reclaimed colonial institutions as their own.

Benedict Anderson also saw this trend while authoring *Imagined Communities* for its 1983 release, but even he did not know what postcolonial museums in Indochina would look like. Anderson analyzed a 1968 ceremony commemorating fifteen years of Cambodian independence. Norodom Sihanouk, the Cambodian Prime Minister at the time, unveiled a massive wood and papier-mache recreation of the Angkor Wat's Bayon temple in Phnom Penh's national sports stadium: "The replica was exceptionally coarse and crude, but it served its purpose -- instant recognizability

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[7] École Française d'Extrême-Orient, "History," École Française d'Extrême-Orient, https://www.efeo.fr/base.php?code=7 (accessed November, 2021). ; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 183.

[8] Vietnamese National Museum of History, "Introduction: History," Bao Tang Lich Su Quoc Gia, https://baotanglichsu.vn/en/Articles/3152/history (accessed November, 2021).

via a history of colonial-era logoization. 'Ah, our Bayon' -- but with the memory of French colonial restorers wholly banished."[9] The EFEO conserved the temple, but that did not matter to independent Cambodians. They would have seen the iconography of the temple and thought "this is a part of me, *my people* built this." Museums and cultural heritage sites have a powerful effect on collective imagination, for they make people relate, empathize, and associate with people whom they could never meet. The modern Vietnamese museum is a product of the colonial era, transformed to fit the nationalist needs of an independent and united Vietnam.

Generally, Vietnamese museums split the country's national history into three periods: ancient/pre-colonial (pre-1945), resistance against the French and Americans (1945-1979), and post-independent restoration and culture (1986-present). The Vietnam Museum of Ethnology (VME) in Hanoi is the premiere museum of Vietnam's pre-colonial period; it uses ancient artifacts that form a specific ethnographic history of the modern Vietnamese nation. The Vietnamese government created the museum in 1986 alongside the *Doi Moi* economic revitalization project. The museums' self-history reflects the socialist orientations of the reformed Vietnamese identity, one that

[9] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 183.

represents the fifty-four ethnic groups of Vietnam. The museum plans to represent more ethnic groups from Southeast Asia in the future, but it remains focused on groups within the nation of Vietnam itself.[10] The multi-ethnic narrative initially seems to conflict with ideas of nationalism, but the entry foyer reaffirms to guests that certain ethnic groups are distinctly Vietnamese. The foyer displays maps of the major ethnolinguistic groups of Southeast Asia and within Vietnam, and "passages explaining the main ethno-linguistic groups shift between situating each group within the Vietnamese nation state and relating the position and history of each group within the region (e.g., noting which groups "created nations such as Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines)."[11] These maps not only constrain fluid ethnic groups within artificial, modern borders, but they also differentiate between which groups are Vietnamese and which are Others. Still, the VME is one of the few museums in the country that give much consideration to the multi-ethnic makeup of Vietnam.

Before the French and American wars, colonial entities brought with them both the western/imperial museum and the objectifying study of Orientalist ethnography. Once France and the

[10] Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, "History," Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, http://vietnammuseumofethnology.com/posts/history (accessed November, 2021).
[11] Eric C. Thompson, "The World beyond the Nation in Southeast Asian Museums," *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 27, no. 1 (2012): 54–83, 64-65.

United States were defeated in Vietnam, independent Vietnam adjusted these institutions to reclaim a specific national identity. The Vietnamese government reclaimed these colonial museums and redeveloped them into powerful tools of inspiring nationalism. Of course, this moment makes sense, for it is common for postcolonial states to use museums to redefine the nation.

Remembering the French and American Wars

When Benedict Anderson analyzed the transition of national identity after the wars of independence, he realized that "the model of official nationalism assumes its relevance above all at the moment when revolutionaries successfully take control of the state, and are for the first time in a position to use the power of the state in pursuit of their visions."[12] When the Democratic Republic of Vietnam overtook the nation, Vietnam's museum landscape reperiodized the region's long history. The most important date in Vietnamese national history is September 2, 1945. On that date, President Ho Chi Minh read the declaration of independence to celebrate the victory against the French after the August Revolution. This date splits Vietnam's colonial era from its modern, national history. When talking about the current nation, Vietnamese museums highlight anti-colonial victories, the traumas

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[12] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 159.

of war, and the socialist solidarity that led to Vietnam's success today. These official histories are important because they are tools of nationalism that foster a powerful communion between citizens who will never meet.

The most prominent museum pertaining to the French and American wars in Vietnam is the War Remnants Museum (WRM). Originally titled the Exhibition House for U.S. and Puppet Crimes in 1975 (renamed to the War Crimes of Aggression Gallery in 1990), the museum lies in a reclaimed US Information Agency building.[13] Their English website, which has not been updated since July 2012, offers an incredibly patriotic view of the war:

> On 31.8.1858 the French attack[ed] Da Nang start[ed] wars of aggression [which began] the colonial rule of Vietnam. For almost 100 years the heroic Vietnamese people waged war [for] national liberation and independence for national freedom. (...) But the French and then the U.S. imperialists continue[d] waging [a] war of aggression, attempted to restore the rule and set [a] new kind of colonialism in Vietnam. During the past 30 years, the Vietnamese people have resilience to fight with so many sacrifices and hardships to protect its independence and freedom.[14]

[13] Christina Schwenkel, *The American War in Contemporary Vietnam: Transnational Remembrance and Representation*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 163-167.
[14] War Remnants Museum, "General Introduction," *War Remnants Museum*. http://warremnantsmuseum.com/posts/introduction-general (accessed November 26, 2021).

Similarly, their web page "On 'Historical Facts'" highlights how the Vietnamese people "smashed the yoke of French colonialism."[15] First, note how the museum consistently uses protagonistic language when describing the historical facts of the matter. This museum is not an exceptional case: modern war museums define their nation with revolutionary origin stories. The museum also attempts to win the moralistic war. Here, the Vietnamese nation fell victim to wars of aggression. Accordingly, nowhere does the museum mention the Republic of Vietnam and its army, ignoring the fact that some Vietnamese people had agency when it came to installing and preserving colonialism.

The Vietnam Women's Museum (VWM) similarly overlooks those who were not on the "right" side of Vietnamese national history. The VWM claims that "In 1946, during the re-invasion of Vietnam by the French, the entire nation joined the resistance."[16] Logically, there were some Vietnamese people who supported the French, as decolonization is a complex political battle. It seems the VWM defines the Vietnamese nation not by a certain ethnic group or limited region, but by anyone who joined

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[15] War Remnants Museum, "On 'Historical Facts'," *War Remnants Museum*. http://warremnantsmuseum.com/article/on-historical-facts (accessed November 26, 2021).

[16] Vietnamese Women's Museum, "1930-1954," *Bao Tang Phu Nu Vietnam*, https://baotangphunu.org.vn/en/1930-1954/ (accessed November 25, 2021).

the resistance. This tells those visiting the exhibit that no matter what, their foremothers and forefathers created the modern Vietnamese nation for them, and it leads museum guests to imagine themselves on the right side of the narrative.

The VWM also places the 980,000 women who fought as guerillas for the North under the spotlight, and it presents audiences of Vietnamese women with the tools to imagine themselves in the traditionally male-dominated communion of revolutionary war.[17] In the American war in the South, the museum states, women made up 40% of militia and guerilla forces, with over 50 female squadrons. Women also suffered and shared the trauma of war directly and indirectly. The VWM recalls Ms. Nguyen Thi Dung's imprisonment in the Tiger Cage of Con Dao, where Vietnamese political prisoners were held, beaten, and electrocuted:

> On top of the ceiling, there was always a barrel containing lime powder. If a prisoner showed any sign of dissent, the guards would pour down the powder immediately – burning our skin. We didn't bathe for three months, because we were only given two small cups of water to drink every day. The tiger cage was hot like an oven, and we came up with a way of washing ourselves – we would use a nylon bag to cover our body until we were sweating.

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[17] Vietnamese Women's Museum, "1930-1954," *Bao Tang Phu Nu Vietnam*, https://baotangphunu.org.vn/en/1930-1954/ (accessed November 25, 2021).

> We would then undo the bag, and use it to scrub the hated dirt off.[18]

The VWM reminds its guests of the human cost that gained their independence within the Vietnamese nation. Moreover, it only highlights the action and suffering that those fighting for the North and NLF underwent; women who aided the Republic of Vietnam are erased from this national history. Even though guests may have had grandmothers and great-grandmothers who aligned with the South, this victor-written history was designed to make nationals empathize with those who fought to create a specific vision of the nation.

The VWM places women back into the national origins of the Vietnamese nation, where socialist duty against outside oppressors was the key to the nation's longtime success. The VWM highlights the continuity of the women who defended the nation: "In the 3rd Century, 23-year-old Trieu Thi Trinh of Thanh Hoa fought against the oppression of the Wu Chinese. King Quang Trung's female General Commander-in-Chief of the elephant-mounted troops, Bui Thi Xuan, contributed to a victory against

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[18] Vietnamese Women's Museum, "1954-1975," *Bao Tang Phu Nu Vietnam*, https://baotangphunu.org.vn/en/1954-1975/ (accessed November 25, 2021).

290,000 Qing Chinese invaders in 1789."[19] Vietnamese national history has a Viet (Kinh) dominant narrative of conflict with external enemies, especially the Chinese.[20] One TripAdvisor from Hanoi agrees, "Vietnamese women have been full participants [in] Vietnam's struggle for independence. Through centuries of domination by China and France along with the civil war of the 60s, Women have fought alongside the men, This Museum celebrates the culture, strength, and determination of the Women of Viet Nam."[21] The VWM, alongside other Vietnamese national museums, employ stories of unity and national solidarity to make their visitors envision themselves fighting for the Vietnamese nation throughout time.

By far the most common theme across Vietnamese exhibits on the French and American wars is the collective trauma and suffering. The WRM displays a thematic exhibition on "Agent Orange in Vietnam" by British photographer Philip Jones Griffiths. The exhibit is incredibly shocking, with dozens of images of

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[19] Vietnamese Women's Museum, "Historic Personages," *Bao Tang Phu Nu Vietnam*, https://baotangphunu.org.vn/en/historic-personages/ (accessed November 25, 2021).

[20] Thompson, "The World beyond the Nation in Southeast Asian Museums," 73.

[21] TripAdvisor, "Vietnamese Women's Museum (Hanoi): Reviews," TripAdvisor, https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g293924-d447354-Reviews-Vietnamese_Women_s_Museum-Hanoi.html (accessed December 4, 2021).

children with horrific birth defects as a result of Agent Orange.[22] In an account by the first Australian group touring unified Vietnam in 1977, educator Stewart E. Fraser recounts "In Ho Chi Minh City we spent half a day at the spectacularly macabre 'Anti-U.S. Imperialist War Museum,' [War Remnants Museum] which portrays in graphic detail the history of American involvement in Vietnam."[23] The WRM explicitly aims to be graphic and startling:

> [Those who joined exchanges] have the opportunity to reach out to 'living proof' of the crime, the consequences of aggressive war, [and] to capture the information in a truthful, objective, comprehensive and lively [manner]. So they better understand the country and people of Vietnam. (...) To the witnesses war, sharing, empathy, admiration and respect of many people [will] help them become more confident [and] feel more useful in life, especially [in] educat[ing] the younger generation about the anti-war ideological invasion, to protect peace.[24]

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[22] The United States military utilized Agent Orange, a herbicide dropped by air, to clear the jungles of Vietnam. Birth defects were not uncommon for the children of one generation of American veterans. Because Agent Orange is a forever-chemical, it continues to impact new generations within Vietnam.

[23] Stewart E. Fraser, "The Four Rs of Vietnamese Education: Revolution, Reunification, Reconciliation, and Redevelopment," *The Phi Delta Kappan* 58, no. 10 (1977): 730–34, 730.

[24] War Remnants Museum, "Exchange Program," *War Remnants Museum*, http://warremnantsmuseum.com/article/exchange-program (accessed November 26, 2021).

This museum is famous for featuring photographs of dead infants, disabled children, and dismembered bodies.[25] If it is true that shared pain brings people closer together, then the WRM uses historical trauma as a tool to strengthen the nation, not as the primary goal but as a secondary outcome.

Christina M. Schwenkel, a historian who studies Vietnamese museums and national identity, spoke to three U.S. tourists at the Apocalypse Now nightclub in Ho Chi Minh City. One woman criticized the WRM for displaying a photograph of a U.S. soldier posing with the head of a Vietnamese soldier: "It's one-sided. They should include the North Vietnamese atrocities. A lot of my dad's friends were here during the war and that's not what they are doing."[26] The museum takes all these photos from war and adds captions to turn them into propaganda. Schwenkel argues that the woman's use of the word "propaganda" denies historical accountability, where her issue was not with the United States, "but that of Vietnamese officials, who borrowed images from the West and inserted them into a 'distorted' history."[27] The woman does not seem to understand that it is not unusual for nations to use graphic images to promote the story of their nation.

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[25] Fodors, "Fodor's Expert Review: War Remnants Museum," Fodors, https://www.fodors.com/world/asia/vietnam/ho-chi-minh-city/things-to-do/sights/reviews/war-remnants-museum-584722 (accessed 2 December, 2021).
[26] Schwenkel, *The American War in Contemporary Vietnam*, 170-171
[27] Schwenkel, *The American War in Contemporary Vietnam*, 170-171.

Coming from an American perspective, the woman Schwenkal encountered seems to believe that the largest takeaway from the museum would be imagining the United States as the enemy. On the other hand, the largest takeaway for Vietnamese audiences is the depth of trauma and suffering that their nation experienced.

When it comes to the presentation of the American and French wars in Vietnam, the museum acts as a creationary agent of national identity. This Vietnamese national identity is based on the shared trauma and socialist solidarity that arise from anti-colonial resistance. Vietnam's national identity incorporates multiple ethnic groups across the north, south, and central regions. This is the power of nationalism, for over 100 years, the Vietnamese nation and identity transformed from a colonial periphery to split Vietnams (Cochinchina, Annam, and Tonkin) and into one united Vietnam. Museums both construct and preserve this national identity, and it leads Vietnamese nationals to imagine a community between space and time with people they will never meet.

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The Reintegration of the Loyalists in Post-Revolutionary America

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Enduring historical perceptions of the Loyalists emerged almost as soon as the war ended. Early Americans wanted to create a sense of identity and unity in the new republic, portraying the Revolution as a unified overthrowing of a tyrannical and oppressive government, both to glorify their nation and serve as a model for future national unity. Loyalists were thus resigned to an ignoble footnote in American historiography for almost two centuries.[1] Historians did not extensively reexamine the role of Loyalists until the rise of new social history in the 1960s and 1970s. With this, there was a newfound interest in the stories not previously told and history from the bottom up. There is now an understanding that the American Revolution was a civil war in many regards, with significant numbers of active individuals opposing independence. Scholars such as Robert Calhoon were instrumental in developing the concept of Loyalists as complex

[1] Eileen Ka-May Cheng, "American Historical Writers and the Loyalists, 1788-1856: Dissent, Consensus, and American Nationality," *Journal of the Early Republic* 23, no. 4 (2003): 495–97.

and dynamic actors in these events.[2] Historians have broken down the misconception that Tories were primarily the aristocratic elites of the community, committed to conservatism out of their desire to maintain their position at the top.[3] There is now an understanding of Loyalists as a diverse group, economically, racially, and behaviorally.[4]

As a heterogeneous group, Loyalists encountered a diverse array of treatment after the war. Most historians focus primarily on the Loyalists who absconded to Canada. This is likely because many of those who left were elite and highly committed, and thus the most prominent and well-recorded.[5] Similarly, historians often emphasize the persecution of Loyalists, looking at confiscation and harassment, arguing that Americans took vengeance on those who worked against their idea of liberty. However, recently several historians have studied small communities and groups of Loyalists

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[2] Robert M. Calhoon, *Tory Insurgents the Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010), xvi-xix.
[3] Joseph S. Tiedemann, Eugene R. Fingerhut, and Robert W. Venables, *The Other Loyalists: Ordinary People, Royalism, and the Revolution in the Middle Colonies, 1763-1787* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009), 2.
[4] Ruma Chopra, *Choosing Sides: Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, American Controversies Series. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, Publishers, 2013), 2.
[5] Rebecca Brannon, *From Revolution to Reunion: The Reintegration of the South Carolina Loyalists* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2016), 5. For a thorough and well-researched account of Loyalists abroad see Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World*, National Book Critics Circle Award (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

who decided to remain in the United States. Judith L. Van Buskirk examined the complex interactions between Loyalists and Patriots in New York City.[6] Valerie H. McKito examined a case study of New York Loyalists.[7] Rebecca Brannon provided a comprehensive understanding of reintegration in South Carolina.[8] Finally, this paper will draw on a study of Loyalists in the rural community of Deerfield, Massachusetts.[9] These studies collectively provides valuable insight into why post-Revolutionary society was so willing to accommodate those that had worked against independence.

Creating a narrative for the fate of Loyalists after the Revolution is a challenge because there was not a uniform process. Besides vague guidance from the Continental Congress and the mostly ignored provisions in the Treaty of Paris, there was no national policy towards Loyalists. The matter of their treatment was primarily handled by the states, which often devolved that responsibility to the local level.[10] Therefore, any discussion of

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[6] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).
[7] Valerie H. McKito, *From Loyalists to Loyal Citizens: The DePeyster Family of New York*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2015)
[8] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*.
[9] Marco J. Lloyd, "The Reintegration after the Revolution: The Deerfield Tories from 1781 to 1800" (Deerfield, MA, Historic Deerfield Library, 2022).
[10] Rebecca Brannon, "America's Revolutionary Experience with Transitional Justice," in *The Consequences of Loyalism: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Calhoon* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2019), 191.

Loyalist reintegration must be a discussion of overall trends, with many differences in individuals' experiences.[11] However, a pattern emerges throughout the states. During the war, Patriots took measures to neuter the threat caused by Loyalist opposition. This was done extralegally, through mob action and intimidation, and legally through Test Acts, amercement, confiscation of property, banishment, and even imprisonment. Legal actions against Loyalists came to a head at the end of the war when many radicals called for vengeance in victory, and the British army's withdrawal left Loyalists without a safe haven. 1783 and 1784 saw the height of Loyalist persecution and flight. Even then, persecution was relatively moderate. There was no widespread policy of execution for political enemies, a feature of many revolutions. The main methods of persecution, confiscation and banishment were very limited in scope. Historians estimate that at least a fifth of colonists had demonstrated Loyalism in some way, but only 1/40th absconded. This is a tiny fraction, especially when one considers

[11] Unfortunately, the scope of this paper also must be limited to the experiences of White Loyalists, both for the sake of maintaining the focus of this paper and because Blacks and Native Americans can hardly be described as "reintegrating" into a society they were all but excluded from. Additionally, the fate of female Loyalists was often so intertwined with their husband's it was difficult to find information unique to their experiences. Some women did petition the South Carolina General Assembly, but the legislature refused to afford them political agency. Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 71-72. Women likely participated in social reintegration with the local community, but future research needs to be done to support this.

that most of those who left did so by choice.[12] Legislation naming those for confiscation and banishment rarely listed over a few hundred names in each state, compared to the tens of thousands who ended up leaving.[13]

After the immediate post-war action against Loyalists, the situation greatly improved for those able to weather the storm. Tempers cooled, and many Loyalists were able to reconcile with their neighbors. Many who had their property confiscated were able to regain it, and many who had absconded were able to return. Even before 1783, state legislatures and courts began hearing Loyalist petitions and cases. In 1784 many states pulled back on the confiscation laws and began passing amnesty acts as the decade progressed. The ratification of the Constitution, with its assurances of rights for all, theoretically prohibited any continuing legal persecutions, such as denial of the franchise or other sanctions. States with outstanding anti-Loyalist laws gradually relaxed them, allowing Loyalists to rejoin society as equal American citizens.[14] Within a decade, the losing side of a civil war was able to successfully reconcile themselves with the country they fought against. This was possible through the actions of Loyalists who

[12] Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles,* 6-8.
[13] Brannon, "America's Experience," 203.
[14] Brannon, "America's Experience," 203-207.

helped their own integration and through the willingness of both elite and common Patriots.

Loyalists made a case for their reintegration

Accounts of the injustices suffered by Loyalists can often take away the agency Loyalists had in determining their fate. However, Loyalists were not helpless victims, subject to the whims of the Patriots, but independent actors whose choices influenced their reintegration. Very few Loyalists were compelled to leave. Those named for expulsion were a tiny fraction of those who left. Many of those who absconded did so by choice. Some were fearful of future retaliation if they chose to stay. After the liberation of New York, the papers were filled with calls for vengeance against the Loyalists.[15] The author of one broadside, under the pseudonym "Brutus," egged them on to flee while they still can, assuring them that it is foolish to think that Congress will give them "favor or protection," and any who say so "are deluding you to destruction."[16] Messages like these understandably intimidated Loyalists, although time would show that the radical's bark was worse than their bite. By contrast, New York's papers painted a

[15] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 183-87.
[16] Brutus [pseud.], "To All Adherents to the British Government and Followers of the British Army, Commonly Called Tories" (Poughkeepsie, NY, 1783).

rosy picture of life in Nova Scotia as a land full of harmony and opportunity. In addition, many had little faith in the success of the new republic, fearing injustice, instability, and poverty.[17] Others were too committed to king and country to become citizens of a new nation. While some were too despised to be able to stay peacefully, the choice to leave was often motivated by self-interest and ideology rather than force.[18]

Many of those who fled in 1783 were still able to return successfully. McKito's study of the DePeyster family is a valuable case study of this scenario. They were a prominent New York Tory family, and all male members took up arms for the British. In 1783, they fled to Canada. After a decade in exile, one of the sons, Frederick, returned to New York. He not only survived in post-Revolutionary New York but thrived, becoming a very successful merchant. Neither he nor the commercial dynasty he founded were persecuted for his Tory past.[19] Even one who had taken up arms against his fellow citizens was effortlessly reintegrated back into society because by the time he returned, individuals were generally more concerned with new issues and day-to-day life than past conflicts. In this regard, Frederick was representative of many exiles who were successfully able to return after their tempers had

[17] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 177-79.
[18] Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 8-9.
[19] McKito, *Loyalists to Loyal Citizens,* 2-7.

cooled.[20] In some cases, exiles in other states could return before the war concluded if they demonstrated loyalty to the United States.[21]

However, an overwhelming majority of Loyalists decided to stay, demonstrating that whatever persecution they faced at the end of the war was tolerable to some degree. Remarkably, even some of those formally expelled by state legislatures staunchly stayed put. At least one-third of those banished by the Massachusetts General Assembly never left the state.[22] In South Carolina, so many Loyalists stayed on their theoretically confiscated property that the legislature caved and gave them clemency.[23] This further demonstrates how *de jure* proscription against Loyalists can often overstate their *de facto* persecution and that Loyalists had agency in their interactions with Patriot governments. Those that chose to stay were also able to reintegrate easier than those who chose to leave and later return.[24] This is partially because those who left severed their interpersonal connections and thus lost a driving force behind social reintegration.[25]

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[20] Brannon, "America's Experience," 203-206.
[21] Thomas N. Ingersoll, *The Loyalist Problem in Revolutionary New England* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 287.
[22] Brannon, "America's Experience," 203.
[23] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 112-13.
[24] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 113-14.
[25] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 191-95.

Additionally, those that stayed had the opportunity to demonstrate that they could peacefully coexist with Whig neighbors and live under an American government. In general, Loyalists helped their case by embodying (or making the appearance of embodying) civic virtues. A major argument against reintegration was that Tories lacked republican virtues, with many accusing them of being treacherous, barbarous, and tyrannical in nature.[26] Former Loyalists made the case that even while aiding the British, they were merciful and charitable to their adversaries. After the war, they attempted to display that they possessed the honorable character necessary for a good citizen of a republic.[27] For example, the former Tories of Deerfield took a very active role in town government, aiding the community in mundane services like repairing a meadow fence or establishing a fund for an itinerant minister.[28] Demonstrating that they could be constructive members in an American republican society helped Loyalists win back the trust and support of their Patriot neighbors and convinced the legislatures that they should be allowed to fully reintegrate.

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[26] Aaron Nathan Coleman, "Justice and Moderation? The Reintegration of the American Loyalists as an Episode of Transitional Justice," in *The Consequences of Loyalism: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Calhoon* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2019).
[27] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 82-90.
[28] Lloyd, "Reintegration," 19-20.

Loyalists also made their case in very concrete ways. Those who had been accused of treason were often allowed clemency based on an oath of allegiance to the new republic. The use of an oath of allegiance for reintegration stems from the ideas of "volitional allegiance," that were emerging at the time.[29] Resulting from the American Revolution, ideas about citizenship and loyalty were in flux. The rebels had recently flung off their British subjecthood. Therefore, it followed that American citizenship and allegiance were an individual choice, and in the chaos and confusion of a civil war, individuals could reasonably need time to make that choice.[30] Beyond this theoretical understanding, an oath of allegiance was also a practical means for reintegration. There were far too many Loyalists to try for treason. Oaths were cheap, quick, and uniform procedures that were generally effective as written records of submission, admissions of wrongdoing, and prescriptions for future good behavior.[31] It seems naïve today to expect reformed behavior based on words alone. However, eighteenth-century American Enlightenment society placed heavy emphasis on honor, civility, and public virtue.[32] Therefore, oaths

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[29] Robert M. Calhoon and Timothy M. Barnes, "The Reintegration of the Loyalists and the Disaffected," in *Tory Insurgents*, *The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (University of South Carolina Press, 2010), 352.
[30] Calhoon and Barnes, "Reintegration," 352-353.
[31] Calhoon and Barnes, "Reintegration," 353-356.
[32] Gordon S. Wood, *Revolutionary Characters: What Made the Founders Different* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), 12-16.

were forceful in the sense that breaking one would sabotage an individual's reputation and confirm to the state that an individual did not possess the necessary civic virtues to be a responsible citizen.

Finally, Loyalists who had been subject to legal punishments made effective use of petitions to appeal those decisions. In South Carolina, seventy percent of Loyalists who faced punishment promptly petitioned the legislature.[33] Petitioning was popular because it was effective. In the eighteenth century, petitioning was a highly valued right and a way for the otherwise voiceless to have their cases heard. Loyalists used them to argue the rule of law, plead their case for citizenship, and explain the reasoning behind their actions. Brannon argued that the most vital part of a petition was demonstrating to the legislature that their local community accepted and supported them. In other words, legal reintegration often hinged on a demonstration of existing social reintegration.[34] This involved them providing evidence they possessed the aforementioned social virtues. Loyalists often had friends and neighbors sign their petitions or write letters to attest to their virtues and display their social reintegration.[35] In order to get the backing of their neighbors, Loyalists often had to make

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[33] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 65.
[34] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 90-95.
[35] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 91-93.

personal amends. Few records survive of interpersonal interactions between community members, but those that do show that many Patriots expected an apology. Some did not feel they had anything to apologize for, but those who were willing to humiliate themselves and show sincere contrition were better able to repair the social ties that were so vital to their reintegration.[36] Therefore, Loyalists were able to make choices that helped their case for forgiveness.

American society was willing to reconcile the Loyalists

American society was generally receptive to Loyalists' cases for reintegration, accepting most but the most notorious and unrepentant. The nation's willingness to reintegrate Loyalists came from both the bottom-up and the top-down. At the end of the war, many elite Whigs supported Loyalist reintegration, blunting, and later helping to repeal, legislation against the Tories.[37] They also penned highly influential defenses of reintegration that appealed to both republican values. One of the most outspoken advocates for integration was Alexander Hamilton, who adopted the pen name "Phocion" in reference to an Athenian general who advocated for coexistence with their former Macedonian enemies.[38] He appealed

[36] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 73-76.
[37] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 186-93.
[38] Coleman, "Justice or Moderation?" 185.

to republican sensibilities, saying that the "spirit of Whiggism is generous, humane, beneficent, and just" and it "cherishes legal liberties, holds the rights of every individual sacred, and condemns or punishes no man without regular trial."[39] Hamilton equated republican virtue to forgiving one's enemies. He also implicitly pointed out the hypocrisy of fighting for liberty, just to deny that to others. Aedanus Burke, a conservative revolutionary from South Carolina, pointed out the illiberal nature of anti-Tory laws based on the South Carolina constitution, the Magna Carta, and common law legal reasoning.[40] For example, he described all Tory laws as ex post facto laws which "even in arbitrary governments is reckoned tyranny."[41] He continued, arguing doing these injustices to Loyalists would have endangered the freedom of them all. The republican case for reintegration was perhaps most succinctly put by Christopher Gadsden when he said, "he that forgets and forgives most, such times as these, in my opinion, is the best citizen."[42] After a long struggle for liberty and individualism, many felt they had to tolerate former opponents to demonstrate their republicanism and commitment to liberal pluralism.[43]

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[39] Alexander Hamilton, "A Letter from Phocion, to the Considerate Citizens of New-York" (Philadelphia, PA, 1784), 3-4.
[40] Aedanus Burke, "An Address to the Freemen of the State of South Carolina" (Charleston, SC, 1783), 19-20.
[41] Burke, "An Address," 23.
[42] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 107.
[43] Ingersol, *Loyalist Problem,* 303.

These elites also gave practical and economic reasons for clemency. Burke cited Machiavelli, arguing that amnesty after a civil war is often an effective strategy for avoiding future bloodshed. He backed this up by contrasting Crowell’s ill-fated lustration with the example of Charles II's successful policy of amnesty after the Restoration.[44] The English Civil War and the brutal fighting of the Revolution would have been all too clear to his audience. The citizens would not want their republican victory to turn to tyranny nor to fail and require the restoration of the monarchy. Therefore, they should resist the desire to purge their opponents, or their sacrifice will be for nothing. Hamilton was even more practical. He argued that by continuing the confiscation of property against the recommendations of the Treaty of Paris, America was losing international credibility, and even jeopardizing the treaty itself.[45] At this point, Britain was still largely in control of the territory west of the Appalachians that it had formally ceded in the peace treaty. Hamilton argued that if the Americans did not hold up their side of the bargain, Britain could reasonably refuse to hold up their end, which was something no one wanted. Both men also argued that reintegration was essential to the economic success of the new republic because many Loyalists were

[44] Burke, “An Address,” 29-31.
[45] Hamilton, “Letter from Phocion,” 8-10.

merchants, and their expertise and international connections would be vital for moving the country towards successful global trade.[46] These men are examples of prominent Whigs who used their influence to call for amnesty for Loyalists.

The tendency for some elite Whigs to take the side of Loyalist reintegration was for similar reasons expressed by Hamilton and Burke. However, it can also be explained as a part of the conservative reaction against the more radical elements of the revolution. Throughout the war, elite Whigs viewed the leveling and redistributive tendencies of the revolutionary mob with great concern. They needed popular support to gain independence from Britain, but once the war was won, they wished to maintain the internal American hierarchy. Therefore, elite Whigs saw the calls for vengeance against Tories, especially fellow elites, as a dangerous step towards anarchy and equality. Many conservative and moderate Whigs were even willing to align themselves with former Tories in the New York government to work against the radicals.[47] This political allegiance can also be seen in smaller communities. The Deerfield Whigs marched side by side with their former Tory adversaries to defend the Springfield arsenal against the radicals during Shays' Rebellion.[48] In South Carolina, elite

[46] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 131.
[47] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 185-89.
[48] Lloyd, "Reintegration," 24-26.

Whigs were especially motivated to create White unity to discourage slave revolts.[49] Therefore, elite Whigs aided the reintegration of Loyalists because of perceived shared interests.

While moderate elite Whigs played a significant role in pushing for Loyalist reintegration, it would be inaccurate to describe it as a top-down affair. These elite calls for reintegration were likely influential because a great portion of the populace already favored reintegration.[50] Evidence for this can be seen in the fact that there were remarkably few crowd actions against remaining Loyalists after the war. In the lead-up and duration of the war, the Patriots furthered their cause through mob actions intended to intimidate and humiliate Loyalists and Neutralists to attempt to punish them for their Toryism and disincentivize potential sympathizers from working against independence.[51] However, after the war, there were very few crowd actions against Loyalists and their sympathizers, even when tempers were still running high. During the Revolution, crowds harassed lawyers who represented Loyalists, accusing them of being friends of government. However, after the war, many high-profile lawyers built successful careers helping former Loyalists regain their

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[49] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 130.
[50] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 193.
[51] Benjamin H. Irvin, "Tar, Feathers, and the Enemies of American Liberties, 1768-1776," *The New England Quarterly* 76, no. 2 (2003): 221-25.

properties.[52] There were still some mobs, but there were remarkably few, and they often targeted a few high-profile individuals, who refused to play by the rules of reintegration by brazenly flaunting community norms. Brannon argued that the limited mob actions against a few high Tories served as a safety valve for popular frustration and allowed the crowds to have an important feeling of agency in deciding who got to reintegrate. This allowed the vast majority of Loyalists to pass unmolested.[53] One explanation for the lack of opposition towards Loyalists is exhaustion from the war effort. The Revolution lasted eight long years. During this time, people experienced disorder, violence, and economic uncertainty. Many simply wanted an end to conflict, and to further persecute the Loyalists would be to continue the strife.[54] Supporting this idea, South Carolina, the state most torn apart by civil war was the most clement, not the most vengeful as one might expect, likely because people were so tired of conflict.

In addition to the desire to end the war, there was a great desire to repair the fractured community. Eighteenth-century American communities were built around consensus and the common good. Therefore, when someone held heterodox views, it

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[52] Salley E. Hadden, "Lawyering for Loyalists in the Post-Revolutionary War Period," in *The Consequences of Loyalism: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Calhoon* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2019), 135-36.
[53] Brannon, *Revolution to Reunion*, 114-15.
[54] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 189.

was often seen as a danger to society.[55] Consequently, most people's treatment of Loyalists was not purely motivated by a desire to punish ideological opponents, but to repair the cohesion of society. This understanding is key to explaining the actions of Patriots towards Loyalists. Those sent into exile were the ones too divisive and notorious to coexist with.[56] On the other hand, they would usually grant forgiveness to Loyalists who demonstrated their willingness to be reintegrated into society, through the aforementioned means of penitent apology and demonstrations of civic virtue. Recanting one's deeds against the community was often enough to restore one's reputation.[57] According to Barbara Clark Smith, these methods of reintegration were already used for other types of nonconformists before the Revolutionary War, and Loyalists were treated in the same manner: "Such public acts of contrition, reform, and conformity were repeated countless times in countless localities."[58] The people of the community were willing to accept Loyalists for the repair of their community cohesion and used existing methods of reintegration.

Finally, the Patriots were willing to accept the Loyalists because the groups were not as distinct as sometimes thought.

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[55] Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost: Consent and Resistance in Revolutionary America* (New York: New Press, 2010), 111-12.
[56] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 177.
[57] Calhoon and Barnes, "Reintegration," 350-352.
[58] Smith, *Freedoms We Lost,* 111.

Most people had family or close friends that fell on the other side of the civil war. As Van Buskirk argued, Patriots and Loyalists maintained these interpersonal connections throughout the war. Borders between British and American-occupied territories were permeable. While the leaders labeled the other side as enemies and tried to ban contact between the two, ordinary people kept in contact with their friends and family even on the other side.[59] The hardships of war and the influx of refugees often made these connections necessary as people depended on the assistance of the other side, further blurring people's political allegiances.[60] These wartime connections became invaluable for post-war reconciliation. As Van Buskirk says, "in 1783, they did not have to begin building bridges to one another; those bridges had never been destroyed during the war."[61] For most people, the relationships between people and communities were more important than former disagreements about kings and governments.

Conclusion

Brutus' New York broadside boldly claimed that it is not possible that "Whigs and Tories can live peaceably in the same

[59] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 1-4.
[60] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 5-7.
[61] Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 195.

society."[62] He was incorrect in this prediction as well. Most White Loyalists were able to successfully reintegrate into society, through their decisions to stay and by advocating for their rights and reconciling with their community. Patriots were willing to accept the Loyalists because of the ideals of republicanism and the desire to return to a harmonious society. However, in some regards Brutus' words were true. Whigs and Tories did not live peacefully in the same society because after the war those distinctions became irrelevant for those who stayed. Both the victors and losers of the war for independence lived together as American citizens.

For a civil war that was so long and costly, it is remarkable that the victors did not seek out greater punishments from their former enemies. Just a few decades later, the victors of the French Revolution would carry out a series of brutal purges against the defenders of the old order. In the history of revolutions, such moderation and amnesty is the exception, rather than the norm. Some may attribute this to the limited extent of the American Revolution as radical and redistributive. It was indeed a conservative revolution in the sense that it did not immediately upend the social order. However, by instituting a liberal society that was willing to tolerate people like the Loyalists, who held beliefs contrary to the government, the war for independence truly

[62] Brutus, "To All Adherents."

was *revolutionary* in the sense of being novel and unique. Just as it was remarkable for Washington to hand back power to republican institutions, it was remarkable that American society as a whole was willing to reconcile with their former enemies. It was not a painless process, and certainly many faced injustice in the time it took to reintegrate. However, one could reasonably trace the ideal of Loyalist reconciliation to the ideals of ideological pluralism and freedom of association that would become central tenants of American political philosophy.

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