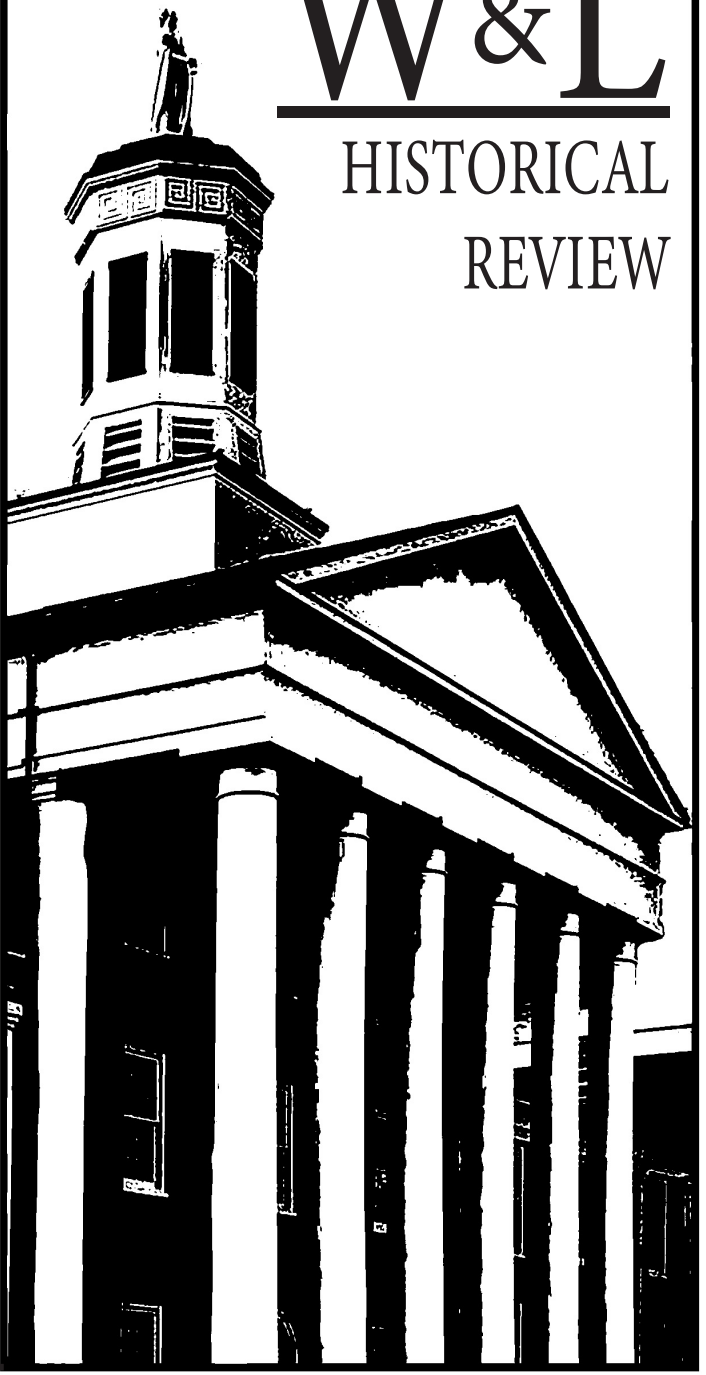
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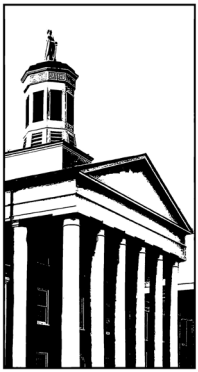
W&L HISTORICAL REVIEW



A special thanks to the history departments of...

Washington and Lee University
Georgetown University
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...for teaching and mentoring the students listed in this review.



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The opinions expressed in the following essays are those of their respective author's and are not the official views of the Washington and Lee Historical Review.

CRITICAL

AND

HISTORICAL ESSAYS

CONTRIBUTED TO THE

WASHINGTON AND LEE HISTORICAL REVIEW

BY

Alex Kagan
Cindy Jiang
Janie Harrison
Elise Murphy
Kaitlin Silva
Cole Nelson
Owen Reid

DURING THE 2026-2027 ACADEMIC TERM

THUS COMPRISING THE INAUGURAL

VOL. I.

OF THIS REVIEW

LEXINGTON, VA

DESIGNED AND TYPESET BY ISAAC JAMES
FIRST EDITION PRINTED MAY 5, 2026

Dear Reader,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you Issue I of the Washington and Lee Historical Review. As our inaugural edition, this publication will hold a special place in the history of this journal and in the minds and memories of all those who worked towards its completion.

I want to extend my deepest thanks to the editorial staff of our journal, the authors enrolled at Washington and Lee University and other prestigious institutions around the country, and everyone involved in the publication of our first issue. Throughout the 2025-2026 academic year, everyone at our journal traveled through uncharted waters. Every one of us, from myself to the Staff Editors, was all learning together. I would especially like to highlight the contributions of our Staff Editors. Their experience and insights were invaluable, as was the trust and courage they demonstrated in joining a start-up journal with no previous publications.

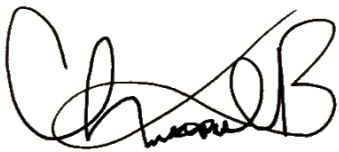
I would also like to extend a special thanks to Professor Michelle Brock and the entire Washington and Lee History Department for supporting the journal and making this issue possible. Finally, I would like to thank my brother, George Boardman, for making his skill and first-hand experience in this field available.

History is not meant to be hidden away in monopolistic ivory towers. History is the study of people. People from the past, yes, but, fundamentally, human beings with much more in common than not with the ordinary of today. History should, therefore, belong to the people to some degree, as it is a study of everyone's common past. The authors whose works are published herein are all undergraduates or very recent undergraduates, showing that this field can be contributed to by all who cultivate the discipline and skill necessary for excellent scholarship.

We are pleased to have three Washington and Lee students' work included in this publication. I am especially pleased to note that our headline piece, written by Alex Kagan, discusses the history of West Virginia and our very own Shenandoah Valley. Kagan argues that the more connected a region of Western

Virginia was to the eastern part of the state in the Antebellum period, the more likely it was to support secession. Covering a temporally adjacent topic, Janie Harrison analyzes racial violence committed by the Ku Klux Klan in Northern, Appalachian Georgia. Kaitlin Silva discusses the impact pre-modern demonology had on sea monster folklore. As a recent graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, Cindy Jiang examines the history of a traditional Chinese medicine pharmacy and its transformation into a state-run enterprise under the Chinese Communist Party. Elise Murphy from Washington University in Saint Louis argues that medieval women practicing in the regulated systems of convents were less prone to negative effects from their devotions than medieval tertiaries. Cole Nelson, also from Washington University, presents an account of some of the ways the Industrious Revolution changed the very fabric of economic and social life in England. Finally, Owen Reid from Georgetown University argues that peace in the Second Liberian Civil War was achieved through the actions of three main groups: American diplomats, rebel groups, and the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace grassroots movement.

Without further ado, I present to you the 2025-26 edition of the Washington and Lee Historical Review. It has been a pleasure to serve as Editor-in-Chief this academic year. I look forward to continuing in the 2026-27 academic year.



"MERE VASSALS TO THEIR EASTERN LORDS?"[1]

Economic Development and Unionism in Western Virginia, 1850-1861

Alex Kagan[2]

Abstract

IN the counties that came to form the state of West Virginia, opposition to Virginia's 1861 Secession from the Union—and, by consequence, support for West Virginia statehood—had a strong, negative correlation with that region's economic and social connections to the eastern half of Virginia. While many early western Virginians argued that cultural and societal East-West divisions were the driving force behind the statehood movement, the narrative tends to hide the importance of other factors to the split. This paper argues that the primary reason for the divisions in the Commonwealth was not the inherently different nature of the people in the state's different regions, but the lack of economic intercourse between these groups, which led them to drift apart. Those areas of western Virginia that, in the lead-up to the Civil War, had become more connected to eastern Virginia tended to be more pro-Confederate than most of what would become the State of West Virginia. A significant degree of the political separation between the regions of pre-war Virginia that manifested itself in 1861 can thus be illuminated by examining factors such as infrastructure spending, regional economic specializations, and others. The paper concludes by examining how the prevalence of slaveholding in a given county, serving as a proxy for economic relations with eastern Virginia among western counties, explains the percentage of Confederate supporters in that county, using results from the May 1861 Secession Referendum.

1 Samuel McDowell Moore, "An Address to the People of West Virginia," *Lexington Gazette* (Lexington, Va.), August 14, 1845, quoted in William Gleason Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847: An Antislavery Aspect of Virginia Sectionalism," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 61, no. 3 (1953): 265, JSTOR.

2 I am indebted to Washington and Lee Professor Franklin Sammons for reviewing an earlier version of this essay during his Slavery and Capitalism class, to Washington and Lee Professor Barton Myers, for supporting my interest in this subject matter, and to former Shepherd University Emeritus Professor John E. Stealey III, for sharing his unparalleled expertise on this subject. I must also thank the staff of *The Washington and Lee Historical Review*, and Editor-in-Chief Charles Boardman, '28, in particular, for their help and patience. All mistakes are my own.

Introduction

FOR a rift that was extensively debated at the time, bloodily fought over for nearly four years, and litigated heavily post-war, West Virginia's separation from the Commonwealth of Virginia continues to be debated at a foundational level over a century and a half later. To this day, no clear consensus has emerged on the motives of those behind the severance of the states, much less on the relative importance of different motivating factors in the separation. This should not be surprising, as the same political position, such as opposition to slavery, can be motivated by moral or religious abhorrence, economic motives, regional animus, and many other factors. This complexity is compounded by the impossibility of finding reliable data on citizens' viewpoints in a time before opinion polling, when the fabric of civil society was quickly collapsing.

Civil War-era West Virginia was home to towns with "lots of little boys ... singing Dixy," where citizens of the state's future capital, Charleston, were "waveing handkerchiefs and halooing for ... Jef Davis and the South."[3] It also held communities that publicly shamed Secessionists and whose prisons became filled with them.[4] In a state where treason could mean the opposite thing from valley to valley, loyalty seems a difficult thing to parse through.[5] It would seem that a cohesive narrative of the ideals and motives of the first West Virginians would be impossible to construct, given this patchwork of views and the unique strains of Unionism and Secessionism present in the region. Yet the area's small, relatively uniform nature, with a similar geography throughout, helps diagnose differences between regions with opposing political persuasions. Viewing divisions between ostensibly similar regions reveals the few underlying differences that existed.

This paper examines the economic, political, and social developments in the Commonwealth of Virginia from the 1850-51 Constitutional Convention to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, which led to Virginia's Secession and separation from western

3 Lewis F. Watts, "Lewis F. Watts to Virginia T. Watts," July 5, 1861, West Virginia State Archives; Lewis F. Watts, "Lewis F. Watts to Virginia T. Watts," January 16, 1862, West Virginia State Archives.

4 *See*, e.g., Ken Fones-Wolf, "'Traitors in Wheeling': Secessionism in an Appalachian Unionist City," *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 3, no. 1 (2007): 78, JSTOR.

5 *See* John Hutchinson, "John Hutchinson to Samuel Price," August 20, 1861, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

Virginia.[6] One development of particular note in this process, which will be explored in depth, is the splitting of the cohesive political bloc comprising northwestern Virginia, southwestern Virginia, and the Shenandoah Valley. This paper contends that the division among the western regions and, consequently, the push for West Virginia's statehood were mainly driven by economic factors, with cultural and political issues playing a secondary role.

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IN the mid-to-late Antebellum Era, Western Virginians, from their newspaper editors to those who ascended to the Commonwealth's highest office, presented a largely united front on the issue of internal improvements. This unanimity was reflected in the region's unified political leanings. Western Virginians, in the two decades between the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829-30 and the Convention of 1850-51, advocated two primary constitutional reforms: equalizing representation in the Virginia General Assembly—a longstanding issue[7] addressable through both apportionment based on white population and conducting redistricting—and expanding suffrage.[8] Northwest Virginia, the same region whose political agitation had led to the Constitutional Convention of 1829-30, led the charge for another round of reforms.[9]

The longstanding sparseness of slaves and free blacks in western Virginia had made the region support eliminating non-whites from being used in the apportionment for decades.[10] An 1816 convention

6 This piece, shortened by several pages due to length constraints and limits on footnotes, has reduced detail in its coverage of the subject, especially regarding the economic development of western Virginia prior to the time period in question. For a full-length treatment of the economic background and historiographical implications of my perspective, feel free to reach out.

7 *See, e.g.,* Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (J.W. Randolph, 1785), 127–28, Internet Archive, https://archive.org/details/notesonstateofvi01jeff/mode/2up.

8 Moore, "An Address to the People of West Virginia," quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 265; Henry Ruffner, Address to the People of West Virginia; *Shewing That Slavery Is Injurious To the Public Welfare, and That It May Be Gradually Abolished, Without Detriment to the Rights and Interests of Slaveholders* (R. C. Noel, 1847; repr., The Green Bookman, 1933), 10, Marshall University, https://mds.marshall.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=ruffner_henry; Elizabeth R. Varon et al., "Reconsidering William G. Shade's 1996 Democratizing the Old Dominion: Virginia and the Second Party System, 1824–1861," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 128, no. 4 (2020): 316–18, JSTOR.

9 David L. Pulliam, The Constitutional Conventions of Virginia from the Foundation of the Commonwealth to the Present Time (J.T. West, 1901), 87, HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044075190538?urlappend=%3Bseq=5.

10 *See* Ruffner, *Address to the People of West Virginia, 10–11; Abstract of the Returns of the Fifth Census, Showing the Number of Free People, the Number of Slaves, the Federal or Representative Number, and the Aggregate of Each County of Each State of the United States*, with Matthew St. Clair Clarke, United States Census (United States House of Representatives, 1832), 17, United States Census Bureau, https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1830a-01.pdf; *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States*, United States Census (United States Department of State,

held in Staunton had argued that the 1776 Virginia Constitution did not conform to the "fundamental principle of republicanism," having "deprived" western Virginia of equal representation.[11] James Madison had corresponded before the 1829-30 Constitutional Convention with Joseph Carrington Campbell, a Virginia legislator and future president of the James River and Kanawha Company, who summarized: "The western part of the state is in favor of white population as the sole basis of representation," while the "eastern section" wished "to establish the federal rule" for representation.[12]

Debates over unequal representation occupied a significant portion of the Convention's time.[13] Having failed to address the inequality that go-round, western Virginians did not give up. When delegates from all three regions of western Virginia met in Lewisburg in 1842 to demand another constitutional convention, the meeting was described as being "to concert measures for obtaining their just and equal share of representation in the State Legislature, according to white population," by the *Richmond Whig*.[14]

The issues united men of western Virginia, many of whom would be on opposite sides during the Civil War. Educator Henry Ruffner argued that "West Virginia has heretofore suffered incalculably from her weakness in the Legislature."[15] Samuel McDowell Moore, a former Congressman and member of the Constitutional Convention of 1829-30, argued that western Virginia deserved equal representation.[16] According to Moore, western Virginia would accept "nothing less. Are we like tame slaves to surrender our rights and to leave our posterity to feel the degraded and

1841), 32–39, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1840/1840v3/1840c-01.pdf; "Virginia," in *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Robert Armstrong, 1853), 256–57, United States Census Bureau, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1850/1850a/1850a-28.pdf.

11 "Journal of the Proceedings of a Convention, Begun and Held at Staunton, the 19th Day of August, in the Year 1816," *Farmer's Repository* (Charles Town), September 11, 1816, West Virginia State Archives, https://archive.wvculture.org/history/statehoodnotexhibit/stauntonconvention1816.html.

12 Joseph C. Cabell, "Joseph C. Cabell to James Madison," December 28, 1828, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mjm.22_0717_0719/?sp=1. The "federal rule" refers to the system of counting five African Americans as three people for representation in a legislative body, à la the "three-fifths rule" in the United States Constitution. See U.S. Const. art. I, sec. 2, cl. 3.

13 See *Proceedings and Debates of the Virginia State Convention of 1829-30* (Samuel Shepherd, 1830), 39–40, 52–66, 537, Internet Archive, http://archive.org/details/proceedingsandd01virggoog.

14 "Lewisburg Convention," *Richmond Whig* (Richmond), August 13, 1842, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RWH18420813.1.2; *see also* "Lewisburg Convention," *Staunton Spectator & General Advertiser* (Staunton), September 8, 1842, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=SSGA18420908.1.1.

15 Ruffner, *Address to the People of West Virginia*, 6.

16 Crofts, "Late Antebellum Virginia Reconsidered," 281; *see* Moore, "An Address to the People of West Virginia."

infamous station of mere vassals to their eastern lords?"[17] Property restrictions on suffrage equally incensed many, like John Letcher, who argued as such in his Lexington-based newspaper, the Valley Star, that it was "a disgrace that property is made the test of merit. We all feel and know that the West is oppressed ... [and] that under the present constitution a minority actually rules the majority."[18] It was with these strong proclivities that western Virginia approached the Constitutional Convention of 1850-51—and did so as a united front.

On an ideological level, the Constitutional Convention of 1850-51 was a battle between groups who saw two distinct, primary ends of state government: safeguarding property rights, the predominant eastern view, and representing the will of the people, which was highly valued in western Virginia.[19] This was a rerun of the convention a generation before, in which the ultimate end of government had taken center stage.[20] Westerners of all stripes had long argued against a conception of government that revolved solely or primarily around the protection of property.[21] Westerners thought these views undermined eastern Virginians' claims to holding "democratic and republican principles."[22] This eastern-western Virginian divide would prove as deep as ever during the debates, but was countered by the unity within western Virginia.

The Convention was a further display of the unity of western Virginia's three sections, which united to mutual benefit against the interests of eastern Virginia.[23] The region's delegates stuck to their core reforms, arguing primarily for the use of the white basis in apportioning legislative representation and for expanding suffrage.[24] Western Virginia achieved, to varying degrees, all of its

17 Moore, "An Address to the People of West Virginia," quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 265.
18 *Valley Star* (Lexington, Va.), July 17, 1845, quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 263.
19 Adam J. Zucconi, "Bound Together: Slavery and Democracy in Antebellum Northwestern Virginia, 1815-1865" (Doctoral thesis, West Virginia University, 2016), 156–59, West Virginia University, https://doi.org/10.33915/etd.7058; Adam J. Zucconi, "'Preserve Us From Such Democracy': Politics, Slavery, and Political Culture in Antebellum Northwest Virginia, 1850–1861," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 123, no. 4 (2015): 327, 330–31, JSTOR.
20 *See Proceedings and Debates of the Virginia State* Convention of 1829-30, 61, 66, 170.
21 *See*, e.g., "Wealth Against Men," *Lexington Gazette* (Lexington, Va.), September 4, 1845, quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 264.
22 Granville Davisson Hall, *The Rending of Virginia: A History* (University of Tennessee Press, 1902), xi, https://history-commons.net/artifacts/12154971/the-rending-of-virginia/13048854/view/.
23 *See* Kenneth W. Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad: Modernization and the Sectional Crisis in the Civil War Era* (University of Alabama Press, 2019), 85, Project MUSE, https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/181/monograph/book/68121.
24 Pulliam, *The Constitutional Conventions of Virginia*, 87.

primary political goals in the Convention.[25] Most seemed satisfied with the results, including in northwest Virginia.[26]

The new Constitution was far more democratic than the previous one, instituting reforms to previously unelected local offices and ushering in the newly popularly elected governorship.[27] The latter broke the systemic advantage that eastern Virginia had held under the legislatively appointed governorship, leading to the election of the first northwest Virginian governor, Joseph Johnson.[28] Universal white male suffrage was finally adopted, along with the elimination of the hated property requirement, allaying anger in western Virginia over the disproportionate effects property requirements had on their political power.[29] Representation in the General Assembly was also reworked to be more equitable and address western Virginia's underrepresentation.[30]

Despite being largely a success, the Virginia Constitution of 1851 was hardly universally praised by western Virginians, primarily because it reduced taxes on slaves: a tax break that disproportionately benefited eastern Virginia.[31] The constitution's preference for slave property over other forms, taxing slaves at a lower rate than their true value, was particularly ill-received in northwest Virginia.[32] William Willey, from a slaveholding family himself,[33] described the typical northwestern view on the matter, noting, "No other public measure had inspired more bitter sectional animosity than this."[34] This provision would continue to be an annoyance to the men of northwestern Virginia, with Willey's

25 Zucconi, "Preserve Us From Such Democracy," 325–26.
26 John Goode, *Recollections of a Lifetime* (Neale Publishing Co., 1906), 28; Zucconi, "Bound Together: Slavery and Democracy in Antebellum Northwestern Virginia, 1815-1865," 169–71.
27 Oren F. Morton, *A History of Monroe County, West Virginia* (McClure Co., 1916), 129–31, Internet Archive, http://archive.org/details/ahistorymonroec00mortgoog; Zucconi, "Preserve Us From Such Democracy," 329, 335; Zucconi, "Bound Together: Slavery and Democracy in Antebellum Northwestern Virginia, 1815-1865," 174, 192.
28 Charles H. Ambler, "The Cleavage between Eastern and Western Virginia," The American Historical Review 15, no. 4 (1910): 765, JSTOR, https://doi.org/10.2307/1836958; Zucconi, "Preserve Us From Such Democracy," 335.
29 Pulliam, *The Constitutional Conventions of Virginia*, 94.
30 Pulliam, *The Constitutional Conventions of Virginia*, 95–96; Zucconi, "Preserve Us From Such Democracy," 330, 334.
31 Va. Const. art. IV, sec. 8, cl. 23 (1851); see "Constitution," in *Journal, Acts and Proceedings of a General Convention of the State of Virginia, Assembled at Richmond, on Monday, the Fourteenth Day of October, Eighteen Hundred and Fifty* (William Culley, 1851), HathiTrust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.35112105105821&seq=1063.
32 *See* Willey, *An Inside View of the Formation of the State of West Virginia*, 11.
33 Zucconi, "Bound Together: Slavery and Democracy in Antebellum Northwestern Virginia, 1815-1865," 159.
34 Willey, *An Inside View of the Formation of the State of West Virginia*, 11.

father, Waitman T. Willey, forcefully opposing it a decade later at the Secession Convention.[35]

The aftermath of the Constitutional Convention of 1850-51 saw internal improvements become the primary bone to pick with Richmond among western Virginians. The push to extend internal improvements—particularly railroads and canals—to connect the west with Richmond and eastern Virginia economically had long helped bind western Virginia as a cohesive political force. From the 1840s onward, numerous internal improvement conventions were held throughout the Commonwealth, primarily in western Virginia.[36] For example, Staunton, in the Shenandoah Valley, hosted such a convention in November of 1846, attended by delegates from seven counties and cities—almost exclusively from the Shenandoah Valley.[37] Unsurprisingly, the Convention primarily touted infrastructure improvements for the Valley as priorities, with those for northwestern Virginia coming only after. This had a clear logic: northwest Virginia could only be connected to eastern Virginia by traveling through the Shenandoah Valley. By the time of the Convention, railroad connections to Richmond were an imminent possibility for much of the Valley.[38] In contrast, either railroad or canal connections were a far-off dream for northwestern Virginia.[39] Yet, this logic would have tremendous consequences in the years to come, in separating the once-homogeneous interests of

35 George H. Reese, ed., *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861, vol. 3* (Virginia State Library, 1965), 3–5, University of Richmond, https://secession.richmond.edu/v3/1; William A. Link, "'This Bastard New Virginia': Slavery, West Virginia Exceptionalism, and the Secession Crisis," West Virginia History 3, no. 1 (2009): 47, JSTOR; see also Chester D. Hubbard, "Chester D. Hubbard to William P. Hubbard," February 25, 1861, Chester D. Hubbard Correspondence, West Virginia State Archives; Reese, Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861, 1:165–66.

36 See, e.g., "Journal of the Internal Improvement Convention, Held in Lewisburg, August 15, 1844," in Journal of the House of Delegates of Virginia, Session 1844-45 (Samuel Shepherd, 1845), 387–90, HathiTrust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=chi.78113632&seq=387; "Internal Improvement Convention," Staunton Spectator & General Advertiser (Staunton), November 5, 1846, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=SSGA18461105.1.2; "Covington Convention," Staunton Spectator & General Advertiser (Staunton), 1846, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=SSGA18461105.1.2; "State Internal Improvement Convention," Augusta Democrat (Staunton), October 9, 1848, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=ADC18481009.1.2; "Internal Improvement Convention," Lynchburg Daily Virginian (Lynchburg), September 3, 1852, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=LDV18520903.1.1&srpos=3&e=; "Internal Improvement Convention," Alexandria Gazette (Alexandria), August 30, 1854, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=AG18540830.1.3&srpos=16&e=.

37 *See Staunton Spectator & General Advertiser*, "Internal Improvement Convention."

38 Laura E. Armitage, "Louisa Railroad—1836-1850 Virginia Central Railroad—1850-1868," *The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society Bulletin, no. 65* (1944): 59, 63–65, JSTOR.

39 Armitage, "Louisa Railroad—1836-1850 Virginia Central Railroad—1850-1868," 64; *see* Jeremy F. Gilmer, Map of the First & Second Division of the James River & Kanawha Canal, Confederate Engineer Bureau, January 1, 1863, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/gvhs01.vhs00369/; Wayland Fuller Dunaway, *History of the James River and Kanawha Company* (Columbia University, 1922), 205–10, Internet Archive, http://archive.org/details/cu31924022882330.

these regions.

Western Virginia had good reason to remain angry. Documents prepared at the Constitutional Convention demonstrate the regional inequality in infrastructure spending. The "Report of the Committee on the Second Auditor's Report" described all the payments made to various projects by the Commonwealth of Virginia by September 30, 1850.[40] This report demonstrated, in no uncertain terms, the sheer disproportionality of spending on internal improvements in the Commonwealth, with western Virginia receiving significantly fewer resources for infrastructure construction.[41] Beyond the inequality, the vast majority of the money appropriated to northwestern Virginia had been given to the James River and Kanawha Company, whose main project, the James River and Kanawha Canal, would never even reach the region.[42]

Large, well-attended internal improvement conventions aimed at rectifying this inequality were regularly held in the decade between the Constitutional Convention and the Civil War. At the beginning of the decade, the western Virginia regions continued to demonstrate unity in pursuing shared infrastructure development goals, but cracks in that unity were slowly becoming more evident. In September of 1852, Union, Monroe County (W. Va.) hosted over 100 delegates from 33 of the Commonwealth's counties for an Internal Improvement Convention.[43] Chief among the concerns of many of the delegates was the completion of "the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad to the Tennessee line," a project that was nearing competition, and to, by railroad, "unite the waters of the Ohio with that of the Chesapeake."[44] Yet among this group, the delegation from southwest Virginia was notably the smallest—perhaps the imminent achievement of the region's last reform goal left little reason to participate.

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40 *See* "Report of the Committee on the Second Auditor's Report," in *Journal, Acts and Proceedings of a General Convention of the State of Virginia, Assembled at Richmond, on Monday, the Fourteenth Day of October, Eighteen Hundred and Fifty* (William Culley, 1850), HathiTrust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.35112105105821&seq=633.

41 "Report of the Committee on the Second Auditor's Report," A–D.

42 "Report of the Committee on the Second Auditor's Report," D; Dunaway, *History of the James River and Kanawha Company*, 166–68.

43 *Lynchburg Daily Virginian*, "Internal Improvement Convention."

44 *Lynchburg Daily Virginian*, "Internal Improvement Convention."; *see also* "James River and Kan'a Company," *Lynchburg Daily Virginian* (Lynchburg), November 4, 1852, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=LDV18521104.1.2.

With the rapid building and nearing completion of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad throughout the late 1840s and early 1850s,[45] the aim of these reformers shifted to building a railroad linking the Ohio River to eastern Virginia. At the Internal Improvement Convention held at White Sulphur Springs, Greenbrier County, in August of 1854,[46] this goal was placed front and center in the Convention's report. The Convention labeled "the Covington and Ohio Railroad" as a "central improvement of the State ... inferior to none in importance," which "ought to be completed by the State with as little delay as possible," as it would serve as a key connection between the regions of the Commonwealth.[47] It is unsurprising, then, that the Alexandria Gazette said its proceedings had "excite[d]" little "interest in this quarter of the State."[48]

The 1854 Convention marked a turning point in the western Virginian push for internal improvements: it was the first time the goals of most regions were met. The relative obscurity of northwest Virginia to the rest of the Commonwealth became apparent to those advocating further internal investment as the Shenandoah Valley and southwest Virginia were linked to Richmond by rail.[49] The Virginia and Tennessee had connected southwest Virginia to Richmond and other eastern Virginia markets and were nearing completion of a connection to Tennessee.[50] The Virginia Central Railroad, tasked with connecting the markets of the Shenandoah Valley with Richmond and environs, had completed much of its task by the turn of the 1850s.[51] Until 1860, Virginia had the highest state investment in railroads among the nine Southern and border states: Tennessee, South Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, North Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi.[52] The Commonwealth

45 Charles W. Turner, "Virginia Railroad Development, 1845-1860," The Historian 10, no. 1 (1947): 49–61, JSTOR.

46 *See Alexandria Gazette*, "Internal Improvement Convention"; Joseph Segar, "To the Editors of the Post," Virginia Messenger (Staunton), October 21, 1854, *Virginia Chronicle*, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=TVM18541021.1.1.

47 *Alexandria Gazette*, "Internal Improvement Convention."

48 *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria), November 28, 1854, *Virginia Chronicle*, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=AG18541128.1.1.

49 Armitage, "Louisa Railroad—1836-1850 Virginia Central Railroad—1850-1868," 64; Charles W. Turner, "Railroad Service to Virginia Farmers, 1828-1860," *Agricultural History* 22, no. 4 (1948): 239–43, 245–48, JSTOR.

50 Noe, Southwest Virginia's Railroad, 11–12.

51 *Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company: And the Several Other Acts of the General Assembly Relating to the Same. Also, Form of a Power of Attorney to Vote at a Meeting of the Stock-Holders* (Colin, Baptist & Nowlan, 1849), 3, 33–38, Google Books, https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=SEQKAAAAIAAJ&hl=en; Armitage, "Louisa Railroad—1836-1850 Virginia Central Railroad—1850-1868," 59, 63–65.

52 Milton S. Heath, "North American Railroads: Public Railroad Construction and the Development of Private Enterprise in the South before 1861," *The Journal of Economic History* 10 (1950): 41, JSTOR.

accounted for nearly 31% of the state railroad investment in these nine states. Its per capita investment, when considering the whole population, was the second-highest of the nine, and among the free population, the third-highest. Yet, despite all the money spent elsewhere, northwest Virginia was now stuck as the only region whose visions of internal improvement had not come to fruition, with no tangible effect.

The internal improvements pushed for by these conventions, still only dreams for northwest Virginia, had completely transformed the economies of southwest Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley when implemented. Southwest Virginia, like the northwest, had been known primarily as a country for animal grazing. "Some of the finest stock forms in Virginia are in the county of Montgomery," noted a writer using the pseudonym "South Side" in the *Southern Planter* in 1854.[53] The author painted a picture of a deeply ingrained pastoral economy in the region. "The farmers have many of the improved breeds of stock. They have been grazing for many years," according to the author.[54] "South Side" noted that the region was "eminently adapted to the growth of grass; it springs up spontaneously," and that its previous commercial isolation made it "adapted to stock and nothing else."[55]

Yet, the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad had transformed this southwest Virginian pastoral economy nearly overnight. South Side argued that the farmers of the region "could not resist" the new agricultural opportunities granted by the railroad: "Their country has been penetrated by the Virginia and Tennessee Rail Road—they have an easy access to market," to which the farmers responded, "by selling all their fine stock (retaining only a few for plantation use,) and 'breaking up' some of the greenest fields the eye of the writer even beheld."[56] The greater profitability of cash crops, now made possible by the region's rail link to Richmond, single-handedly disrupted a decades-old pastoral economy that had mirrored that of much of northwest Virginia.

The observations of "South Side" are reinforced by contemporary

53 South Side, "Necessity of Good Stock in Virginia," *Southern Planter*, September 1, 1854, 261, *Virginia Chronicle*, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=SPT18540901.1.4&srpos=2&e=-------en-20--1--txt-txIN--------.
54 "Necessity of Good Stock in Virginia," 261.
55 "Necessity of Good Stock in Virginia," 260.
56 "Necessity of Good Stock in Virginia," 261.

accounts and recent scholarship. Livestock holdings in the region fell significantly from 1850 to 1860, with cattle, sheep, and pigs all declining in population by the end of the decade.[57] The railroad led to much greater economic integration between southwestern and eastern Virginia and saw a massive productivity spike in the southwest, with tobacco sales in 1860 up 2020% from a decade earlier.[58] Tobacco suddenly jumped from a near-afterthought in the region, not even 5% of the level of the region's corn production, to being the second-most important crop in the region.[59] It is a testament to the skyrocketing agricultural protection that wheat harvesting merely doubling over those ten years looks tame.[60] Even corn saw an 18.4% increase in production for the market during the decade.

The Shenandoah Valley was experiencing a similar surge in agricultural production, primarily wheat, that would cement the Valley's links to eastern Virginia. Just a decade earlier, the Shenandoah Valley had been begging for markets for its products.[61] The "Commonwealth has forgotten the acknowledged duty of a parental government to furnish means for the development of the resources of its people," a piece in the *Lexington Gazette* had argued, continuing, "The government of Virginia has suffered the richest portion of its territory to remain hemmed in by mountain barriers, despite the wants and petitions."[62] According to the editorial, many of Virginia's most fertile agricultural lands had been depressed due to "effort by the contracted policy which has characterized the legislation of Virginia."[63]

Yet, in the 1850s, none of these assertions remained true. Richmond had become an international hub for flour sales, and the growing demand for wheat was met when the railroad reached the Shenandoah Valley, where wheat production grew.[64] This new market fostered direct economic integration between Richmond (and the eastern Virginia elite) and the Shenandoah Valley,

57 Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad*, 36, 40.
58 Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad*, 37–39.
59 Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad*, 34–35, 38–39.
60 Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad*, 39.
61 *See* "To the People of Eastern Virginia," *Valley Star* (Lexington, Va.), April 23, 1846, quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 266–67.
62 *Lexington Gazette* (Lexington, Va.), April 15, 1845, quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 267.
63 *Lexington Gazette,* April 15, 1845, quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 267.
64 See Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad*, 87–89.

inexorably linking the economies of the two regions.[65] The new, highly competitive grain market, along with the rail connection to the industrialized grain market of Richmond, fostered centralization and plantation-style wheat farming in the region, a far cry from traditional western Virginian farming.[66]

While these marked transformations occurred, northwestern Virginia looked on jealously. The 1854 Convention, noting that improved infrastructure would benefit the entire Commonwealth, practically begged for northwestern Virginia to receive the same infrastructure improvements as its neighbors.[67] Whether northwest Virginia could have experienced the agricultural renaissance that the Shenandoah Valley or southwest Virginia experienced is up for debate, as it was at the time. "South Side" thought not, believing its climate and soil more suited for a pastoral than an agricultural economy.[68] Yet the foundations for such a potential economic shift were not present in the region and would not be during the period, as most of northwest Virginia continued to lack a rail connection to Richmond.[69]

In fact, in many regards, the economic connections between the northwest and the rest of the state, already tenuous, regressed further. When the 1853 version of "The Tourist's Pocket Map of the State of Virginia" was released, not a single new rail or stagecoach route in much of northwest Virginia was listed.[70] While the Baltimore & Ohio would reach a handful of towns in the far reaches of northwest Virginia along the Ohio River, especially Wheeling and Parkersburg, after decades of petitioning from those areas, by the Civil War, much of the rest of the region remained disconnected.[71] To even reach areas straddling the modern Virginia-

65 Daniel B. Rood, "An International Harvest: The Second Slavery, the Virginia-Brazil Connection, and the Development of the McCormick Reaper," in *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 87–90, 94, Project MUSE, https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/56/edited_volume/chapter/4028230.

66 Rood, "An International Harvest," 89, 94.

67 See *Alexandria Gazette*, "Internal Improvement Convention."

68 See "Necessity of Good Stock in Virginia," 261; Willey, *An Inside View of the Formation of the State of West Virginia*, 10.

69 Angus J. Johnston, "Virginia Railroads in April 1861," The Journal of Southern History 23, no. 3 (1957): 311, JSTOR.

70 J. H. Young, *The Tourist's Pocket Map of the State of Virginia: Exhibiting Its Internal Improvements, Roads, Distances &c., Thomas Cowperthwait & Company, 1853*, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2012593333/.

71 Turner, "Virginia Railroad Development, 1845-1860," 45–49; *A Map of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad* and Its Principal Connecting Lines Uniting All Parts of the East & West, A. Hoen & Co., 1860, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3701p.rr003380/.

West Virginia border from eastern Virginia, travel often involved a complicated route of train and stagecoach rides.[72] Even by the time of West Virginia's statehood, in 1863, this lack of infrastructure in the region remained a sore topic for its residents. Virginia had, according to Governor Arthur I. Boreman in his inaugural address, "collected heavy taxes from us," while only building "railroads and canals in the East."[73]

The agricultural explosion of southwest Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley, caused by their connections to this expanding rail system, strengthened the institution of slavery in both regions, something not matched in the northwest. Southwest Virginia, in particular, saw massive growth in slavery that outpaced the general decline of slaves as a percent of the population of Virginia throughout the decades leading up to the Civil War.[74] While much of eastern Virginia had become "a slave-selling" region, connecting it with the growing slave economies of the Deep South,[75] Southwest Virginia, including several counties in modern southern West Virginia, experienced an average growth of 15.7% in the slave population between 1850 and 1860, with some counties seeing their slave populations double.[76] Slaveholders owning dozens of slaves became more common in the region, as the economy shifted to something more akin to eastern Virginia's plantation system.[77]

Northwest Virginia did not experience the same growth in agriculture, but also had other factors that hindered its slave populations: mainly its proximity to free states and its remoteness, both of which were inducements for runaway slaves.[78] The region had never been sympathetic to the institution, with its delegates in the General Assembly voting nearly unanimously to abolish

72 *See,* e.g., "New Arrangement—Through Ticket from Richmond to the Virginia Springs—Baggage Checked Through—Nineteen Miles Less Staging Than by Any Other Route," Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner (Richmond), September 29, 1854, *Virginia Chronicle*, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RSWE18540929.1.1.

73 Boreman, "Inaugural Address of Governor Arthur I. Boreman," quoted in Zucconi, "To 'Whiten' the Mountains," 67.

74 Scott A. MacKenzie, *The Fifth Border State: Slavery, Emancipation, and the Formation of West Virginia, 1829–1872* (West Virginia University Press, 2023), 18–19.

75 George W. Summers, "Letter from Hon. Geo. W. Summers. His Views on the Crisis," Kanawha Republican (Charleston, [W.] Va.), February 5, 1861, West Virginia State Archives; see Maurie D. McInnis, "Mapping the Slave Trade in Richmond and New Orleans," *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, no. 2 (2013): 102–4, 106–11, JSTOR.

76 Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad*, 68.

77 Noe, *Southwest Virginia's Railroad*, 72, 75.

78 Summers, "Letter from Hon. Geo. W. Summers. His Views on the Crisis"; MacKenzie, *The Fifth Border State*, 18–19; Willey, *An Inside View of the Formation of the State of West Virginia*, 10.

it in the 1830s.[79] "Slavery was a profitable institution east of the mountains," claimed William P. Willey, but "it was of but little practical value west of the mountains."[80] By any metric, those in northwest Virginia "ha[d] very little ... interest in the Instit[u]tion of slavery," as a northwest Virginian delegate to the 1861 Secession Convention would note.[81]

Slavery did not decline at nearly the same rate in southwest Virginia as it did in the northwest, and represented a much larger part of the population in the lead-up to the Civil War.[82] Northwestern Virginia was home to unique industries that connected it more closely to the Midwest and the North than to eastern Virginia. Dr. John Brockenbrough's 1846 assertion that "[t]heir minerals are now wrought to but little extent" did not continue to be true as trade routes westward developed.[83] A prominent example among these industries was the Kanawha Salt Mines. The Kanawha River connected several counties in what would become central West Virginia, including the eponymous Kanawha County, to the Ohio River and, by extension, the Mississippi River.[84] As Midwestern settlements created large metropolitan areas with high demand for salt, the Kanawha Salt mines continued to be a massive economic force in the region, and one that faced staunchly westward in its economic connections.[85] In conclusion, returning to Governor Boreman's Inaugural Address, the "natural channels" of "markets, trade and travel" for western Virginians looked to the West.[86]

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79 Charles Henry Ambler, *Sectionalism in Virginia from 1776 to 1861* (University of Chicago Press, 1910), 198–99, Internet Archive, http://archive.org/details/cu31924028785199.

80 Willey, *An Inside View of the Formation of the State of West Virginia*, 10.

81 Chester D. Hubbard, "Chester D. Hubbard to William P. Hubbard," January 3, 1861, Chester D. Hubbard Correspondence, West Virginia State Archives.

82 Kenneth W. Noe, "'A Source of Great Economy?' The Railroad and Slavery's Expansion in Southwest Virginia, 1850-1860," in *Appalachians and Race: The Mountain South from Slavery to Segregation* (The University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 102; "State of Virginia," in *The Eighth Census of the United States: 1860* (Government Printing Office, 1864), 508–13, United States Census Bureau, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1860/population/1860a-36.pdf.

83 *Staunton Spectator & General Advertiser*, "Internal Improvement Convention."

84 John E. Stealey III, *The Antebellum Kanawha Salt Business and Western Markets* (University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 4, 17, Internet Archive, https://archive.org/details/antebellumkanawh0000stea/page/n5/mode/2up.

85 Stealey III, *The Antebellum Kanawha Salt Business and Western Markets,* 36, 42–47, 158–60, 170–83; MacKenzie, *The Fifth Border State*, 11.

86 Boreman, "Inaugural Address of Governor Arthur I. Boreman," quoted in Zucconi, "To 'Whiten' the Mountains," 67.

THUS, we arrive on the eve of the Civil War, and northwestern Virginians could claim that their region remained starkly economically isolated from eastern Virginia, in contrast to the southwest and Shenandoah Valley. "There was not only no communication between the two peoples, but there was little or no acquaintance, and absolutely no commercial relations," observed William P. Willey.[87] His father, Senator Waitman T. Willey, would ask in a letter published in 1866: "Who carries anything from west of the Alleghanies to eastern Virginia to sell? Who brings anything from East Virginia to West Virginia to sell?"[88] Willey would continue, adding that

> "There are and have been almost literally no business and no intercourse between the two sections for twenty-five years ... There is no State in the Union, which has been admitted ten years ago, of which the people of East Virginia know less than they do of West Virginia."[89]

Northwestern Virginia was an economically isolated region that had experienced little of the benefits of its neighbors, with extremely slow economic growth in the preceding decades.[90]

The stresses of war once again highlighted the stark economic divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. When the *Richmond Enquirer* covered the Union's blockading of the Mississippi River at Cairo, Illinois, this internal Virginian sectionalism was unmistakable. The "Effects of the Blockade on the North-West" were argued to be much worse "than those for whose injury it has been instituted," the sections of Virginia and the South more broadly in open rebellion.[91] "We have no doubt," declared the Enquirer, "but the people of that section will feel" the "unjustifiable and insane policy of the Lincoln Government" much "more acutely" than the rest of the Commonwealth.[92] Wheeling and the other Northwest Virginian towns straddling the Ohio River likely agreed.

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87 Willey, *An Inside View of the Formation of the State of West Virginia*, 6.
88 Richard Ellsworth Fast and Hu Maxwell, *The History and Government of West Virginia* (The Acme Publishing Company, 1901), 86, Google Books, https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=x3exmONvPBkC&pg=GBS.PP1&hl=en.
89 Fast and Maxwell, *The History and Government of West Virginia*, 87.
90 *See* Donald R. Adams Jr., "Prices and Wages in Antebellum America: The West Virginia Experience," *The Journal of Economic History* 52, no. 1 (1992): 209–11, JSTOR.
91 "Effects of the Blockade on the North-West," *Richmond Enquirer* (Richmond), June 4, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RE18610604.1.2.
92 *Richmond Enquirer*, "Effects of the Blockade on the North-West."

The political divide in western Virginia was a festering wound whose bandage was finally ripped off at the Virginia Secession Convention. There, men of the Shenandoah Valley and southwest Virginia largely worked in lockstep with the members from eastern Virginia. Samuel McDowell Moore, a long-time Whig who had expressed antipathy to slavery, sounded like a positively new man a decade and a half later.[93] Moore, representing Rockbridge County in the Secession Convention, supported the dissolution of the Union and the creation of a "new confederacy under the constitution," featuring a constitutional protection of slavery, and did so in late February, several weeks before the Battle of Fort Sumter.[94] Moore condemned the "so-called free States" for "resisting the execution of the Fugitive Slave law," for stunting the westward growth of slavery, for "circulating incendiary pamphlets among us," and, most strikingly, for "furnishing arms to bands of assassins to invade our borders and murder our people."[95] These heinous wrongs, Moore contended, necessitated "prompt reparation of the injuries inflicted, and justify Virginia in demanding ... full and ample security."[96] Moore had gone from working in lockstep with his northwestern Virginia brethren in favor of internal improvements to diametrically opposing them.[97]

Moore was certainly not one of the most extreme members of the Convention; neither were most of the members from the Shenandoah Valley or western Virginia, but the region's realignment is nonetheless evident. Moore was hesitant to say that Virginia's interests wholly aligned with those of the other states, arguing that the tariff, being the "real ground of dissatisfaction" of the Southern states, had perhaps protected western Virginia's manufacturing interests.[98] This position would hardly make him popular with many within the Convention, or in Richmond, where citizens threatened to burn him in effigy,[99] a violent response that angered

93 *See* Moore, "An Address to the People of West Virginia," quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 265; Ruffner, *Address to the People of West Virginia*, 3; Crofts, "Late Antebellum Virginia Reconsidered," 281.
94 Reese, *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861*, 1:165, 173; *see* George H. Reese, ed., *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861*, vol. 4 (Virginia State Library, 1965), 88–89, University of Richmond, https://secession.richmond.edu/v4/1.
95 Reese, *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861*, 1:172.
96 Reese, *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861*, 1:174.
97 See "Journal of the Internal Improvement Convention, Held in Lewisburg, August 15, 1844," 5–7.
98 Reese, *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861*, 1:174.
99 "The Virginia State Convention: Tenth Day," *Richmond Enquirer* (Richmond), February 26, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RE18610226.1.2; "A Revolutionary Scene--The Temper of the Mob--Letter from Wetzel County," *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* (Wheeling), March 2, 1861,

at least one moderate Secessionist following along with the newspaper debate coverage from western Virginia.[100]

Moore was lambasted for believing in differences between the Commonwealth and the Deep South by the Fire-Eater John Goode from Bedford County,[101] who asked Moore, "Are we not a people of homogeneous interests? Are we not a people of like habits, of like institutions and like religion? Are we not all deeply and vitally concerned in the preservation of the institution of African slavery?"[102] "We are, sir," Goode answered himself, continuing, "and the only Union which can yield any material benefit to us is a Union with our Southern Sister States."[103] Whether the men of the Shenandoah Valley and southwest Virginia were completely on board with this philosophy—it depended on the member—by April 17, the date of the second vote on Secession in the Convention, most assented in practice.[104]

The breakdown of votes for and against Secession in western Virginia is a fascinating testament to the region's developments over the preceding generation. Among the 47 delegates representing counties that would become West Virginia, 32 voted against Secession, 11 in favor, and four did not vote.[105] Among southwestern Virginian delegates, the vote was 13 to two in favor of Secession, while in the Valley, it was close: nine in favor and 11 against. This meant that eastern Virginia voted 57-10 in favor of seceding. The vote of northwest Virginia was predictable; its economic isolation from the rest of Virginia was as firm as ever and had never been adequately bridged by infrastructure.[106] Southwest Virginia's leaning during the vote has a simple explanation, too: never bite the

Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=DI18610302.1.1.

100 *See* Edward C. Burks, "Edward C. Burks to Rowland D. Buford," January 15, 1861, quoted in James Elliott Walmsley, "The Change of Secession Sentiment in Virginia in 1861," The American Historical Review 31, no. 1 (1925): 85–86, JSTOR; Edward C. Burks, "Edward C. Burks to Rowland D. Buford," February 26, 1861, quoted in Walmsley, "The Change of Secession Sentiment in Virginia in 1861," 91.

101 Goode, *Recollections of a Lifetime*, 27; *see* Wythe W. Holt, "The Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1901-1902: A Reform Movement Which Lacked Substance," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 76, no. 1 (1968): 77, JSTOR.

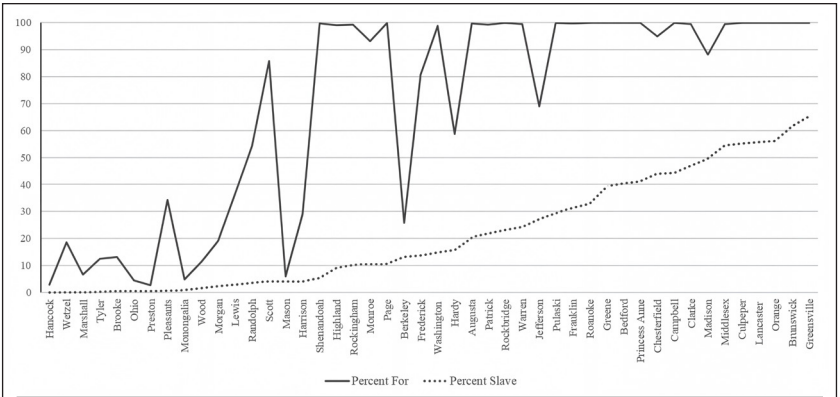
102 Reese, *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861*, 1:198.

103 Reese, *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861*, 1:198.

104 *See* Reese, *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861*, 4:144; "Record of the Vote in the Virginia Convention on the Ordinance of Secession, 17 April 1861.," Richmond, April 17, 1861, University of Virginia Library Online Exhibits, https://explore.lib.virginia.edu/exhibits/show/voicesofcivilwarvirginia/item/5857.

105 "Record of the Vote in the Virginia Convention on the Ordinance of Secession, 17 April 1861."; Link, "This Bastard New Virginia," 48.

106 Johnston, "Virginia Railroads in April 1861," 309–10; Ambler, *Sectionalism in Virginia from 1776 to 1861*, 301–2.



Graph comparing the percentage of the vote a county gave to the Secession Ordinance (solid) with the percentage of the county's population that was enslaved at the time of the 1860 Census (dotted), in the fourty-seven counties with accessible voting returns. [107]

hand that feeds you. The newly enriched planter class in southwest Virginia was not going to sever its economic lifeline to Richmond. The Valley's divided vote is an interesting case that merits greater review, though its near-vote to secede places it far from the strongly anti-Secession northwest.

After the Secession Convention passed the Secession Ordinance, the clearest snapshot of regional views on Unionism and Secession emerged: the popular vote in the Secession Referendum. By the time of the promulgation of the Ordinance in May of 1861, the prominence of slavery in an area arguably served as the single best predictor of a county's Unionist or Secessionist sympathies. Those counties whose vote records survive give us a far better understanding of their Unionist or Secessionist leanings than any other source.

Using this method, we see a strong, if imperfect, correlation between the commonality of slaves in a county and that county's

107 "The Election," *Lexington Gazette* (Lexington, Va.), May 30, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=LGZ18610530.1.1; "Later Election Returns," *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner* (Richmond), May 31, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RSWE18610531.1.2; "Election," *Staunton Vindicator* (Staunton), May 31, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=SVI18610531.1.1; "The Returns from the North-Western Counties," *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner* (Richmond), May 31, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RSWE18610531.1.4; "The Vote for Secession in Virginia," *New York Times* (New York), June 1, 1861, TimesMachine, https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1861/06/01/78658652.html; "State of Virginia," 500–522; Richard Orr Curry, *A House Divided: A Study of Statehood Politics and the Copperhead Movement in West Virginia* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), 142, Project Muse, https://muse-jhu-edu.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/pub/49/monograph/book/72255/pdf.

vote for Secession. Using linear regression, the percentage of slaves in a population predicts nearly half (47.8%) of the variability in an average county's Secession vote. The order of the counties listed below (by the percentage of slaves in their population) is a good regional divisor. The 14 counties with the lowest slave populations (by percentage) in the sample were all from what would become West Virginia, along with 16 of the 17 lowest.[108] Simultaneously, the 19 lowest county vote shares for the Secession Ordinance were recorded in the region. This is in stark contrast to the other western Virginian regions, which showed no significant difference in the popular vote for the Secession Ordinance, despite, on average, having fewer slaves than the counties in the sample from the Piedmont or Tidewater regions.

That being said, there are still clear difficulties in using the commonality of slaveholding to predict the leanings of different areas of the Commonwealth. The most obvious of these is that a county's vote on the Secession Ordinance is not necessarily reflective of its population's true views. By the time the votes for the Ordinance were being held on May 23, 1861, fighting had commenced—as Virginia's newspapers reported the results of the Ordinance, they also reported the first skirmishes of the war.[109] On May 28, the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, the product of Radical Republican leader[110] and West Virginia statehood promoter[111] Archibald W. Campbell, declared that "[t]here never was an election, we presume, since elections began, in which the people expressed themselves more overwhelmingly opposed to anything, than the people of Western Virginia have to the infamous ordinance

108 *Lexington Gazette*, "The Election"; *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner*, "Later Election Returns"; *Staunton Vindicator*, "Election"; *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner*, "The Returns from the North-Western Counties"; New York Times, "The Vote for Secession in Virginia"; Curry, *A House Divided*, 142.

109 *See Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner* (Richmond), May 31, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RSWE18610531.1.1; "Battle at Hampton," *Lexington Gazette* (Lexington, Va.), May 30, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=LGZ18610530.1.2.

110 *See* J. M. Pumphrey and Thomas Hornbrook, "J. M. Pumphrey & Thomas Hornbrook to Abraham Lincoln," February 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mal.0711800/; Gibson Lamb Cranmer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley, with Family History and Biographical Sketches, a Statement of Its Resources, Industrial Growth and Commercial Advantages* (Brant & Fuller, 1890), 1:568–69, Internet Archive, http://archive.org/details/historyofupperoh01madi; Henry Lee, *History of the Campbell Family, The Maxwell Series: Famous Old Families* (R. L. Polk & Co., 1920), 117–18, Internet Archive, https://ia801308.us.archive.org/24/items/historyofcampbel00leeh/historyofcampbel00leeh.pdf; Richard Orr Curry, "A Note on the Motives of Three Radical Republicans," *The Journal of Negro History* 47, no. 4 (1962): 273, JSTOR, https://doi.org/10.2307/2716569; Jim Comstock, "Archibald Campbell," in *The West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia* (Jim Comstock, 1976), 4:785–86.

111 *See*, e.g., "To the People of North Western Virginia," *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* (Wheeling), May 21, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=DI18610521.1.1&e=-------en-20--1--txt-txIN---------.

of secession."[112] This seems untrue in two regards: most obviously, those pro-Ordinance counties were far more pro-Ordinance than the anti-Ordinance counties were united in their opposition.

Northwestern Virginians were not as uniformly anti-Secession as the rest of the state was pro-Secession: the average northwestern county was around 80% opposed to Secession, while around 98% of voters in the rest of the Commonwealth voted for Secession.[113] Few in northwest Virginia, especially near the Ohio River, outwardly supported Secession, with some notable exceptions, such as the Convention Delegate Benjamin Wilson.[114] Many in northwest Virginia hoped to avoid conflict altogether,[115] while some who were willing to fight for the Union worried about their neighbors' sympathies[116] or about the possibility of maintaining the Union.[117] Most, though, seemed confident that Unionists held the majority.[118] Whether this majority was actively anti-slavery or merely pro-Union and anti-slave power is another question altogether.[119] Nonetheless, the region's men, prominent or otherwise, were being forced to choose a side, and they were overwhelmingly supporting the Union.

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112 "The Vote of Western Virginia—The Convention," *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* (Wheeling), May 28, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=DI18610528.1.2.

113 *Lexington Gazette*, "The Election"; *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner*, "Later Election Returns"; *Staunton Vindicator*, "Election"; *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner*, "The Returns from the North-Western Counties"; *New York Times*, "The Vote for Secession in Virginia"; Curry, *A House Divided*, 142; *see* Henry Dering, "Henry Dering to Waitman T. Willey," March 12, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

114 *See* "Virginia Ordinance of Secession," *Virginia Secession Convention*, May 1, 1861, Library of Virginia, https://www.lva.virginia.gov/collections/educator-resources/online-classroom/union-or-secession/entries/ordinance-of-secession-(first-signed-version); *To the Voters of Harrison County*, 1861, Archibald W. Campbell Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Jim Comstock, "Benjamin Wilson," in *The West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia* (Jim Comstock, 1976), 23:5119; "Members of the Virginia State Convention, 1861," Virginia Historical Society, 1861, Encyclopedia Virginia, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/461hpr-11ca215cafd5dca/.

115 *See* O. D. Downey et al., "O. D. Downey, G. W. Sheets, John Gardner, J. S. Paxton, and G. W. Rizer to Waitman T. Willey," April 24, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Zucconi, "Bound Together: Slavery and Democracy in Antebellum Northwestern Virginia, 1815-1865," 196–98.

116 *See* Samuel Peden, "Samuel Peden to Waitman T. Willey," April 30, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; John Jay Jackson Jr., "John Jay Jackson Jr. to Waitman T. Willey," May 11, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Waitman T. Willey, "Waitman T. Willey to Chester D. Hubbard," May 6, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

117 *See* Chester D. Hubbard, "Chester D. Hubbard to William P. Hubbard," January 3, 1861.

118 Henry Dering, "Henry Dering to Waitman T. Willey," March 12, 1861; Ellery R. Hall, "Ellery R. Hall to Waitman T. Willey," March 18, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; A. F. Ritchie, "A. F. Ritchie to Waitman T. Willey," March 21, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

119 *See* Henry Dering, "Henry Dering to Waitman T. Willey," December 30, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Granville Davisson Hall, "How the West Virginia Convention Tried to Conserve Slavery: The Seamy Side of the Story," n.d., Granville Davisson Hall Papers, pp. 1, 9, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Zucconi, "To 'Whiten' the Mountains," 69.

Take Waitman T. Willey, a delegate to the Convention from Monongalia County (W. Va.), a moderate Unionist[120] who was moderate on slavery.[121] Willey had become inundated with letters of support for his stand for the Union during the Convention, as well as with others generally favoring the maintenance of the Union,[122] and was discussed as a likely candidate for the House of Representatives.[123] Despite his personal worry, as a contemporary recollected, that northwestern Virginian separation from the Commonwealth would represent "Triple Treason" against Virginia,[124] the Confederacy, and the Union, his opinion did not seem to be in the majority regionally, with criticisms of Willey from western Virginia being mainly over the cautious nature of his Unionism.[125] Thus, Willey, who had supported the Constitutional Union Party just the year before,[126] was being thrust headlong toward the side of the Lincoln administration[127] and, as he would soon find necessary, independence for West Virginia.[128]

Secondly, neither the anti-Ordinance results in northwest Virginia, nor the pro-Ordinance results nearly everywhere else, should be taken as gospel. In northwest Virginia, pressures against Secessionist tendencies abounded. Secessionist newspapers often complained about "Ohio bank of the Ohio river" being "covered with Lincoln troops, which intimidated many to vote as

120 Granville Davisson Hall, "Granville Davisson Hall to William P. Hubbard," July 27, 1913, Granville Davisson Hall Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

121 Curry, "A Note on the Motives of Three Radical Republicans," 273–77; Link, "This Bastard New Virginia," 40–41; Zucconi, "Bound Together: Slavery and Democracy in Antebellum Northwestern Virginia, 1815-1865," 159–62.

122 *See* Henry Dering, "Henry Dering to Waitman T. Willey," February 23, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; George M. Reay, "George M. Reay to Waitman T. Willey," February 24, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Henry Dering, "Henry Dering to Waitman T. Willey," March 12, 1861; Ralph Lazier Berkshire, "Ralph Lazier Berkshire to Waitman T. Willey," March 12, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Francis H. Pierpont, "Francis H. Pierpont to Waitman T. Willey," April 3, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

123 Chester D. Hubbard, "Chester D. Hubbard to William P. Hubbard," February 16, 1861, Chester D. Hubbard Correspondence, West Virginia State Archives.

124 Granville Davisson Hall, "A Sixty-Two Year Old Trail," 1913, Granville Davisson Hall Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Hall, "Granville Davisson Hall to William P. Hubbard."

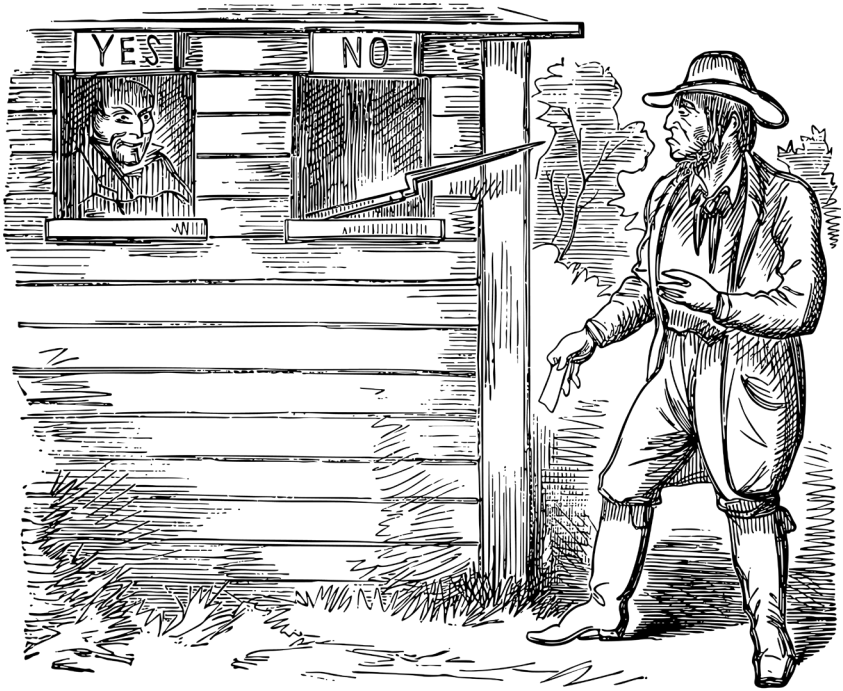
125 John J. Davis, "John J. Davis to Waitman T. Willey," May 6, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

126 Ellery R. Hall et al., "Ellery R. Hall, Claude Goff, Z. Shields, H. K. Payne, D. S. Morris, John S. Herr, and Dan K. Shields to Waitman T. Willey," August 8, 1860, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; J. D. Rapp et al., "Executive Committee Union Club to Waitman T. Willey," August 30, 1860, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; William A. Haminson et al., "William A. Haminson, Burton Despard, and Thos. L. Moore to Waitman T. Willey," September 7, 1860, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center; Thomas J. Evans et al., "Committee of Invitation to Waitman T. Willey," December 1, 1860, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

127 J. M., "J. M. to Waitman T. Willey," February 21, 1861, Waitman T. Willey Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

128 Willey, "Waitman T. Willey to Chester D. Hubbard".

they did."[129] Popular actions like the "office of the Parkersburg, Va., News, a Secession sheet," being "completely demolished ... by a crowd of Union men," could not have soothed the minds of northwestern rebels.[130] Many of the same pressures, just reversed and often far worse, existed in other areas of the state. Unionist candidates reported facing violence, with some having to flee.[131] Eastern Virginia saw the publication of "black lists" by newspapers—simply the names of every voter in a county who had voted against Secession.[132] This pressure would serve as an excuse for northwestern Virginians to call the results illegitimate.[133]



HOW VIRGINIA WAS VOTED OUT OF THE UNION.

A Harper's Weekly cartoon from June 15, 1861, satirizing the pressure felt by Unionists throughout much of the Commonwealth to conform to Secession.[134]

129 "West and Northwest," *Staunton Vindicator* (Staunton), May 31, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=SVI18610531.1.1.

130 "Poetic Justice," *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* (Wheeling), May 28, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=DI18610528.1.2.

131 One such person would brag about their sacrifice for the Union in a later political campaign. James Carskadon, *To the Voters of the 10th Senatorial District of W.Va.*, (New Creek, W. Va.), October 20, 1864, Archibald W. Campbell Papers, West Virginia & Regional History Center.

132 "The Black List of Carroll," *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner* (Richmond), June 4, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RSWE18610604.1.3; "The Black List of Washington," Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner (Richmond), June 4, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RSWE18610604.1.3.

133 *See* Hall, "Granville Davisson Hall to William P. Hubbard."

134 "Humors of the Day," *Harper's Weekly* (New York), June 15, 1861, in *Harper's Weekly: A Journal of*

While these difficulties may seem to invalidate the methodology described above, they really do quite the opposite. No reasonably sized county would have been unanimously in favor or opposed to Secession, yet 11 counties, just in the small data group above, were.[135] Most others had only one or a handful of votes against Secession.[136] The link between slavery and Secessionism was so strong because slavery in Virginia could often be used as a stand-in for political and economic connections with Richmond. With Richmond and the eastern elite being rabidly Secessionist, to the point of driving out the northwestern Virginian delegates to the Secession Convention,[137] the men of the Shenandoah Valley and southwest Virginia followed the region from which their newfound prosperity came. This is magnified by the treatment of Secession in the Valley's prominent papers. "Last Thursday the freemen of Virginia voted themselves out of the corrupt, rotten, and abolitionized despotism of the Northern usurpers," declared the Lexington Gazette, comparing the move toward Secession to fight for freedom against Great Britain.[138]

These papers demonstrate two key shifts in the viewpoints of Valley and southwest Virginian papers: distancing themselves from the northwest and aligning with eastern Virginia, the Confederacy, and the South as a whole. "Long and patiently has Virginia, along with her sister Southern states, borne the Yankee insolence and oppression of the Northern people," the *Lexington Gazette* also argued, continuing, "With the exception of a little disaffection in some of the Northwestern counties, the returns of the vote on the ordinance of secession will exhibit almost entire unanimity among the people."[139] In a separate column, "The Disaffection in the North-west," the Gazette opined, "We may expect to hear of a pretty strong anti secession vote from" the counties of the Northern Panhandle.[140] The Gazette slammed much of the leadership of

Civilization (Harper & Brothers, 1861), 5:371, HathiTrust, http://www.hti.umich.edu/h/harpersweekly.

135 *Lexington Gazette*, "The Election"; *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner*, "Later Election Returns"; *Staunton Vindicator*, "Election"; *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner*, "The Returns from the North-Western Counties"; New York Times, "The Vote for Secession in Virginia"; Curry, A House Divided, 142.

136 *Lexington Gazette*, "The Election"; *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner*, "Later Election Returns"; Staunton Vindicator, "Election"; *Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner*, "The Returns from the North-Western Counties"; New York Times, "The Vote for Secession in Virginia"; Curry, A House Divided, 142.

137 *See* "Mr. Marshall M. Dent," Richmond Enquirer (Richmond), March 26, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RE18610326.1.2.

138 "The Secession of Virginia," *Lexington Gazette* (Lexington, Va.), May 30, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=LGZ18610530.1.1.

139 *Lexington Gazette*, "The Secession of Virginia."

140 "The Disaffection in the North-West," *Lexington Gazette* (Lexington, Va.), May 30, 1861, Virginia

northwest Virginia, declaring "In times of such uncommon public commotion as we are now having, it is to be expected that political rubish, like John Brown[,] Carlisle, Pierpont, Dent, & Co., led on by that incendiary Abolition sheet, the Wheeling Intelligencer, will for a time float to the surface."[141]

Dent's Monongalia County (W. Va.) paper, the Virginia Weekly Star, was just as harshly criticized by the *Richmond Enquirer* for being "anti Southern" as he was by the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* for being anti-Union.[142] But that was immaterial as any threat to Virginia, ranging from the hardest abolitionist to the softest Southern Unionist, was now a threat to the interests of the Valley. As the Staunton Vindicator put it: "[E]very vote cast ... against the Ordinance of Secession is an invitation to Lincoln to march his army of cut-throats and robbers into and through Virginia!"[143] Where northwest Virginia saw its destiny with the North and West, the other two regions of what had once been a solid western Virginian political alliance had broken off, placing their faith in the South and eastern Virginia.[144]

"No man deprecates a division of the State more than we do," argued a western Virginian, continuing,

> "[B]ut there are evils which we consider of greater magnitude than a division. If the East are determined to refuse us justice ... then we say let us separate. We have no objection to have the issue made up at once—either a convention or a division of the State with the Blue Ridge as the dividing line."[145]

A Unionist did not write these words; they were not even said in 1861, but over fifteen years before the outbreak of war. A man intimately familiar with Virginia's separation did write them, though: Virginia's Civil War governor, John Letcher, in 1845, writing for the Lexington-based Valley Star. Politicians from the

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Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=LGZ18610530.1.1.

141 *Lexington Gazette*, "The Disaffection in the North-West."

142 *Richmond Enquirer*, "Mr. Marshall M. Dent"; "The Morgantown Star Again," *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* (Wheeling), July 15, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=DI18610715.1.2&srpos=10&e=------.

143 "Important Fact," *Staunton Vindicator* (Staunton), May 10, 1861, Virginia Chronicle, https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=SVI18610510.1.1.

144 *See* Willey, "Waitman T. Willey to Chester D. Hubbard."

145 *Valley Star* (Lexington), July 17, 1845, quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 264; *see* Crofts, "Late Antebellum Virginia Reconsidered," 279.

Valley and southwestern Virginia, raising the specter of treason by northwestern Virginia for merely opposing Secession, rang uniquely hollow. Many of these men had been considered disloyal to Virginia (or at least eastern Virginia) in the past, having seriously considered seceding from the Commonwealth.[146] It is merely that the shoe was on the other foot now: the interests of the western Virginian sections had diverged, and now, northwest Virginia was the enemy. And while many western Virginians had forsworn northwest Virginia and taken their place with the Piedmont and Tidewater, northwestern Virginians, unlike their former Valley ally Samuel McDowell Moore, were not content to be "mere vassals to their eastern lords."[147]

146 Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 268; William Gleason Bean, "John Letcher and the Slavery Issue in Virginia's Gubernatorial Contest of 1858-1859," *The Journal of Southern History* 20, no. 1 (1954): 22–23, JSTOR; Zucconi, "Bound Together: Slavery and Democracy in Antebellum Northwestern Virginia, 1815-1865," 172–73.

147 Moore, "An Address to the People of West Virginia," quoted in Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," 265.

Ω

THE MODERNIZATION OF TONG REN TANG

Reform, Resistance, and Historical Narratives in 20th-Century China

Cindy Jiang

Abstract

THIS thesis examines the transformation of Tong Ren Tang, a family-based traditional Chinese medicine pharmacy founded in 1669, into a socialist state-owned business under Maoist China in the 1950s. While dominant historiography, including official narratives published by the company, CCP media, and state discourse, frames the 1956 socialist transformation as the brand's first encounter with modernization, this paper challenges that narrative by asking when and how modernization actually began—and who should receive credit for it. Rather than treating state-led intervention as the origin of reform, this thesis explores earlier capitalist experimentation and family-driven modernization efforts during the Republican era (1920s-30s), drawing on oral histories, archival documents, and newspapers. It argues that the socialist transformation was not a clear break but a contested process shaped by questions of ownership and memory. By centering the Yue family's lived experiences, this thesis challenges linear narratives of modernization and sheds light on how traditional industries negotiated shifting economic and political regimes, offering a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between modernization, statecraft, and the politics of historical narrative in twentieth-century China.

Introduction

FOUNDED in 1669 during the Kangxi reign of the Qing dynasty, Tong Ren Tang rose from an imperial pharmacy to a national brand renowned for its expertise in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). For over two centuries, it operated as a family business under the management of the Yue family. The transformation of its role from an imperial medicine dispensary to a public-private enterprise in the 1950s, culminating in its establishment as a fully state-owned corporation in 1966, presents a unique perspective

for analyzing the broader path of modernization within TCM. This transformation represented not merely a narrative of scientific reform or commercial expansion; rather, it was intertwined with China's political revolutions, commercial restructuring, and evolving ideologies.

Understanding the transformation of Tong Ren Tang is crucial for interrogating how modernization unfolded within one of China's most prestigious traditional medicine enterprises. Unlike lesser-known pharmacies, Tong Ren Tang's survival across dynastic, republican, and socialist regimes makes it a rare and valuable case. It also complicates straightforward narratives of break or continuity in Chinese medicine, presenting how different phases of modernization—some internally initiated, others externally imposed—coexisted, conflicted, and built upon each other over time.

Yet the dominant historical narrative, as documented and published by the company itself in *Beijing Tong Ren Tang History*, overwhelmingly privileges the post-1949 period, particularly the 1956 joint state-private ownership (*gongsi heying*), as the turning point in Tong Ren Tang's modernization. This moment, in which the company formally transitioned from a family-owned business to a state-managed enterprise, is often praised in official accounts as a triumph of socialist transformation.[1] Internal reforms, mass production, ideological education, and mechanization all indicate a "successful" modernization.

What this state-centric narrative overlooks, however, are the earlier reform efforts during the Republican era, the 1920s–1930s, when members of the Yue family attempted to modernize Tong Ren Tang from within. These initiatives included adopting scientific production methods, restructuring management, and experimenting with Western-inspired business models such as shareholder-based governance. While these efforts have ultimately faded from mainstream memory, they still represent significant attempts at modernization rooted in market logic and commercial self-reform rather than in political coercion. That they were neglected speaks not to their irrelevance but to the structural and ideological constraints of the time: a fragmented Republican state,

1 Beijing Tong Ren Tang Group Corporation and Editorial Committee for the History of Beijing Tong Ren Tang, eds., *Beijing tongrentang shi* (Beijing: Renmin ribao chubanshe, 1993), 44. Hereafter cited as *BJTRTS.*

entrenched familial hierarchies, and a weak national infrastructure for healthcare reform.

Thus, this paper seeks to challenge the dominant state-centric narrative that frames the socialist transformation of the 1950s as the definitive beginning of Tong Ren Tang's modernization. Rather than constituting a prominent break from the past, 1954 was not the brand's first encounter with modernization but the first moment in which external political forces overcame internal structural resistance that had previously stalled reform. Earlier reform efforts during the 1920s and 1930s, while ultimately unrealized, were significant attempts at commercial and scientific modernization. By analyzing how these early efforts have been sidelined in official narratives, this thesis examines how Tong Ren Tang's modernization involved not only production methods but also how its identity was constructed in different political eras.

Brief History of Tong Ren Tang

ESTABLISHED in 1669, Tong Ren Tang was founded by Yue Xianyang (乐显扬) during the early Qing dynasty. For centuries, the pharmacy operated under the patronage of the imperial court, gaining exclusive rights to supply medicines to the emperor's household beginning in 1723. The firm's reputation was built not only on its imperial service but also through its proprietary formulas, skilled workforce, and strict quality control, many of which were passed down through generations of the Yue family.[2] By the late Qing and Republican eras, Tong Ren Tang had expanded its influence across China, with its name becoming synonymous with quality and tradition. As the company's geographic reach widened, the prestige attached to the Tong Ren Tang name also required careful protection. Rapid growth could have weakened the brand if new branches operated under the same name without consistent standards. According to the twelfth-generation descendant and manager of Tong Ren Tang in the socialist era, Yue Songsheng (乐松生)'s account, "In order to preserve the singular brand of Tong Ren Tang, our family agreed that: 'When establishing branch stores, one may not use the name Tong Ren Tang, but may use the brand of the Yue Family Pharmacy.'"[3] This compromise allowed for the

2 *BJTRTS* 1-11.
3 Yue Songsheng, "Beijing tongrentang de huigu yu zhanwang," in *Wenshi ziliao*, vol. 11 (Beijing: Beijing Chubanshe, 1961), 146.

proliferation of branches across major cities while maintaining the integrity of the original name.

During the Qing dynasty, Tong Ren Tang mainly remained a unified, centrally managed enterprise under the leadership of the founding Yue family. It was only in the early twentieth century, following the disruption of the Boxer Rebellion, that internal divisions began to surface. The death of Yue Pingquan (乐平泉), a tenth-generation descendant of the Yue family, left the succession in question to his four sons, which would later be divided into the four major branches of the family. Before that, the household and business affairs of Tong Ren Tang were managed for twenty-seven years by Yue Pingquan's second wife, Madam Xu (许氏). Upon her death, formal joint management among the four family branches was established.[4] Yet by the 1920s and 1930s, the cracks in this traditional model began to show. Inspired by growing contact with Western medicine and management sciences, several younger descendants, most notably Yue Daren (乐达仁) and Yue Duzhou (乐笃周), attempted to bring about change. They advocated transitioning to a joint-stock company structure and building a pharmaceutical factory equipped with modern machinery. However, these proposals were largely blocked by elderly family members who feared the erosion of their authority. Internal factionalism, nepotism, and conservative resistance undermined these early reform efforts.[5]

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Tong Ren Tang retained the characteristics of a feudal or patriarchal enterprise. As Yue Songsheng notes, during the rule of the Republican Beiyang and Kuomintang governments, the firm "retained the traits of an old-fashioned, sealed-off enterprise, marked by household control and private division of branches."[6] The management remained strictly within the family, with younger generations expected to either inherit existing stores or establish new ones using the family's reputation.[7] This period coincided with broader developments in Chinese society. The Republican government had begun to experiment with public health initiatives, including the licensing of TCM practitioners, the regulation

4 *BJTRTS*, 36-41.
5 *BJTRTS*, 36-41.
6 Yue Songsheng, *Wenshi ziliao*, 146.
7 Yue Songsheng, *Wenshi ziliao*, 159.

of pharmacies, and the promotion of scientific hygiene.[8] The emergence of hybrid medical models, such as "Chinese-Western integrated medicine" (*zhongxiyi jiehe*), also signaled a willingness to adapt TCM to new frameworks. However, these top-down efforts remained fragmented and uneven, especially compared to the sweeping healthcare and medical reforms that would follow after 1949.

That said, the founding of the People's Republic of China fundamentally altered the environment in which Tong Ren Tang operated. New healthcare policies sought to integrate TCM into a state-planned medical system, mobilizing it as a tool for rural health campaigns and ideological education. S.M. Hillier and J.A. Jewell argue that the Communist Party reoriented medical priorities toward collectivist health goals and politicized medical practice. One of the central slogans of the Great Leap Forward was the call to "walk on two legs," which meant "the need to use both traditional medicine and modern scientific methods" to advance health care across the nation.[9] This dual reliance positioned Chinese medicine as a native counterpart to Western medicine in service of socialist goals. As Hillier and Jewell note, traditional medicine was increasingly seen as politically strategic and perhaps a way to project cultural continuity while aligning medicine with socialist modernity.

These trends were interconnected with the socialist transformation that began with the 1954 joint state-private ownership agreement, in which Tong Ren Tang formally gave up its autonomy and was integrated into the framework of China's socialist economy. While continuing to operate under the nominal leadership of Yue Songsheng, Tong Ren Tang was embedded within the logic of party-state oversight. Furthermore, this transition has often been characterized, particularly in state publications and corporate histories, as the definitive starting point of Tong Ren Tang's modernization.[10] Indeed, the period that followed saw tremendous expansion in production capacity, the introduction of industrial machinery, and the implementation of political education programs for workers. However, this prevailing interpretation has neglected the complexity of the modernization process.

8 S. M. Hillier and J. A. Jewell, *Health Care and Traditional Medicine in China*, 1800–1982 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), 43-54.
9 Hillier and Jewell, *Health Care and Traditional Medicine in China*, 86.
10 *BJTRTS*, 44-47

Conceptualizing Modernization in Traditional Chinese Medicine

THE introduction of Western medicine to China during the late Qing and early Republican periods significantly transformed the practice, concepts, and degree of politicization of traditional Chinese medicine. As Bridie Andrews has noted, the very idea of "Chinese medicine" as a distinct category arose in contrast to the growing influence of biomedicine: "The concept of Chinese medicine did not exist until Chinese physicians found themselves compelled to define their field in order to differentiate it from the medicine of the West."[11] This act of definition was not merely semantic—it marked the start of a transformation whereby medicine became crucial for negotiating cultural identity, national sovereignty, and modernity itself. As Chinese society experienced significant changes in governance, education, and economic structure, medicine was also incorporated into the broader process of modernization, requiring institutions and practitioners to justify, adapt, or abandon traditional frameworks in response to scientific paradigms and public health needs.

During the Republican era, debates about medicine were situated within efforts to construct a modern nation-state capable of resisting foreign dominance. Healthcare policy reflected both national anxieties and reformist ambitions. Initiatives such as the founding of the Institute of National Medicine in 1930 indicated official support for preserving and reforming traditional Chinese medicine, even as critics like Yu Yunxiu campaigned for its abolition.[12] By contrast, the healthcare system under Maoist governance from the 1950s onward was structured around political ideology and mass mobilization. With the launch of nationwide healthcare campaigns and the policy of integrating Chinese and Western medicine, traditional practices were not eliminated but reconfigured to align with the revolutionary goals of serving rural populations and promoting scientific progress.[13] As Andrews observes, medicine became "symbolic of a shared striving towards the ideals of modernity," taking on new political meanings in both

11 Bridie Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 1850–1960 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 11.
12 Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 85.
13 Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 103.

rhetoric and institutional form.[14] These evolving contexts establish a basis for analyzing how specific actors and enterprises, like the Beijing-based pharmacy Tong Ren Tang, engaged with, resisted, or were transformed by these overlapping waves of reform.

Extending into the socialist period, modernization came to be driven increasingly by post-1949 state intervention. Building on this shift, Volker Scheid examines how the People's Republic restructured Chinese medicine, particularly from 1954 onward, when the development of Chinese medicine became "inseparably intertwined with the establishment of the new China."[15] Scheid details how TCM was institutionalized, redefined, and absorbed into state-run systems, with policies such as the 1956 directive to integrate Chinese and Western medicine reflecting a broader political agenda. Many authors consequently distinguish between Chinese medicine before and after 1949 and between Chinese medicine and TCM. Scheid also employs a tripartite division in his discussion, with the first period spanning from 1949 to 1965, which he considers to correspond to the formal institutionalization of Chinese medicine.[16]

This model emphasizes the state's role in redefining Chinese medicine to serve mass healthcare, promote ideological conformity, and ensure scientific credibility. Yet, as Kim Taylor argues, this redefinition was not the outcome of a coherent scientific or medical plan but rather what she calls "the product of an undetermined and piecemeal process," shaped more by "a careful manipulation of [Chinese medicine's] value as a 'cultural legacy'" than by "any consideration of its actual therapeutic value."[17] Taylor's analysis complements Scheid's by showing how the standardization of Chinese medicine was tied as much to political symbolism as to medical utility. She argues that even the English-language term "traditional Chinese medicine" (TCM) was intentionally formulated to project a unified cultural identity to the international community, reflecting that the modernization of Chinese medicine under Maoist governance was influenced by the desire to project

14 Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 13.
15 Volker Scheid, *Chinese Medicine in Contemporary China: Plurality and Synthesis* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002), 65.
16 Scheid, *Chinese Medicine in Contemporary China*, 66.
17 Kim Taylor, *Chinese Medicine in Early Communist China*, 1945–1963: A Medicine of Revolution (London: Routledge, 2004), 251.

a particular view of China to the outside world.[18] In the 1950s, Tong Ren Tang transitioned from a family-owned elite business to a joint-state-private company, illustrating this politically strategic process. The reforms introduced new management frameworks and standardized pricing to ensure that production met the needs of the general populace, thus achieving the vision of a revolutionary healthcare system under Maoist governance.

In contrast, Bridie Andrews provides a longer historical view of medical reform, arguing that "the story is not all about the state."[19] Rather than a top-down state reform, the development of Chinese medicine began before the Communist Revolution and was influenced by individuals who contributed to the transfer and advancement of knowledge, improved practices, and established institutions for both Chinese and Western medicines. According to Andrews, TCM's "origin and path were not set by Western science, by the state, or by any single viewpoint or political group," stressing that multiple players drove reform.[20] This model validates the modernization efforts seen in Tong Ren Tang during the 1920s and 1930s, such as adopting extraction methods and proposing a corporate management model. Despite internal resistance from traditionalist elders, these initiatives respond to how Republican-era reformers envisioned a modernized TCM, complicating post-1949 narratives that portray earlier medicine as static or needing salvation.

Furthermore, Sherman Cochran's study of commercial medicine, particularly the branding practices of the Yue family behind Tong Ren Tang, examines how traditional pharmacies adapted to modern markets.[21] Cochran writes, "The Yue family… became particularly adept at inventing elite traditions as devices for marketing medicine."[22] Their approach involved opening branch stores, utilizing advertising, and matching traditional herbal remedies with consumer expectations for efficacy and trust. As Tong Ren Tang presented itself as authentic and modern, as shown

18 Kim Taylor, 'Divergent Interests and Cultivated Misunderstandings: The Influence of the West on Modern Chinese Medicine,' *Social History of Medicine* 17, 1 (2004): 93-111.
19 Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 215.
20 Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 215.
21 Sherman B. Cochran, *Chinese Medicine Men: Consumer Culture in China and Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), chap. 2 and 3.
22 Cochran, *Chinese Medicine Men*, 17.

in advertisements from the 1930s, these efforts remained limited by factionalism within the family. Still, Cochran's analysis suggests that modernization in this period was commercial, strategic, and at times constrained but not nonexistent.

Later state narratives depicted Republican-era Chinese medicine as feudal and ineffective, framing socialist transformation as both necessary and inevitable. In *Material Contradictions in Mao's China*, Denise Y. Ho and Jennifer Altehenger describe how the CCP appropriated material objects, including medicine, as a symbol of revolutionary legitimacy.[23] While earlier reforms were marginalized in the historical record to emphasize the outcome of state policy, the transformation of Tong Ren Tang is not dependent on its political reframing in 1956. Examining earlier efforts in the Republican era reveals that modernization was not simply imposed from above and carried out with state orientation but was part of a longer evolution of institutional and conceptual change that connects to the broader development of TCM altogether throughout modern China.[24] To situate how internal commercial ambition and external political restructuring shaped the story of TCM modernization, instead of viewing modernization as the achievement of one era or ideology, it should be understood as a series of overlapping, sometimes conflicting initiatives and actions. Focusing on a single enterprise can offer the granularity needed to observe how change was implemented, resisted, or reinterpreted at the institutional level.[25]

Early Reform and Resistance in the Republican Era (1920s-30s)

BY the early twentieth century, Tong Ren Tang had lost its cohesive and efficient operation. The passing of the matriarch Madam Xu in 1907 marked a turning point in the company's internal structure.[26] Though nominally governed under a collective model known as the Four-Family Joint Management, this arrangement quickly descended into factional competition. "Each

23 Denise Y. Ho and Jennifer Altehenger, *Material Contradictions in Mao's China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2022), 1–19.
24 Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 96.
25 Ho and Altehenger, *Material Contradictions in Mao's China*, 167.
26 *BJTRTS*, 38.

house operated as a sovereign entity," creating a chaotic atmosphere where financial misappropriation and internal rivalries became common.[27] Rather than uniting them around a shared legacy, the family's wealth and reputation caused disputes over control and profit.

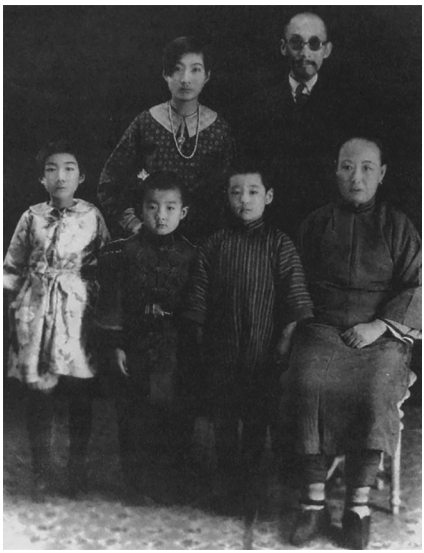


Figure 1: Yue Daren with his wife (seated) and children, ca. 1933. Cochran, Sherman B. Chinese Medicine Men: Consumer Culture in China and Southeast Asia. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006, 64.

Distinct from the later socialist mobilization, modernization during the Republican era was conceived by reform-minded Yue family members in terms of scientific production, commercial expansion, and capitalist management. This vision emerged not from central planning but as a response to the demands of national revival and modern science, seen as a solution during a time dominated by foreign imperialism and perceived backwardness. Historians like Bridie Andrews emphasize that modernization in Chinese medicine was "negotiated and multi-vocal," influenced by individuals both within and beyond the state who struggled over blending science with tradition.[28] Within Tong Ren Tang, this negotiation can be seen as an entrepreneurial experiment within a conservative, patriarchal family structure, which often valued continuity and hierarchy over change. In the context of the 1920s and 1930s, two figures stand out in these reform efforts: Yue Daren and Yue Duzhou.

Yue Daren and the Capitalist Experiment Da Ren Tang

YUE DAREN (1875–1934), the son of Yue Jifan (乐季繁) from the fourth branch of the family, emerged as one of the earliest reformers of traditional Chinese medicine within the Yue

27 Yue Songsheng, *Wenshi ziliao*, 154.
28 Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 6.

family (Figure 1). Born into privilege, Yue Daren initially led a life similar to other heirs of elite families, attending opera houses and indulging in leisure activities. However, his worldview shifted dramatically between 1897 and 1901, when he traveled to Europe as an attaché to the Qing ambassador Lü Haihuan (吕海寰). During this five-year stay, he studied European mechanical technologies and toured prominent pharmaceutical enterprises, including Bayer. His experience observing the Western model of industrial operation, including production methods and worker trainings left a lasting impression on him.[29] Witnessing Germany's scientific rigor and China's diplomatic weakness during the Boxer Rebellion, Yue Daren developed a belief that China could only regain dignity through industrial strength. This experience planted the seeds for his lifelong commitment to reforming traditional medicine through technological and organizational modernization.

Yet upon returning to China, Yue Daren was at odds with his family. Tong Ren Tang was embroiled in internal conflict and nepotism. Since the death of the old matriarch, there had been no one in the family with absolute authority. According to Yue Songsheng's account, family members began selling their own versions of branded pills, fostering competition even within the same storefront. Employees at the pharmacy, although unrelated to the family, ended up aligning with different branches as the family members competed over professional personnel.[30] At first, Yue Daren wanted to restore order in Tong Ren Tang, urging the family to follow ancestral traditions and discipline, avoiding self-serving behavior. The conservative elders furiously refused to accept his reasonable proposals, rebuking him: "Do you still respect seniority? Is it your turn to speak now?"[31] The elders' firm rebuke stood in contrast to Yue Daren's passion for transforming the aged and unregulated family brand.

Yue Daren recognized the urgent need to restore discipline and stop corruption. His proposal to follow ancestral traditions (*zuzhi* 祖制) and enforce strict business ethics (*jiagui* 家规) was not a call for conservatism but an attempt to maintain order in a company rapidly descending into chaos. However, the older generations rejected

29 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue: Beijing tongrentang chuangshiren yuejia yishi* (Shanghai: Dongfang Chubanshe, 2013), 14.
30 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue*, 15-16.
31 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue*, 15.

his ideas outright because of deeply ingrained Confucian seniority norms. The fact that his age alone disqualified him from making suggestions shows how discourse within the family prevented reform. Instead of considering the well-being of Tong Ren Tang, the older generation was more concerned about maintaining authority.

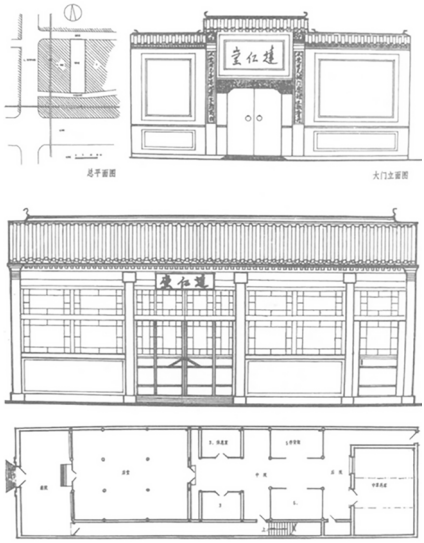


Figure 2: Architectural drawings of Da Ren Tang's main store in Tianjin. Built in 1914. "Tianjin chengshi jianshe," comps., Tianjin jindai jianzhu, (Tianjin: Tianjin kexue jishu chubanshe, 1990), 119-120.

Unable to restore order from within, Yue Daren, as his nephew put it, "was forced to seek a new path instead."[32] This new path was Da Ren Tang (达仁堂), founded in 1912 on Dazhalan Street in Beijing and later headquartered in Tianjin (Figure 2). More than just a business, Da Ren Tang served as a living laboratory for Yue Daren's ideas about modern medicine. "Da Ren Tang's medicines had to be high-quality and high-priced," Yue Daren insisted. "The raw herbs must be authentic, purchased at the place of origin, and processed meticulously. Every step had to follow strict procedures."[33] Aesthetic appeal also mattered; herbs were carefully sliced and packaged, and the store's layout emphasized cleanliness and order.

His commitment to high standards even extended to consumer psychology. He divided expensive ingredients like deer antlers into tiers: blood slices, mid-grade, and coarse. Each came with a different price, but all were clearly labeled to indicate the superior and more expensive options. "If your medicine is good," he told his nephews, "patients will remember you. That's what it means for the product to speak for itself."[34] While still using Tong Ren Tang's original prescriptions, he incorporated the new technologies and methods he had learned from his years of studying in Europe. For

32 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue*, 15.
33 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue*, 14.
34 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue*, 17.

example, Da Ren Tang was the first to use electric milling.[35] Unlike traditional methods of grinding, the adoption of electric milling allowed for precise, consistent grinding, ensuring that medicinal powders had uniform particle sizes.[36] This use of new technology may be regarded as one of the early documented instances of mechanization in traditional Chinese medicine processing toward industrial-scale pharmaceutical production.

In many ways, Da Ren Tang achieved a level of fame and sales comparable to Tong Ren Tang. During the two decades under the leadership of Yue Daren, who, driven by a sense of urgency about the future of Chinese medicine, once predicted that traditional Chinese medicine would survive no more than twenty years unless it adopted the scientific models of Western firms like Germany's Bayer.[37] Though this forecast was too gloomy— as TCM endures to this day—his core concern about the need for modernization was prescient. As it turns out, Yue Daren's reform proposals anticipated many of the strategies the state would adopt during the socialist transformation. This raises the question: had Yue Daren's vision been embraced earlier by the family, could Tong Ren Tang have pursued broader internal reforms that reshaped the later state-led transformation? While the eventual path taken under the PRC differed in both scope and ideology, the possibility remains that earlier consensus within the Yue family might have established a foundation for modernization on its own terms.

In his final years, Yue Daren strongly advocated for "industrial salvation of the nation" (*shiye jiuguo*), believing modern business practices could restore China's dignity. In remembrance of his uncle, Yue Chongxi reflected, "he tried to save Tong Ren Tang, but conservative forces blocked him; he understood that traditional Chinese medicine needed reform and took concrete steps to pursue it."[38] In his bid to further industrialize, he even negotiated with Bayer. The deal fell apart, however, over disagreements about naming rights and location. Bayer insisted on branding and locating the factory in Qingdao, while Yue Daren demanded Tianjin and the Da Ren Tang name. As Yue Songsheng recalled, "This was,

35 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue*, 17.
36 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue,* 17.
37 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue,* 15.
38 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue*, 15.

in essence, a question of who would be in control."[39] His refusal symbolizes both the ambitions and limitations of this reform era: determined to modernize but unwilling to compromise autonomy.

Despite his successes, Yue Daren could not institutionalize these innovations within the larger Tong Ren Tang network. As Cochran explains, Da Ren Tang functioned as a semi-independent chain that operated outside of the family's central governance and was therefore viewed with suspicion by more conservative branches.[40] His eventual failure to expand into Chengdu after a trademark lawsuit with a local Tong Ren Tang branch further illustrates how fragile these entrepreneurial experiments could be in the face of legal and familial resistance.

Yue Duzhou and the "Great Tong Ren Tang-ism" Vision

FOLLOWING his uncle Yue Daren, Yue Duzhou (1894–1979), the son of Yue Xiaoting (乐小庭) of the first branch, also offered a bold vision for modernizing Tong Ren Tang. After studying business management and pharmacy in France in the early 1910s, he returned to Beijing in 1919 and later opened his Hong Ren Tang (宏仁堂) branches in Beijing, Shanghai, Qingdao, and Tianjin during the 1930s, and the controversial Nanjing Tong Ren Tang. His most ambitious proposal was the "Great Tong Ren Tang-ism" (*da tongrentang zhuyi*), a plan to unify all of the Yue family's branches under a single corporate structure, distributing dividends according to equity shares. According to his writings, Yue Duzhou envisioned a consolidated pharmaceutical company where all branches would operate as shareholders, receiving dividends based on their stakes.[41] As Yue Chongxi recalled, "It was like a conglomerate model before its time."[42] Yet the plan was quickly rejected by conservative family members.

According to Sherman Cochran, Yue Duzhou's proposal was met with a "storm of criticism" from other branches of the family,

39 Yue Songsheng, *Wenshi ziliao*, 158.
40 Cochran, *Chinese Medicine Men*, 27.
41 Yue Duzhou, *Wo suo zhidao de tongrentang* ("The Tong Ren Tang I Know"), manuscript written in 1977 at the invitation of Lin Quanshui of the Institute of Economics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Unpublished.
42 Yue Chongxi, Qingping yue, 13.

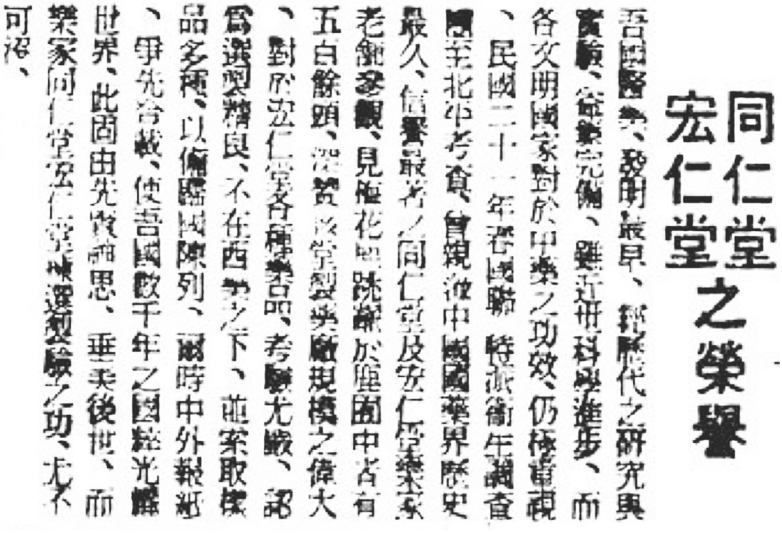


Figure 3: Newspaper advertisement announcing the opening of a new Tong Ren Tang branch in Nanjing's Central Market. Nanjing wanbao, January 9, 1936. Accessed via Quanguo baokan suoyin.

particularly because his new Nanjing store used the protected "Tong Ren Tang" name rather than the permitted "Yue Jia Lao Pu" brand.[43] The decision to establish a branch of Tong Ren Tang in Nanjing was made after the relocation of the Nationalist government to the south in 1928. All funds and medicinal materials were directly allocated from the Beijing Tong Ren Tang. However, this action violated the family's internal regulations, resulting in widespread opposition.[44] From Yue Duzhou's perspective, the move likely reflected more than just personal ambition. With Nanjing newly designated as the national capital under the Kuomintang, the city had become a symbol of political authority and reform. Opening a branch there may indicate that Yue Duzhou viewed proximity to the central government as strategically beneficial for promoting his reformist vision.

In fact, the Nanjing branch was not a failure. According to Republican-era newspapers, it operated quite successfully for several years. In a 1936 advertisement published in *Nanjing wanbao* (Nanjing Evening News), the grand opening of a new sub-branch of Tong Ren Tang in Nanjing's Central Market was announced (Figure 3). The headline, "Beiping Tong Ren Tang, Nanjing Yue Family Old

43 Cochran, *Chinese Medicine Men*, 25.
44 Yue Songsheng, *Wenshi ziliao*, 156.



同仁堂
宏仁堂之榮譽

吾國醫藥、發明最早、歷代之研究與實驗、容皆完備、雖近世科學進步、而各文明國家對於中藥之功效、仍極重視、民國二十一年春國聯特派衛生調查團至北平考查、曾親往中國國藥界歷史最久、信譽最著之同仁堂及宏仁堂藥室老舖參觀、見極花費跳躍於座間中者有五百餘頭、深覺該堂製藥規模之偉大、對於宏仁堂各種藥品、考驗尤嚴、認爲選製精良、不在西藥之下、並索取該品多種、以備國際陳列、國時中外報紙、爭先登載、使吾國數千年之國粹光耀世界、此固由先賢神思、垂澤後世、而藥家同仁堂宏仁堂精選製藥之功、尤不可沒、

Figure 4: 1939 news article praising the national reputation of Tong Ren Tang and Hong Ren Tang, reflecting official recognition during the Republican era. Shibao, April 3, 1939. Accessed via Quanguo baokan suoyin.

Pharmacy Branch—Central Market Sub-Branch Grand Opening," frames the event as a business milestone. The advertisement emphasized that the new location was established "for the convenience of customers" and offered "special discounted prices for one month," demonstrating how Nanjing Tong Ren Tang employed competitive marketing strategies.[45] Moreover, the ad's aesthetic design, including a decorative border repeating the phrase "Beiping Tong Ren Tang," further reinforced brand identity, resembling modern visual branding techniques.[46]

Alongside the success of his Nanjing Tong Ren Tang branch, Yue Duzhou's efforts also extended to another brand, Hong Ren Tang, which was established in 1931. Though often overshadowed by Tong Ren Tang in later historical narratives, contemporary sources show that Hong Ren Tang earned considerable acclaim in its own right. A 1939 *Shibao* article titled "The Fame of Tong Ren Tang and Hong Ren Tang" documented an official visit by representatives from the Ministry of Health to inspect both pharmacies (Figure 4). The report indicates that Republican officials from the Ministry

45 See Figure 3, "Beiping tongrentang Nanjing lejia laopu fenhao zhongyang shangchang zhong fendian kaimu" 北平同仁堂南京樂家老舖分號中央商場中分店開幕 [Beiping Tong Ren Tang Nanjing Lejia Lao Pu Branch – Central Market Sub-Branch Opening], in *Nanjing wanbao*《南京晚報》, January 9, 1936.
46 The name "Beiping" was the Republican-era name for Beijing, as the capital was moved to Nanjing; consequently, the name "jing," which means capital city, was granted to Nanjing.

of Health visited Hong Ren Tang, commending the brand's medicine industry as "grand."[47] It is worth mentioning that during the Republican era, the government had already been focusing on traditional Chinese medicine companies such as Hong Ren Tang and conducting official visits to evaluate them. Hong Ren Tang's medicines were said to be "elegantly produced and of high quality [...] not inferior to Western medicine," and were selected for international exhibition and media promotion as examples of China's medical heritage.[48]

Indeed, this degree of state intervention was not comparable to the socialist transformation imposed on private enterprises, and the Republican state paid particular attention to traditional Chinese medicine as a cultural heritage to commend. This report also showed that Hong Ren Tang was recognized as a separate brand, alongside Tong Ren Tang, and was considered another creation of the Yue family. Later accounts, including the official history, often regard Hong Ren Tang as a branch of Tong Ren Tang, suggesting that its operations are merely a substitute and completely unrelated to innovation or reform, with efforts not being acknowledged.[49] This acknowledgment, as presented in the 1939 Republican-era news report that evaluates each division individually, proves Hong Ren Tang's reputation and significance within the medical industry and market during the Republican era.

The experiences of both Yue Duzhou and Yue Daren reveal a consistent theme. They both pursued studies overseas and aimed to modernize traditional Chinese medicine using scientific approaches and experimentation. However, their hopes were dismissed by family members more focused on smoking opium.[50] In Yue Duzhou's own words, the motivation to modernize traditional Chinese medicine was born during his studies abroad: "These experiences were very enlightening for me...I returned to China with the spirit of reforming and modernizing it."[51] However, upon returning home, he found the situation within Tong Ren Tang far less conducive to innovation than he had hoped. The business was in disarray, and the leadership under his ninth uncle Yue Jianqiu

47 See Figure 4, "Tongrentang zhi rongyu; Hongrentang zhi rongyu" 同仁堂之榮譽;宏仁堂之榮譽 [The Fame of Tong Ren Tang and Hong Ren Tang], in *Shibao*《時報》. April 3, 1939.
48 "Tongrentang zhi rongyu; Hongrentang zhi rongyu," *Shibao*, April 3, 1939.
49 *BJTRTS*, 36-41.
50 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue,* 14.
51 Yue Duzhou, *Wo suo zhidao de tongrentang,* section 3.

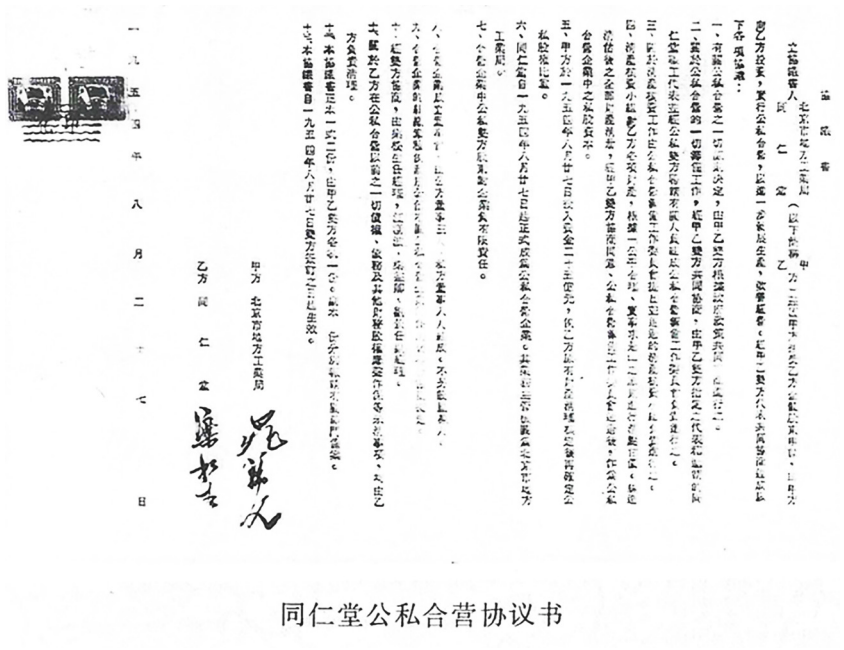
(乐鉴秋) was indifferent, if not actively hostile, to change. "They were extremely unwelcoming to my return, especially opposed to me getting involved in Tong Ren Tang's affairs," he wrote.[52] The story of Yue Duzhou and Yue Daren paralleled broader intellectual currents in the Republican era, where reformers struggled to balance cultural continuity with technological advancement. As Yue Chongxi later reflected, "it was unfeasible at the time...the conservative elders simply would not listen to these progressive and helpful suggestions."[53] Consequently, the pioneering visions of the younger generation encountered resistance from elder family members, who maintained that retaining control was preferable to embracing change. It appears that they had not considered how a new chapter would commence with the forthcoming rotation of the political regime. As the initiatives from the Republican era are retrospectively remembered in the official narrative as either stagnant or entirely pre-modern, the establishment of the People's Republic provided a fresh interpretation of modernization, which would shift from being solely an issue of internal reform to a process of state-led transformation.

The Socialist Transformations and State-Led Modernization (1950s-60s)

IN 1954, Yue Songsheng, the general manager of Tong Ren Tang, formally submitted an application for the pharmacy to enter into a joint state-private ownership arrangement with the government. On August 9, at the *Dazhalan* storefront, a seven-member Joint State-Private Ownership Preparatory Committee (公私合营筹备委员会) was established, alongside a fifteen-member team responsible for asset verification and valuation.[54] By August 27, representatives from the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Local Industry and Tong Ren Tang's shareholders signed the official agreement (Figure 5). This moment not only marked a turning point for the company but also positioned it at the forefront of a broader wave of economic transformation sweeping across China's urban centers.

The 1950s were a defining decade for the founding of the People's Republic of China, as the state sought to restructure the national

52 Yue Duzhou, *Wo suo zhidao de tongrentang*, section 3.
53 Yue Chongxi, *Qingping yue*, 14.
54 *BJTRTS*, 44.



同仁堂公私合营协议书

Figure 5: Tong Ren Tang Joint State-Private Ownership Agreement, signed on August 27, 1954. BJTRTS, 1993.

economy by absorbing private enterprises into a centrally planned socialist system. One of the key instruments for this transformation was the policy of joint state-private ownership (*gongsi heying*). This model, while nominally preserving elements of private ownership, was designed to shift managerial control and operational authority to the state. Under the arrangement, private owners retained formal shares and received fixed dividends, but enterprise leadership, production planning, and profits became subordinated to government oversight.[55]

The ideological foundation of this shift was laid out in the Provisional Regulations on Public-Private Partnership, announced in September 1954. These regulations defined the framework for transitioning capitalist enterprises into cooperative, socialist entities. By early 1956, the vast majority of private urban businesses had entered into such partnerships; by the end of that year, the private sector in China was practically extinguished.[56] Tong Ren

55 Puck Engman, *Shanghai's Dispossessed: The Capitalist Problem in Socialist Transition*, 1956–1981 (PhD diss., Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 2020), 72–75.

56 Beijing juan bianji zu, ed., *Zhongguo zibenzhuyi gongshangye de Shehui zhuyi Gaizao* (*Beijing juan*). Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 1991, 18. Hereafter cited as *ZZGSG-BJ*.

Tang's decision to adopt this structure must therefore be understood not as an isolated case of reform but as part of a coordinated, state-led campaign to remold Chinese industry and commerce. Although it arose from political necessity, the 1954 agreement also signified a crucial moment in Tong Ren Tang's ongoing journey toward modernization. This process, under socialism, would be reshaped through ideological alignment, industrial restructuring, and the integration of traditional Chinese medicine within a revolutionary context.

At the center of this institutional change was Yue Songsheng, the son of Yue Dayi (乐达义), the twelfth-generation descendant of the Yue family in Beijing. Born in 1908 and passing away in 1968 at the age of 60, Yue Songsheng became a significant figure in the history of the Yue family and Tong Ren Tang due to the consequential era he lived through. In 1947, following the successive deaths of Yue Daren and Yue Dayi, Yue Songsheng became a central shareholder of Tong Ren Tang, holding one-sixteenth of the shares and emerging as one of its key leaders.

Yue Songsheng initially was skeptical of the Communist Party's intentions.[57] After the Communist victory in 1949, he temporarily relocated to Tianjin to manage Da Ren Tang, the legacy of his uncle Yue Daren. This decision was due to caution and detachment from the political developments in Beijing, but as Tong Ren Tang became embroiled in unresolved labor-capital disputes, municipal officials and workers demanded his return to Beijing for negotiations. In 1950, the labor-capital consultation committee appointed Yue Songsheng as the general manager of Tong Ren Tang. Former workers and descendants of the Yue family recall that this decision was influenced mainly by the respected conduct of his father, Yue Dayi.[58]

This early negotiation period saw several pragmatic reforms under Yue Songsheng's leadership, such as eliminating exploitative wage structures and introducing stricter quality control in pharmaceutical production. Unlike the Republican era reforms, however, Yue Songsheng made no mention of incorporating science or electric models into production. In fact, Yue Songsheng's most

57 Yue Songsheng, *Wenshi ziliao*, 163.
58 *BJTRTS*, 44.



Figure 6: Tong Ren Tang manager Yue Songsheng meeting Mao Zedong on behalf of Beijing's industrial and commercial sector on January 15, 1956. BJTRTS, 1993.

decisive act came in 1954 when he was said to have *voluntarily* applied for Tong Ren Tang to enter a joint partnership with the state.[59] The agreement was the turning point for the future of this family brand, transitioning to full integration, with the pharmacy's management structure reorganized and key leadership run by state officials. Though technically representing the private shareholders, Yue Songsheng's role was now embedded within a party-controlled structure.

At this point, Yue Songsheng's cooperation with the state was widely publicized, and he was even made a role model and icon to encourage other private business managers to join the joint-state-private ownership.[60] A celebration marking the success of the socialist transformation took place at Tiananmen Tower in Beijing on January 15, 1956 (Figure 6). At the conference, Yue Songsheng represented Beijing's industrial and commercial sector and reported on behalf of his peers. He was described as having *excitedly* walked toward Mao Zedong and presented the report of the complete implementation of joint state-private ownership for all private enterprises in Beijing.[61] In subsequent years, he held several prestigious political positions, including Vice Chairman of the National Federation of Industry and Commerce, Deputy Mayor of Beijing, Standing Committee Member of the Beijing People's Congress, and more (Figure 7).[62]

59 *BJTRTS,* 44.
60 *BJTRTS,* 44.
61 *BJTRTS,* 44.
62 *BJTRTS,* 51-52.

The CCP actively promoted Yue Songsheng as a case of ideological conversion—proof that capitalists could be "remolded" to serve socialism. A quote from the official narrative captured this: "Led by Yue Songsheng of the Tong Ren Tang Chinese medicine store, all Chinese medicine shops in the city applied for joint partnerships, and many other industries followed suit."[63]

In government reports, Yue Songsheng was one of several high-profile figures with ties to the Communist ideology or a pragmatic willingness to cooperate, who were chosen to spearhead the transformation campaign.[64] Yue Songsheng's leadership at Tong Ren Tang was essential for the program's credibility. Not only did he bring legitimacy to the campaign, but his symbolic role helped diffuse tensions among reluctant capitalists. The state emphasized his transformation as a moral and political victory, linking personal sacrifice with national interest. The official state report on Tong Ren Tang's involvement in the program stated that the initiative is "setting a precedent and providing a model for the industry."[65] Furthermore, the report noted that "this transformation deeply unsettled the Yue family, as they faced the painful loss of ownership over production materials, management authority, and profit distribution."[66] The official narrative here emphasized that, after reflection, Yue Songsheng recognized the process as "an inevitable trend, the will of the people, and a historical force that



北京市副市长、同仁堂经理乐松生

Figure 7: Yue Songsheng. BJTRTS, 1993.

63 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 19.
64 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 14.
65 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 467.
66 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 467.

could not be resisted."[67] What followed was an assurance that Yue Songsheng would be allowed to continue serving as general manager with the same living conditions as before.[68]

The phrasing in this Party-approved account is revealing. It frames Yue Songsheng's acceptance of the socialist transformation not as defeat, but as ideological awakening, conforming to the "law of historical development."[69] Yet beneath this narrative lies a pragmatic calculus. Yue Songsheng's decision to embrace joint-state-private ownership was facilitated by the preservation of his status, role, and material comfort. The painful loss of economic autonomy was mitigated by his symbolic retention of managerial dignity. In this way, the story of Yue Songsheng's transformation was deployed as a political parable: the revolutionary state, while stripping away private control, could still reward ideological alignment with continued relevance and prestige.

While the state's official portrayal framed Yue Songsheng's decision as a response to historical inevitability and ideological clarity, oral histories offer a more nuanced interpretation that foregrounds his aspirations for reforming traditional Chinese medicine. Rather than being solely motivated by political alignment or self-preservation, Yue Songsheng also appeared to see the socialist transformation as an opportunity to achieve long-envisioned goals of scientific advancement within the pharmacy. His initiative was not merely to comply with state directives but to realize a vision of "Western-style production of Chinese medicine" (*zhongyao xizhi*), modernizing TCM through industrial methods and scientific precision.[70]

As noted by Yue Xia (乐侠), a descendant of the Yue family from the second branch, Yue Songsheng's collaboration was not merely political. He envisioned a scientific modernization of traditional Chinese medicine. According to oral histories and recollections from Yue Xia, he wanted to introduce machinery and industrial production methods into Tong Ren Tang.[71] At the time of joint-state-private ownership, Tong Ren Tang's assets and capital were verified

67 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 467.
68 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 467.
69 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 19.
70 Yue Songsheng, *Wenshi ziliao*, 165-167.
71 For Yue Xia's account, *see Geren xushu zhong de Tongrentang lishi*, eds. Ding Yizhuang, Zhang Haiyan, and Xing Xinxin (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2014), 66-67. Hereafter cited as *GRXS*.

to be only 800,000 yuan since medicine production primarily relied on manual labor and lacked any mechanical workshops.[72] In Yue Xia's interview, he stated that the reason Yue Songsheng agreed to joint state-private ownership was to request state investment for these purposes. He hoped to use modern equipment to enhance the efficiency and quality of traditional Chinese medicine.[73]

This vision aligned closely with the broader goals of the Chinese Communist Party in the 1950s, which redefined modernization not merely as scientific or technological progress, but as a process rooted in ideological restructuring and institutional integration. According to the 1954 *Central Committee Report on Improving Work in Chinese Medicine*, the modernization of TCM required the systematic blending of Chinese and Western medical approaches under direct state leadership.[74] Within this framework, individual agencies like Yue Songsheng's did not stand apart from structural reform; they were subsumed within and empowered by it. By bringing Tong Ren Tang into the new system, Yue Songsheng pursued industrial upgrades for traditional medicine and conformed to the state's redefinition of modernity, one that prioritized political alignment, mass production, and public utility over private initiative or market logic. His efforts embodied the principles of socialist modernization in the 1950s, which sought to transform medicine into a tool of ideological education, scientific standardization, and national health, all coordinated through mechanisms like joint state-private ownership. Rather than modernizing through internal, market-driven initiatives as seen in earlier decades, modernization now meant alignment with state goals, and medical production had to serve public health, conform to state ideology, and operate under central planning.

Between 1948 and 1959, Tong Ren Tang's total annual output value skyrocketed from 160,000 yuan to over 12.5 million yuan, a seventy-two-fold increase that captures the scale of transformation brought on by the socialist modernization drive.[75] In just over a decade, the number of workers tripled to over 540 employees, with production staff growing more than eleven times. These figures represent not just growth; they signify a complete restructuring

72 *GRXS*, 66-67.
73 *GRXS*, 66-67.
74 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 129-130.
75 *BJTRTS*, 49.

of Tong Ren Tang's production system, technical infrastructure, and internal governance due to the joint state-private ownership initiative. Products expanded from a handful of classical formulas to over 500 varieties and over 1000 types of raw herbal decoctions.[76] Tiger bone wine production, emblematic of both tradition and commercial value, increased by more than tenfold.[77]

This rapid expansion was made possible by structural changes within the company. As government reports document, before the reform, Tong Ren Tang's management had been characterized by scattered inventory, weak planning, and deteriorating stockpiles: "At one point, twenty taels of rare tiger bone were found gnawed by rats in a forgotten storage room."[78] To address this, the post-1954 transformation brought about centralized warehousing systems, internal statistical tracking, and technological innovations such as pill presses, grinders, and mixing machines. Former production processes that took hours, such as preparing Women's Golden Pills (*Nüjindan*), a prized medicine for women, were reduced to half the time.[79] A new spirit of collective engagement emerged among workers, who began participating in technological reforms and design projects. "[They] independently designed and produced machinery such as grinders, steam boilers, and thermometers, as well as improving production packaging."[80] Even old workers like Li Dongchen (李栋臣), a renowned expert in ginseng, who had long refused to pass on his skills, took the initiative after the joint ownership reform to dictate instructional material for others to transcribe.[81]

Despite these reforms, the transformation had profound consequences for the Yue family. As oral testimonies reveal, the transition resulted in the physical and emotional disintegration of the Yue family. The family mansion, once a hub of kinship and business, was emptied right after the joint-state-private ownership was signed. One descendant, Yue Shuqing (乐曙青), recalled, "After that, we didn't keep in touch anymore."[82] The joint-state-private ownership program, while placing Yue Songsheng in a

76 *BJTRTS*, 50.
77 *BJTRTS*, 50.
78 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 470-471.
79 *BJTRTS*, 50.
80 *ZZGSG-BJ*, 471.
81 *BJTRTS*, 51.
82 For Yue Shuqing's account, see *GRXS* 33.

附件五 北京同仁堂各厂、店历届领导人名录

北京同仁堂制药厂

姓 名	性别	任职时间	职 务	备 · 注
乐松生	男	1949—1954	经理	这个时期同仁堂制药厂属于私营
		1954—1960	经理	1954 年同仁堂制药厂公私合营
		1961. 2. —1966. 5.	经理	
		1965. 5. —1966. 7.	厂长	1966 年同仁堂制药厂转为国营
江勇波	男	1954—1956	党支部书记、副经理	1954 年建立第一届党支部委员会
尹梅芝	女	1956—1958	党支部书记	
胡凤岐	男	1958—1960	党支部书记	
杜至德	男	1954—1963	党支部副书记	
杨逸礼	男	1959—1960	党支部副书记	
宋益卿	男	1954—1963	副经理	

姓 名	性别	任职时间	职 务	备 注
刘 景	男	1954—1966. 7.	副厂长	
苏晓光	男	1961. 2. —1964	党支部书记	1961 年由党支部改为党总支
王文才	男	1964—1966. 7.	党总支书记	
		1968. 5. —1969	革委会主任	
		1972. 6—1980. 12.	党总支书记	
侯正果	男	1961. 2. —1964	党总支副书记	
勾明三	男	1961. 2—1966. 7.	副厂长	
肖启增	男	1961. 2. —1979	副厂长	
郑 庸	男	1961. 2. —1962	副厂长	
阎凤山	男	1965—1966. 7.	副厂长	
刘崇英	女	1966. 7. —1968. 5.	代理总支书记工作	
孙春裕	男	1968. 5. —1972	革委会副主任	
李洪飞	男	1970—1972	代理总支书记	

Figure 8: List of Leaders of Various Tong Ren Tang Factories and Stores in Beijing Across Different Periods, cataloged by the Tong Ren Tang Corporation. BJTRTS, 1993, 172-173.

high management position, excluded the rest of the family from control and influence within Tong Ren Tang's administration. The aftermath of Tong Ren Tang becoming a fully state-owned business also dissolved the collective identity that had supported the brand for generations.

While Yue Songsheng remained the nominal head of the pharmacy at the start, Tong Ren Tang had fundamentally changed. The lineage-based structure was replaced by bureaucratic administration, and the company's culture shifted from personal loyalty to ideological conformity. As one former worker, using the alias Yuanshan (远山), described, "It wasn't the same Tong Ren Tang anymore."[83] The modernization achieved under socialist reform came at the cost of familial continuity and historical identity. By 1966, as officially recorded in the *Beijing Tong Ren Tang History*: "Tong Ren Tang officially transitioned from a joint state-private enterprise to a fully state-owned enterprise. In doing so, this centuries-old pharmacy completed its historic transformation from private ownership to state operation."[84]

As shown in the chart, *List of Leaders of Various Tong Ren Tang Factories and Stores in Beijing Across Different Periods* (Figure 8), Yue Songsheng was the last member of the Yue lineage to hold a managerial role in the company. Serving as general manager from 1949 to 1960 and continuing in key leadership roles until 1965, Yue Songsheng's name disappears from the company's internal leadership records after 1966, precisely the year the company was fully nationalized. [85]From this point forward, all managers and party secretaries were state-appointed, with no familial ties to the original owners. The Yue family, which had managed Tong Ren Tang for generations, was therefore formally excluded from its future under the new socialist regime. The remaining descendants of the Yue family had no connection to the company, and most resided in Beijing, albeit not in their ancestral mansion. Once the agreement was finalized, the company was effectively "sold" to the state.

The Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) brought further upheaval to Tong Ren Tang. Once promoted as a model of reform and cooperation between the state and private enterprise, the pharmacy was rebranded by the Red Guards as a "feudal remnant." Its longstanding imperial associations became politically dangerous. Cultural artifacts such as plaques, inscriptions, and antique

83 For Yuanshan's account, see *GRXS* 253.
84 *BJTRTS*, 50-51. "同仁堂由公私合营企业正式转为全民所有制的国营企业。从而，同仁堂这座古老的药铺也完成了从私人经营过渡为国家经营的历史性巨变。"
85 See Figure 8, "List of Leaders of Various Tong Ren Tang Factories and Stores in Beijing Across Different Periods," cataloged by the Tong Ren Tang Corporation, in *BJTRTS*, 172-173.

furnishings were destroyed in campaigns to "Smash the Four Olds," symbolically severing the brand from its pre-socialist past.[86] Tragically, Yue Songsheng's story did not end in honor. After leading Tong Ren Tang into a socialist partnership and becoming Deputy Mayor of Beijing, Yue Songsheng had been hailed as a model capitalist turned loyal servant of the state. But during the Cultural Revolution, this identity became a liability. Formerly shielded as a united front figure, he was now condemned as a "red capitalist"—a hybrid category increasingly seen with suspicion.

Oral histories from Yue family members paint a vivid and painful picture of this reversal. Despite his former political prestige, Yue Songsheng was denounced within Tong Ren Tang itself, and members of his family became direct targets of violence. Yue Xia recounts, "It didn't matter what kind of hat they gave you, you were a capitalist! During the Cultural Revolution, didn't Yue Songsheng kill himself?"[87] According to family accounts, both Yue's mother and one of his wives were beaten to death by Red Guards. "He couldn't bear it anymore... He took sleeping pills and killed himself," Yue Xia recalls. "His ashes were never even found."[88] In another testimony, Yue Shuqing recounts, "Yue Songsheng saw a dazibao posted at Tong Ren Tang stating that he would be publicly denounced the following day. Fearing what was to come, he returned home and locked the door, refusing to let his wife, Tao Huimin, enter, saying he needed to write something and did not want to be disturbed. When Tao Huimin finally entered, she found that he had already taken his own life."[89]

These narratives illustrate how Yue Songsheng's identity shifted rapidly in the volatile atmosphere of the Cultural Revolution. Despite his alignment with the socialist state, it was his background as a former capitalist and business manager that rendered him vulnerable. Family members remembered that even though he had reached the position of Deputy Mayor, "that was because of the United Front system. Inside Tong Ren Tang, people still struggled against him."[90] The ambiguity of Yue Songsheng's identity, both a symbol of transformation and a remnant of bourgeois legacy, became a fatal contradiction.

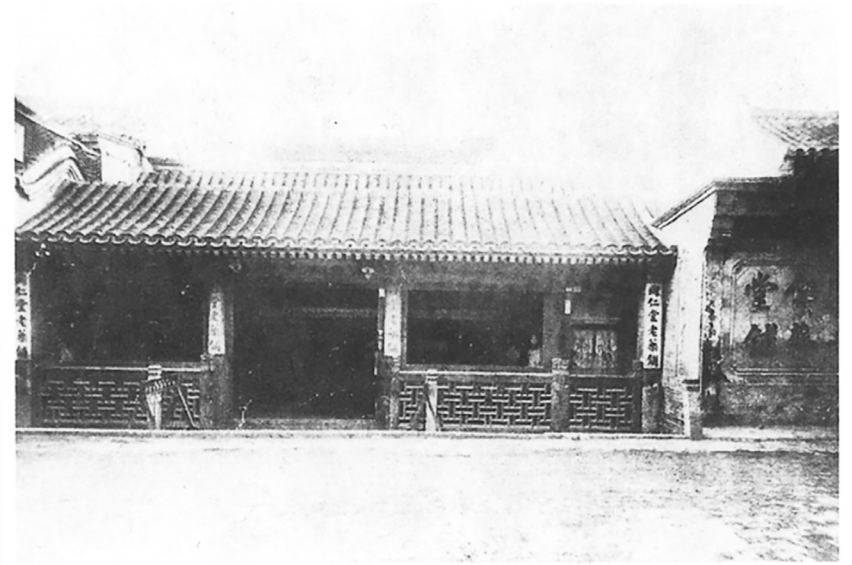
86 *BJTRTS*, 52-53.
87 For Yue Xia's account, see *GRXS* 77.
88 *GRXS*, 78.
89 For Yue Shuqing's account, see GRXS 21.
90 *GRXS*, 44.

Yue Songsheng's downfall, therefore, parallels the transformation of Tong Ren Tang itself. What had been redefined in the 1950s as a model of modern, state-aligned traditional medicine was later recast as a problematic symbol of the old order. In both cases, the revolution that had initially granted recognition and institutional preservation ultimately consumed its own icons. By the end of the Cultural Revolution, Tong Ren Tang had survived but was stripped of many of its cultural signifiers and internal leadership, including the very figure who had brokered its socialist modernization. Until now, official narratives have depicted how Yue Songsheng passed away under unclear circumstances in 1968. It was not until September 5th, 1978, that his contributions were publicly acknowledged, and a memorial was held at Babaoshan Cemetery to restore his reputation.[91] The erasure of Yue Songsheng's contributions and their eventual rehabilitation in 1978 shows how historical narratives are continuously reshaped by political context, just as modernization itself is never a fixed endpoint but a process subject to reevaluation.

Conclusion

WHILE the 1954 socialist transformation undoubtedly marked a turning point in Tong Ren Tang's history, it should not be mistaken for the sole origin of the brand's modernization. As examined, the narrative that credits this moment as the definitive break from a feudal past, reinforced by post-1949 state historiography, hides a more sophisticated history of prior reform initiatives. This raises the central question: why have early reform efforts been overlooked or erased in official narratives while the state-led transformation of 1954 has been elevated as the definitive starting point of "real" modernization? Figures like Yue Daren and Yue Duzhou may have seen their projects falter in the face of internal opposition and lack the political momentum the state would later provide. Nevertheless they engaged with the challenges of modernity. That these efforts remain largely forgotten today reveals how history itself is constructed and remembered. Historical narratives are shaped not only by outcomes but by the authority to define them.

91 *BJTRTS*, 53.



解放前同仁堂药铺门面

Figure 9: Storefront of Tong Ren Tang pharmacy before 1949. BJTRTS, 1993.

The tendency to treat 1954 as the unquestioned beginning of modernization is not merely a reflection of what occurred, but a decision about whose agency counts and what kind of reform deserves recognition. To revisit these early reformers is to acknowledge that modernization is not linear nor monopolized by the state; it is a layered, cumulative process, shaped by different historical actors under varying political regimes. This calls for a historiographical approach that values partial, failed, or forgotten attempts as meaningful parts of transformation. To write history in this way is not to deny the importance of state transformation, but to challenge the monopoly of its narrative and to make room for the complexities, contradictions, and forgotten possibilities that also exist within the full story of the modernization of Tong Ren Tang and traditional Chinese medicine. Ultimately, this thesis argues for a historical perspective attentive to how memory is constructed, preserved, or erased in the service of political legitimacy. The modernization of Tong Ren Tang is not only a narrative of what changed but also of what was remembered and what was not.

What, then, constitutes modernization? In the Republican era, it signified capital investment, scientific reform, professionalization, and innovation driven by market forces from within the private sector. For individuals such as Yue Daren and Yue Duzhou, the modernization of traditional Chinese medicine necessitated the incorporation of Western-style management, standardized production methods, and even the concept of corporate branding, all adopted in pursuit of what was perceived as a superior, Western model of modernity. However, post-1949, modernization became defined in political terms: integration into a centrally planned economy, ideological training, and alignment with national health campaigns. A communist vision of modernity serves the masses, emphasizes the importance of the rural sector, and promotes uniformity, rather than catering to the interests of a select "privileged" few. While both models aimed for efficiency, scale, and legitimacy, they arose from fundamentally different conceptions of authority and progress. In the end, the transformation of Tong Ren Tang's physical appearance from an ornate, centuries-old storefront steeped in imperial symbolism to a streamlined, modern factory may best reflect its modernization (Figure 9). Yet in that shift, what was lost was not merely architectural heritage, but a deeper continuity of identity. Is modernity necessarily a break with tradition, or is it about rejecting tradition altogether? For Tong Ren Tang, modernization has produced a fundamentally new state-integrated entity, one that shares a history of the past but is no longer the same pharmacy it once was.

Ω

MOONSHINE AND MURDER

The Ku Klux Klan in North Georgia

Janie Harrison

Abstract

THIS paper examines racial violence in the form of the Ku Klux Klan in Northern and Appalachian Georgia during the Reconstruction period after the Civil War. Sources for this paper include a mixture of books, Georgia newspaper articles, congressional reports, and one song. Although casting a widespread web across the American Southeast, the Ku Klux Klan was a highly localist organization. Thus, motivations for organization and action against Black men, women, and children varied by state and region. As explained in this paper, motives for racial violence and white terrorism in North Georgia differed from those of the rest of the state due to economic climate, geographic isolation, and mountain traditions.

AMERICAN novelist John Fox Jr. opens his 1903 novel, *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come*, with the journey of a young white Appalachian Kentucky boy who is wandering through the mountains after the loss of his family. During his journey, Chad Buford encounters two enslaved men and, for the first time in his life, sees someone whose skin is a different color than his own. Chad is confused. His first response is to ask his friend Tom, "Whut've them fellers got on their faces?" while his sheepdog Jack cowers behind him. Tom tells Chad, "Lots o' folks from yo' side o' the mountains nuver have seed a n*****. Sometimes it skeers 'em."[1] And scared they were. Scared that with Emancipation and the end of the Civil War, Black men would have too much freedom. Scared that the Black man would own land, would farm, and then sell his products. Scared that the Antebellum social order in the South would not prevail. Scared that the carpetbagger, scalawag, and Black man would overtake the region. Mountain whites felt that their action was needed. It was this fear of a new racial hierarchy and the loss of the white supremacist-dominated American South

1 John Fox Jr, *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1931), 24.

that led to mass insurgency in the form of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Georgia Klan began with the murder of "Republican organizer George Ashburn in Columbus on March 31, 1868, initiating a wave of violence that reached its zenith during the 1868 presidential election..."[2] Although stemming from the genesis of the Ku Klux Klan in Pulaski, Tennessee which then shifted to a terrorist organization in Nashville under the leadership of Nathan Bedford Forrest, the KKK was a localist organization whose method, organization, and motivations "varied from state to state and locality to locality."[3,4] The prevalence of localism is shown in the unique motivations behind Klansman's actions in North and Mountain Georgia. This paper will examine the motives of the Ku Klux Klan in North and Appalachian Georgia during Reconstruction and compare the region to other parts of the South and the state of Georgia. Motives for racial violence and white terrorism in North Georgia differed from those of the rest of the state due to economic climate, geographic isolation, and mountain traditions.

Understanding North Georgia during the Civil War is key to understanding violence in the region during the Reconstruction Period. In recent years, historians have worked to debunk the myth that mountain families were constantly feuding with one another and that mountaineers possessed an "awful regard for human life."[5] Although exaggerated and overplayed in depictions of the residents of Appalachia, this stereotype of a region gripped by violence holds weight when referring to the wartime and Reconstruction Appalachian South. The war itself was distinct in Appalachia, often described as a "shadowy sub-war."[6] Due to the isolation of the region and the importance of kinship ties and localism, mountain Georgians fought a "war-within-a-war" with "their own heroes and villains, their own ground rules, their own motivations, and their own indicators of victory."[7] There were secessionists and Union sympathizers, but these ideological motivations took

2 Andrew L. Slap and Gordon B. McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia: The Civil War's Aftermath* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010) 56.
3 Allen W. Trelease, *White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 2023), 14.
4 Hooded Americanism David Mark Chalmers, Hooded Americanism: the First Century of the Ku Klux Klan. 1865-1965 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 15.
5 Dwight B. Billings, *Gurney Norman, and Katherine Ledford, Back Talk from Appalachia: Confronting Stereotypes* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001) 122.
6 Jonathan D Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity: The Madden Branch Massacre and Guerrilla Warfare in North Georgia. 1861-1865." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 77, no. 4 (1993): 680.
7 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity," 680.

a backseat to other driving forces. Security, survival, and revenge were more important motivators for mountain guerrillas during the war.[8] Appalachia, and North Georgia in particular, saw high rates of desertion from men serving in the Confederate Army.[9] This can, in part, be explained by soldiers placing importance on local and personal motives rather than ideological reasons for fighting. Using the geography of the region to their advantage, "deserters and draft-dodgers had been gathering in the mountains and by 1864 they had organized themselves into fairly cohesive groups, fighting off Confederate soldiers and guerrillas." These groups formed as a response to the Georgia guerrillas, focused on rounding up deserters and draft dodgers.[10]

North Georgia was a hotbed for guerrilla violence because it served as a direct path into Unionist Tennessee, with the loyalist hubs of Chattanooga and Cleveland sitting directly across the state line, beckoning any mountain man not quite sold on secessionism. Georgia highlanders with anti-Confederate or Union sympathizing views often attempted to migrate through the mountains to Tennessee to reach safety from Confederate guerrillas.[11]

Revenge was top of mind for the men of all mountain guerrilla groups, as the Rebels sought revenge on deserters. In return, the deserters and Union sympathizers retaliated to protect their communities and families. Ruthlessness and brutality became commonplace, and the violence created by these groups continued to escalate during the war and ended the lives of countless mountaineers. Guerrillas were known to shoot, hang, or sometimes cut the Achilles tendons of their victims, forcing them to then "walk or crawl for miles before being hanged."[12] The lack of easy access to courts due to geographical isolation also contributed to the escalation of violence in the Mountain South.[13] Mountaineers commonly took justice into their own hands, thus acting in the best interest of their local communities rather than the state or federal government.

8 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity," 705.
9 Jonathan Dean Sarris, *A Separate Civil War: Communities in Conflict in the Mountain South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 70.
10 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity," 701.
11 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity," 691.
12 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity," 703-704.
13 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity," 706.

The brutal nature of this Appalachian sub war can be encapsulated in the telling of the Madden Branch Massacre of Polk County. In November of 1864, a group of anti-Confederate white men set out to join a Union army regiment in East Tennessee.[14] They did not get far before encountering a significant obstacle. John P. Gatewood, an infamous North Georgia guerrilla known as "the longhaired, red-bearded beast from Georgia," stood in their path.[15] Gatewood and his companions had donned stolen Union uniforms and were able to convince the group of men that they, too, were anti-Confederates. "The guerrillas then stood the captives against the wall of the mountains where Gatewood himself shot them methodically, one by one, through the head."[16] The Civil War brought an era of brutality to the region that made events like this seem commonplace, priming mountaineers for an era of continued violence after the war, but one with a different enemy and cause. "Deeds considered heinous in peacetime and unthinkable even in war were quickly accepted and utilized by both sides," states the Georgia Historical Quarterly.[17] The brutality of conflict in the North Georgia Mountains altered the region and set a new standard for violence, paving the way for and intensifying the racial violence against Black Georgians during Reconstruction. Indeed, there would be many more "hellish deeds enacted in a Christian land."[18]

Founded in Pulaski, Tennessee, in 1866 as a "social club," the Ku Klux Klan sought to quell any sort of Black social, political, or economic progress and promote ideals of white supremacy through intimidation and violence.[19] Many whites did not see any issue with the formation of this white terrorist group. They claimed that the Klan was originally founded as "little more than an outlet for the pranks of returned Confederate soldiers," and did not begin enacting racial violence, "until the supremacy of the white people in the South was threatened by the coming of another organization called the Loyal or Unional League and the granting of suffrage to the Negro."[20] Georgia whites convinced themselves that they were

14 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity," 680.
15 Robert Edward Barclay, *Ducktown: Back in Raht's Time* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946) 100-101.
16 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity, " 683-684.
17 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity," 680.
18 John Azor Kellong, *Capture and Escape: A Narrative of Army and Prison Life* (Madison: Wisconsin History Commission, 1908), 169.
19 John C Lester, D.L. Wilson, Walter L. Fleming, William S. Hein & Company, Daniel Love Wilson (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1905), 50-51.
20 E. Merton Coulter, A Short History of Georgia (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press,

serving as a tool "to regulate the social and economic position of the Negro, and in the upper part of the cotton belt" in order to "deter the Negro from politics," thus aiding their communities.[21] Klansmen also hid behind the claim that their terrible acts of violence were all in the name of defending the honor of the Southern white woman.[22] The defense of the white woman's honor was a common justification for brutality against Black men, and for years continued to be a relevant theme for the Klan. However, the real purpose of the organization was "to control the Negroes in every way and to ensure that they remained subject to white people," and to do this by whatever means necessary.[23]

After the brothers' war came the problem of how to put the country back together. To be readmitted into the Union, Southern states that had rebelled were required to form new state constitutions that ratified the 13th Amendment. Dunning scholar E. Merton Coulter's account of this period after the war in his 1947 book, *Georgia: A Short History*, reflects the popular opinion of white Southerners at the time: "Georgia set about making a new commonwealth; but she was not unassisted by her conquerors whose unwelcomed control plunged her into a turmoil, known as Reconstruction, which was drawn out as long as the war and became as devastating."[24] The "turmoil" Coulter refers to is the Emancipation of slaves, the abolition of the institution, and the transition of the American South away from a slave society. White Democrats across Georgia were enraged by the new rights afforded to the freedpeople and the presence of federal troops in their hometowns. These sentiments persisted years after the installation of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, as white Georgians continued to show resistance to this legislation, even referring to them as "amendments" in quotation marks in a 1875 Marietta newspaper, thus undermining their validity.[25]

An ominous cloud of white supremacy hung over the state of Georgia as statements such as, "We have but few idlers in the South

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1933), 371.
21 Coulter, *A Short History of Georgia,* 371.
22 Alan Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966), 172.
23 Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia,* 172.
24 Coulter, *A Short History of Georgia*, 348.
25 National Endowment for the Humanities, "The Marietta Journal. [Volume] (Marietta, Ga.) 1866-1909, February 19, 1875, Image 2," News about Chronicling America RSS, accessed April 16, 2025, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85034082/1875-02-19/ed-1/seq-2/.

and they are confined principally to lazy negroes who congregate in the larger cities and predate and steal for a living.." and "a hog thief was shot near Macon recently...He was colored of course," flooded the official newspapers of Georgia's cities.[26] Prejudice against Blacks was not secretive. Furthermore, there existed the fabricated religious reasoning for white supremacy, which white people in America had continuously leaned upon since the Colonial era. Southern Democrats clung to their idea that "...white people were made to rule this country. They are the superior race, and like truth crushed to the ground, their supremacy is a natural consequence, aided by God himself..."[27] This Christian justification was also accompanied by calls to maintain the existing racial hierarchy simply because it was the "natural" way of life for Americans, and that it was the way things had been arranged for decades. Again, white citizens and politicians did not shy away from sharing their prejudiced views on what they called "the problem of the Negro."[28] Georgia Politician Robert Toombs was staunch in his claim that "They [Black people] are of the human race but they are not of my race. They are a lower order of human beings."[29] Similar was the sentiment of Klansmen across the state of Georgia, regardless of region.

In Georgia, the Ku Klux Klan emerged in the spring of 1868 under the leadership of ex-Confederate General John Brown Gordon and other powerful conservative Southern elites. Although Gordon elusively evaded any specific questions about his involvement with such an organization or his leadership within anything called the Ku Klux Klan, he did admit to involvement "with a secret organization whose sole purpose...was the preservation of peace."[30] Like other influential white supremacists in Georgia, Gordon clung to the idea that he was only doing what was right for his state and what would create "self protection from the threat posed by the Black population."[31] He masked his bigotry under a polished image of peacemaker and moral leader. Surprisingly, in 1866 Gordon

26 National Endowment for the Humanities, "The Marietta Journal. [Volume] (Marietta, Ga.) 1866-1909, August 18, 1876, Image 2," News about Chronicling America RSS, accessed April 16, 2025, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85034082/1876-08-18/ed-1/seq-2/.
27 National Endowment for the Humanities, "The Marietta Journal. [Volume] (Marietta, Ga.) 1866-1909, August 18, 1876, Image 2.
28 Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia*, 60.
29 Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia*, 63.
30 Ralph Lowell Eckert, *John Brown Gordon: Soldier. Southerner. American.* (Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 146.
31 Eckert, *John Brown Gordon*, 146.

supported the funding of schools and churches for the freedmen in Georgia, specifically along the coast in Brunswick, and called for his white peers to do the same, claiming he was "in favor of extending, by every possible means, every aid toward the moral and intellectual advancement of the colored race."[32] However, he followed this claim with the following warning to Black Georgians: "...if you attempt to inaugurate a war of races you will be exterminated."[33] Gordon was by no means a supporter of Black rights. He could endorse certain moral and intellectual advancements of freedpeople, so long as there was no political mobilization and any Black progress was enacted under the control of white conservatives.

Gordon also believed that the real political issue was the presence of white carpetbaggers convincing freedpeople to mobilize politically and that any conflict between the races would dissolve upon their departure.[34] This line of thinking, in combination with his support for Black schools and the "intellectual advancements of freedpeople," suggests that Gordon possessed a paternalistic and arguably even more bigoted view that Black Georgians were not intelligent enough to advocate for themselves politically, and thus could only possibly advance in society through the aid of their white counterparts.

The Freedmen's Bureau was an organization formed to aid freedpeople as they were incorporated into society as political equals for the first time. Coulter's summary of the Bureau encapsulates the indignation that white Democrats felt toward this organization and their values. He frames the organization as an unnecessary charity toward Black people. He states that although the organization helped assist some who could not help themselves economically, at one point the Freedman's Bureau "forgot its main mission and attempted to establish the Negro's social standing and his political position..."[35] At this point, whites felt enough progress had been made and that the freedpeople were asking for too much. They began to tighten their grasp on the Antebellum social order, and thus came the surge of white violence that followed the Civil War.

32 Eckert, *John Brown Gordon*, 130.
33 Eckert, *John Brown Gordon*, 131.
34 Eckert, *John Brown Gordon*, 131.
35 Coulter, *A Short History of Georgia*, 349-350.

Roles and motivations of the Freedmen's Bureau were unique in North Georgia because of the extensive poverty in the region. "With so few black people in the mountains, Bureau officials focused primarily on the needs of white refugees and Unionists," states historian Jonathan Dean Sarris.[36] White poverty was widespread, and Bureau agents, mostly white men themselves, "...likely turned a blind eye to black poverty, since that was the condition they expected of the race, but they were shocked to see the whites of the region living in similar conditions."[37] In other areas of Georgia, white people were not suffering from poverty to the same extent that mountain whites were. This, in combination with higher percentages of freedpeople, led Bureau agents in Southern and Middle Georgia to surpass those in the Northern part of the state in terms of Black aid. Even though the Freedmen's Bureau struggled across the South to adequately aid freedpeople due to economic, personnel, and political limitations, their work in North Georgia was below that of even the meager level of support given to Black people in the rest of the South due to the poverty of whites and the prejudice of many Bureau agents.

White violence in the Northern region of Georgia was distinct from Klan violence in other parts of the state in part because of slavery's history in the region. In her book, *Reconstruction in Georgia: Economic, Social, Political, 1865-1872*, historian C. Mildred Thompson, who came to be known as the only woman to study under Reconstruction scholar William Archibald Dunning at Columbia University, points out how racism in North Georgia was unique from other areas of the South. She claims that "the real cause of disturbance in the northern section of the state was due fundamentally to the racial animosity of the poorer class of whites to the blacks. Emancipation removed the most important barrier between the poor whites and the negroes..."[38] In the eyes of mountaineers, the institution had served as way to maintain the racial hierarchy and "by emancipation, the negro became a social menace to the class of poor whites..."[39] In other words, whites in North Georgia had different motivations for their violence against the Black citizens in the area.

36 Sarris, *A Separate Civil War,* 146.
37 Sarris, *A Separate Civil War*, 146.
38 Clara Mildred Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia: Economic, Social, Political, 1865-1872*, 341.
39 Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, 338.

They were not slaveholders and, therefore, were not at risk of losing their property. However, as they saw it, without the institution of slavery or existing wealth and prominence in their communities that was more common in other parts of the state, these poor and middle-class whites were left with nothing more than a racial distinction that they felt made them superior to their Black counterparts. Their motivation for racial violence and intimidation was social, as they attempted to remind the Black man of the way, in their eyes, that the world ought to be. From the Congressional Joint Select Committee hearings tasked with investigating the state of the Ku Klux Klan in the southern states in 1872, historians and civilians can examine the opinions of many Georgians at the time and further explore the Klan's effects and motives. While being questioned, a white man in Rome, Georgia, gives his opinions on the Klan and its rationale in the region. "I think that organization was formed with what they conceived to be an imminent danger to society...Well, we have felt that there is danger. I saw men moving among them, from whose conduct I apprehend danger, and a collision between the two races."[40] The sentiment from this white man's statement furthers the argument that racial violence in North Georgia began as a social tool rather than a political one. The man being questioned is acting out of fear. He is scared of Black citizens ascending to the same social level as the whites in the region, as he confirms the need for white violence against Blacks. Thompson, prejudiced herself as evident in her writing, states that with the attainment of freedom and later the right to vote, Black people may, "be inclined to think he was 'as good as white folks."[41] With this statement, she encapsulates the postwar attitude of whites in North Georgia.

Appalachia stands out across history as a socially, economically, and politically unique region within the country and, more specifically, the American South. Scholarly analysis of the Civil War's and Reconstruction's effects on Appalachia is a relatively new subject for historians.[42] Primarily, white violence and Klan activity were distinct in Appalachian Georgia because whites in the area were not wealthy, as mentioned by Thompson. In his 2006

40 *Report of the Joint Select Committee Appointed to Inquire in to the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States*, no. 6 (Washington: Govt. Print. Off., 1872) : 92, accessed April 8, 2025, https://heinonline.org/HOL/Index?index=trials/acms&collection=trials.
41 Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, 340.
42 Sarris, *A Separate Civil War*, 1.

book, *A Separate War: Communities in Conflict in the Mountain South*, historian Johnathan Dean Sarris states that "arable land was scarce in the heights of the Blue Ridge. Generally, there were few landowners in mountain Georgia, and most men worked as tenants, farm laborers, or miners.[43] In addition to existing poverty in the region, "the mountain counties had suffered enormous economic dislocation during the war, and recovery was slow." Droughts and poor agricultural conditions coincided with economic destruction and a deadly smallpox epidemic that came to the region at the end of the war and thrust many families further into poverty, creating near famine.[44] During the postwar period, mountain whites did not have much, if any, economic advantage over their Black counterparts.

Since fewer wealthy whites owned large plots of land or plantations, slavery was less common than in other parts of the state, and those who did own slaves tended to own fewer. Although Fox's portrayal of a little white mountain boy who had never heard of Black people, let alone encountered an individual, so much so that he thought the two Black men must have been white men with something on their faces, is exaggerated for the sake of fiction, there is some truth to it. Mountain and North Georgia had a smaller percentage of freedpeople than other parts of the state. For example, in Fannin County, a mountain county which borders East Tennessee and Southwestern North Carolina, "blacks accounted for less than two percent of the population" and "only 36 of 900... families owned slaves in 1860..."[45] Conversely, on Georgia's coast, "Blacks greatly outnumbered whites..." and slavery was an integral part of life on plantations in the majority of the state.[46] Perhaps this can be explained by the isolation of the region, which had very few large plots of land, leading to fewer wealthy white landowners, then fewer enslaved people, and ultimately fewer freedmen.

Because slavery was sparse, the myth that "Appalachians have not been saddled with the same prejudices about black people that people of the deep South have" emerged in popular and historical thought.[47] Some believed that there was potential for resentment of

43 Sarris, *A Separate Civil War,* 38.
44 Sarris, *A Separate Civil War,* 145.
45 Sarris, "Anatomy of an Atrocity: The Madden Branch Massacre and Guerrilla Warfare in North Georgia. 1861-1865," 689.
46 Eckert, *John Brown Gordon*, 129.
47 Loyal Jones, "Appalachian Values," in *Voices from the Hills: Selected Readings of Southern Appalachia*, ed. Robert J. Higgs (New York: Ungar, 1975), 507-17.

the wealthy class to manifest itself in an anti-slavery sentiment.[48] However, generally, no anti-slavery sentiment surfaced because poor whites who could not own slaves themselves still viewed slavery as a beneficial way to keep the social order of the South in place. In fact, white mountaineers who did have chances to exploit Black people for work through coercive labor contracts made possible through loopholes in the 13th Amendment did not shy away from this opportunity. After Emancipation, "...white trash who had never had a thousand dollars or fifteen hundred dollars to pay for a slave could get n****** now for a few dollars a head by giving them an advance against wages. Times change and new ways of getting slaves are cunningly devised," stated American Journalist John L Spivak.[49] Spivak's point is that it is evident that mountain whites were not against slavery and that if given the economic and landowning opportunity, then they too would have participated in the peculiar institution as others did in the rest of the South.

Historian John C. Inscoe ascribes this idea that there was less racism in the region to a "moral superiority" felt among mountain whites, "deep rooted" and "based in large part on the stereotypical 'rugged individualism' credited to mountain men."[50] Perhaps mountain whites felt that by not owning slaves themselves, and often being on similar economic playing fields as the Black members of their communities, they were in some way not as vicious as their white counterparts in other parts of the state. In examining primary and secondary accounts of racism and white violence in Mountain Georgia and the whole of Appalachia, this claim can quickly be rebutted. Considering that slavery was not as common in North Georgia as the rest of the wartime South, and the economic environment of the region, more whites were in economic competition with the freedpeople in their area. Unlike their neighbors to the South, who operated large plantations and, in many cases, after Emancipation, were able to prolong slavery on their agricultural operations through legal loopholes and intimidation tactics, upcountry yeomen farmers and mountain whites were competing with black labor instead of depending on it.[51]

48 John C. Inscoe, *Race, War, and Remembrance in the Appalachian South*. 1st ed. (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 26.
49 Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia*, 61.
50 Inscoe, *Race, War and Remembrance in the Appalachian South*, 19.
51 Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism,* 16.

Mountain Blacks and whites farmed small plots of land, sold their products to the same markets, and competed for mining jobs. This point addresses another facet of economic motivation for Klan violence in the region, and perhaps specifically for the destruction of Black plots of land and farming operations. Not only did intimidation and threats in rural areas cause Black Georgians to flee their homes out of fear, but many fled out of necessity as their homes and crops were destroyed by Klan violence. Black families in rural areas often left their farms or homesteads due to racial attacks and moved to larger cities. ZB Hargrove, a white ex-Confederate turned Republican who resided in Rome, Georgia, shares his knowledge on the matter with the Congressional Committee investigating the state of the Klan in the Southern states in 1872: "I can give you names of three or four parties who have left their farms...Some of these people, named Taylor, Ware, Johnson, came into town and left their places, their little crops of wheat, because they were driven away."[52]

Off the top of his head, this Georgian can name several Black families just in his area who have had to abandon land. Hargrove goes on to attribute Klan activity as the reason for many of these abandonments. He mentions a specific case in which a family he knows was driven from their home due to Klan violence: "This Methodist minister I referred to had quite a little interesting family, quite a comfortable home; but he has just had to leave it all, and it has almost ruined him.." and when asked if this fleeing was due to an attack "by a band of these disguised men," he replied with "Yes sir; driven away from home."[53]

Freedman Jordan Ware of Floyd County was robbed and beaten in his own home by a local group of Klansmen. Locals determined the most probable reason for the attack on Ware was that he had recently started renting a small farm outside of Rome and "appeared to be prospering."[54] This destruction of property was most likely motivated by social and economic reasons, as rural whites in North and Mountain Georgia increasingly saw Black farmers and homesteaders not only as a social threat but also as economic competitors.

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52 *Report of the Joint Select Committee*, 81.
53 *Report of the Joint Select Committee*, 82.
54 Trelease, *White Terror,* 325-326.

Another factor that contributed to the popularity of the myth that Southern highlanders were less racist was the presence of a few Union strongholds within Appalachia, like East Tennessee and West Virginia.[55] Historian Keith S. Hébert refutes this claim when he says, "the mythical notion of a distinctive land filled with noble people who 'had fought for the Union though their homes were in the heart of slave territory' and 'who owned the land but did not own slaves' ignores the mountain Klan."[56] Since there was less of an economic gap between the two races in mountain Georgia, prejudice intensified in the region as it did in Northwest Georgia and was distinct from racism in other parts of the state. John Eaton, a Freedman's Bureau commissioner, asserted that even though the mountains of East Tennessee and North Georgia had fewer Black people than other parts of these Southern states, "the prejudice of the whites against the Negro was even more acute'' than in cities known for their great numbers of Blacks, like Memphis and Vicksburg.[57]

Because whites generally did not have a significant economic advantage over freedpeople, many felt the need to remind the Black people in the region of their "proper place" in society, situating their racial violence as more of a social tool. Whites began to realize that "the white Southerner for the first time faced the reality of having to live in a society where the black man could claim, even if he didn't get, political and social equality."[58] Thus, these whites used Klan violence as a means of keeping the existing racial hierarchy in place. Blacks were killed, families terrorized and forced to flee, and homes, churches, and schools destroyed. In Appalachian Georgia's White and Habersham counties, the Mossy Creek Ku Klux Klan ran rampant, their most active spree stretching "from the summer of 1868 through the November presidential election."[59]

Furthermore, the members of the Klan and other instigators of racial violence in North and Mountain Georgia reveal more about the motivations of the groups. The average Klansman in the region was "more often than not a poor dirt farmer, fearful of the Negro

55 Billings, Norman, and Ledford, *Back Talk from Appalachia*, 68.
56 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia*, 50.
57 John Eaton, *Grant, Lincoln, and the Freedman: Reminiscences of the Civil War* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1907), 119.
58 Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia*, 62.
59 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia*, 49.

as an economic competitor."[60] Motivations for racial violence were more often social and economic than political. Additionally, many of the men participating in Klan activity were too young to have served in the Confederate army, differing greatly from other regions of Georgia in which most Klansmen were Confederate veterans.[61] Sarris sums up the distinct nature of those fighting within Appalachia during the Civil War when he states, "The mountain guerrillas...were largely illiterate, pragmatic, ruthless people who fought not for 'cause and comrades' but for local power and influence."[62] This line is a reference to James M. McPherson's *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*, which examines wartime letters and diaries and attributes enlistment motivation to a solid belief in one's cause and a core idea of who one was fighting for and alongside.[63]

Sarris's assessment of the men fighting guerrilla warfare runs parallel to Keith S. Hébert's concept of the insurgents of a typical mountain Georgia county: "In White County, the typical Klansman was a twenty-four-year-old wage laborer who owned no property and less than $100 dollars of personal property. Approximately 30 percent of the local Klan members could not read or write."[64] This was starkly different from other parts of the state, such as Atlanta or Augusta, where members of the Klan were "usually men of affairs" and held influential positions in their communities.[65] The same was true in the eastern part of the state in counties like Clarke and Wilkes, where Dunning pupil C. Mildred Thompson refers to the Klansmen as "the best people, old and young alike, operating for social and political purposes as well," and later, "a group of serious men, the most esteemed in the community.[66] Poor and middle-class whites in the northern third of the state did not have this advantage and had to make their own influential positions in society to assert what they felt was their racial dominance. The emphasis of localism in place of Rebel or Yankee ideology as the reasoning for the creation of guerrilla units in Appalachia during the war persisted into the postwar period. Mountain Klansmen fought

60 Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 18.
61 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia*, 63.
62 Sarris, *A Separate Civil War*, 3.
63 James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
64 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia*, 59.
65 Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 18.
66 Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, 348.

not for the image of the late great Confederacy, but to stamp out any social progress or economic growth their Black counterparts may have seen come April 9th, 1865.

Another characteristic of Appalachia that made its mark on the region's Ku Klux Klan was the mountaineers' affinity for bootlegging. The Appalachian Mountains have long been a center for moonshining. This tradition has proved lucrative for many mountain people and families. Distilling was an important part of mountain life before the Civil War and persisted for many years after the war and Reconstruction. A federal liquor tax had been put in place, threatening to destroy the livelihood of many of those "hiding...stock from federal officials beneath the potatoes in the root cellar and behind jars of preserves.[67] During Reconstruction, federal agents were sent to many mountain and northern Georgia counties with instructions to enforce the liquor tax and arrest those who did not comply.[68] Moonshiners, who were, for the majority, mountain whites, were enraged by this federal intervention and encroachment on their way of life. Moonshining was tightly intertwined with the Klan and its members in Appalachian Georgia, and the prevalence of bootlegging intensified and complicated the existing racial violence. Many Klansmen themselves were distillers (especially members of the Mossy Creek Klan in White County) and, "...one part of the [KKK] oath...was to drive out and wage war against the United States revenue officers who should come up there to break up the distilling."

This oath was kept, as there were many cases of Klan members showing up at federal agents' homes and warning them of the bloodshed to come if they did not decide to pack up or at least turn a blind eye to the distilling operations.[69] This call to protect moonshining also attracted many new members to the Klan, "whose backgrounds and motivations differed from those of other Klansmen in other parts of the state."[70] The focus on moonshining also explains why most members of the Klan in Appalachian Georgia were poor.[71] The Klan was perhaps more popular among lower classes because these were the people making a profit off of the moonshine trade, as distilling was a popular way for low and

67 Billings, Norman, and Ledford, *Back Talk from Appalachia*, 163.
68 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia*, 49.
69 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia*, 58.
70 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia*, 57.
71 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia*, 61.

middle-class mountaineers to supplement their incomes.

Not only was the Ku Klux Klan focused on intimidating and harming Black citizens in the area, but also on preserving their illicit incomes and resisting federal intervention. At times, these two goals coincided to create mass violence and injustice. Klansmen in mountain counties often housed local moonshiners to hide them from persecution by federal law enforcement agents.[72] In 1871, in White County, two Ku Klux Klan members murdered a white deputy official enforcing the federal liquor tax. The killers had smeared lamp oil on their faces as an attempted disguise and to make others believe two Black men had been the murderers. Mary Brown, a Black woman who lived with her family in the area, witnessed the two men and knew of their malevolent plot. To ensure that the true murderers were not convicted and to make known their ideas of white supremacy, on "an unseasonably cold May morning in 1871...forty members of the Mossy Creek Ku Klux Klan came upon the home of Joe and Mary Brown. During the next hour, the Mossy Creek Klan committed the most violent acts of physical and psychological abuse in their group's short history."[73] Klansmen brutally whipped all members of the Brown family, including the children, and lit their home on fire, all while screaming at Mary Brown to reveal what she knew about the murder of the federal official.[74]

The whippings the Klansmen gave to Mary Brown, her husband, and her children that morning would come to scar the Brown family mentally and physically for the rest of their days. Their story would be told among Black people in North Georgia, a haunting tale many could relate to, and all lived in fear of experiencing. Jim and Mary Brown and their children had been caught in a vicious crossfire of racial brutality and a moonshine war. The Mossy Creek Klan's attack on the Brown family is an example of unbridled racism that, when combined with localist motivations, resulted in a brutal physical and emotional attack on a Black mountain family.

This social motivation in North Georgia was then harnessed for political power. C. Mildred Thompson cites a witness who is speaking in front of the Ku Klux Committee who says, "Since

72 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia,* 51.
73 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia,* 52.
74 Slap and McKinney, *Reconstructing Appalachia,* 53-54.

the war, that feeling on the part of the non-slaveholders toward the negroes has been worse...The shrewd, smart, cunning men of the country among the Democratic masses took advantage of that feeling... they took advantage of the prejudice of this class of men against the colored people and....fanned their passions and kept them alive against the colored people."[75] Southern Democrats in Georgia knew that by harping on the social prejudices of whites in the Northern section of the state, they could gain political power for the Democratic party. Additionally, "..former Confederate officers, such as Congressman William P. Price, used the legacy of their military service for political gain. The editors of the Dahlonega Mountain Signal were also solidly Democratic, using their pages to decry 'radical abuses' and African American civil rights." The white Democrats in positions of power in Georgia, most of them cold-blooded and merciless racists as well as Confederate veterans themselves, knew they would receive political support if they ran on platforms of white supremacy.

John Brown Gordon himself, the former Confederate general who had served as a Grand Dragon in the Georgia Ku Klux Klan, was elected to the Georgia Senate in 1873, all while preaching such statements as, "The Saxon race was never created by Almighty God to be ruled by the African" and stressing the importance of maintaining the existing racial hierarchy.[76] Gordon also emphasized the importance of maintaining what he felt was an accurate view of the South's heritage. He was adamant that Southerners needed to resist Republican and Northern efforts "'to destroy the self-respect and character of Southern youth by teaching them...that they are descendants of rebels and traitors to the Constitution of the country.'...the motives that prompted Southerners to go to war in 1861 must not be disparaged."[77] This stance was typical of Southern Democrats at the time and helped politicians like Gordon draw white voters into the movement from across the state. Another tactic used by Democratic politicians was to attack the Republican Party, and in doing so, freedpeople as well. Gordon claimed that during the 1868 gubernatorial election, "...that the Republicans had made full use of the black population by passing them from county to county during the four days of the election,"

75 Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, 342.
76 Eckert, *John Brown Gordon*, 131.
77 Eckert, *John Brown Gordon*, 137.

thus emphasizing his point that Georgia Republicans were corrupt and simultaneously undermining the intelligence and political awareness of Black Georgians.

The Ku Klux Klan terrorized freedmen in the American South for years following the Civil War. Riding through the dark Georgia night, Klansmen burned houses, whipped families, destroyed farms, and scarred Black Georgians for life. Furthering the truth that the Klan functioned as a localist organization rather than a nationally organized system, Ku Klux Klan violence in North and Appalachian Georgia was unlike that of other parts of the state. It differed in its membership, its motivations, and its tactics. Its actions dispel the myth of the rugged, benevolent mountaineer, too focused on his own backwoods way of living to worry about the Black man down the road. The Georgia Mountain Klansman was poor, incredibly racist, afraid, and would stop at nothing to keep the government's hands out of his "fruit jar full of...good corn liquor."[78]

78 "Good Corn Liquor," *The SteelDrivers,* 2010.

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SELF-DESTRUCTION ON THE PERIPHERY

An Analysis of Medieval Female Tertiaries

Elise Murphy

Abstract

THIS paper examines the destabilizing effect that extreme religious devotion had on women outside of the convent structure, more specifically, its profoundly negative impacts on female tertiaries. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Europe's convents were overrun by women wishing to become devotees. This led to many devout women choosing to adopt a religious way of life outside of the cloister by engaging in chastity, prayer, and penance without the regulatory framework of the convent. Through case studies of Dominican, Augustinian, and Franciscan tertiaries, this paper reveals a pattern of extreme ascetic practices, including starvation, self-flagellation, and other forms of self-harm, enabled by the absence of communal regulation or familial support. By contrast, convents provided a rigid structure of prayer, labor, learning, and regulated discipline that acted as a preventative tool against extreme acts of piety. To complicate the binary, an additional case study of an abbess named Benedetta Carlini, whose extreme performances of piety led to scandal and downfall, is analyzed to introduce the possibility of cycles of self-harm and extreme piety when the subject possesses unique authority within the convent structure. Ultimately, this paper argues that while the convent structure limited female autonomy, it also acted as a protective and stabilizing force in a society that placed a high value on increasingly extreme ascetic acts, whereas the peripheral tertiaries were vulnerable to psychological, social, and physical consequences of unregulated devotion.

Introduction

MEDIEVAL European convents had a problem, too many women wanted to be nuns. Twelfth and thirteenth century Europe was defined by an uptick in religious fervor, which some scholars characterized as a "distinct women's religious movement."[1] Passion

1 Herbert Grundmann, *Religiose Bewegungen im Mittelalter: Untersu- chungen uber die geschichtlichen*

for religion amongst Christian women forced multiple religious orders–such as the Cistercians and the Premonstratensians–to restrict the number of sanctioned nunneries.[2] These limitations motivated some penitent women to affiliate themselves with specific religious orders and embody the ideals of female religious life, such as reclusion, regular prayer, and chastity, without being formally cloistered. Through analyzing the actions of medieval penitent women who lived outside of the cloister structure, a pattern of overzealous acts of self-harm emerges, especially when engaging in more extreme forms of worship such as self-flagellation and starvation. I will use accounts of life within the cloister and accounts from three tertiaries of different religious orders: Dominican, Augustinian, and Franciscan–to argue that the convent's ordered way of life and active regulation of intense religious acts allowed for women religious to still engage in these activities, while protecting them from unsafe practices. Conversely, the female tertiaries who existed outside of the restrictive and protective structure of the cloister were prone to over-indulge in self-destructive behaviors in the pursuit of holiness. Thus, the physical and spiritual structure of the cloister acted as an emotional safety net that not only protected women from the corruptive forces of secular society but also protected them from devolving into patterns of self-destruction. My analysis will be complicated by detailing the actions of Benedetta Carlini, who performed extreme acts of piety to demonstrate her exceptional holiness during her tenure as abbess of the Convent of the Mother of God at Pescia. The steady increase in the extremity of her actions is what eventually led to her political downfall and social death.

How Does the Convent Structure Protect Women?

A consistent and largely unyielding routine defined convent life. All of the sisters participated in the standardized Catholic prayer schedule, attended regular religious services, and ate communal meals. During meals, they often ate in silence or had someone read religious lessons aloud, as exemplified in the

Zusammenhange zwischen der Ketzerei, den Bettelorden, und der religiosen Frauenbewegung im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert und uber die geschichtlichen Grundlagen der Deutschen Mystik (Berlin, 1935; revised edition, Hildesheim, 1961). This citation is via Daniel Bornstein, "Women and Religion in Late Medieval Italy: History and Historiography," in *Women and Religion in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. Daniel Bornstein and Roberto Rusconi (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 7.

2 Bornstein, *Women and Religion*, 7.

Constitutions of Abbess Scolastica of Le Murate,

> *In the refectory, the first thing done by the chosen person is to place the book on the table to read the lesson, and those who disobey should say in penitence five Our Fathers while kneeling on the floor.*[3]

Refusal to adhere to the standards of the convent resulted in swift disciplinary action. Scaled punishments were often standardized by the religious order's rule, such as the Benedictine Rule for convents part of the Order of Saint Benedict, or the rule of the current abbess.

Convent leaders also instated firm regulations around what type of food their charges were permitted to eat. In her book *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, Caroline Walker Bynum cites a vision from Margaret of Cortona in which she claimed that Christ told her, "Christians cannot be perfect unless they restrain their appetites from vices, for without abstinence from food and drink the war of the flesh will never end..."[4] Restricting oneself from certain foods was vital to achieving and maintaining "abstinence". Bynum preserves this verbiage throughout her book, and notes that, "Abstinence was sometimes understood as simply abstinence from meat, although it usually included certain animal products (especially milk and eggs) as well."[5] In relation to the types of restricted foods in the convent, there were also expectations surrounding the volume of food one should eat and whether it be restricted or increased. This point is especially salient within the context of Christian female devotion because there was a propensity for food-restriction to become a self-destructive act of piety. In the convent of Corpus Domini, their founder and religious beacon, Brother Giovanni Dominici, ordered that all the sisters were required to immediately respond to the meal chime's summons and that when eating must "take food according to their needs, because many rose from the table having eaten little."[6] He passed this order for the health and safety of the women under his charge and played a key role in establishing a disciplined and chaste group that was a proper representative of the Dominican Order.

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3 Giustina Niccolini, *The Chronicle of Le Murate, trans. Saundra Weddle* (Toronto: Iter Inc, 2001), 118.
4 Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast* (University of California Press, 1988), 2.
5 Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, 41.
6 Bartolomea Riccoboni, *Life and Death in a Venetian Convent, 1395-1436: The Chronicle and Necrology of Corpus Domini*, trans. Daniel Bornstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 36.

In addition to stringently scheduled prayer times and enforced meals, those living in convents also had to attend to the matters of everyday life. Those include household tasks that secular women engaged in, such as laundry, mending communal clothing, or gardening. However, nuns' labor differed in that they also engaged in administrative tasks like balancing ledgers or communicating with local governments via letters.[7,8] Nuns were also expected to engage in learning, reading, scribe work, and composition of texts as these were important facets of their religious devotion.[9] Thus, women religious' days were enriched with endless tasks, many of which strengthened their connection to the local community; as, despite the ideal of religious reclusion, in practice, the institutionalized structure of the convent often shared a rich and symbiotic relationship with the surrounding community.[10] Further, by virtue of each convent's membership to a designated order, they were also allowed access to the "international dimensions of their orders", as noted by Vera Morton in her introduction to the book *Guidance for Women in Twelfth-Century Convents*.[11] These persisting connections had the potential to enrich the academic and creative pursuits of female devotees as they were able to maintain an updated knowledge of international culture, society, and politics. This tendency to be attuned to contemporary culture, even while cloistered, is exemplified by the letters exchanged between the Pirckheimer sisters, who were nuns at the convent of Holy Cross at Bergen, and their brother. Most interestingly, their letters also revealed that their brother enabled their creative endeavors by regularly sending art supplies, like paints, to the cloistered sisters: "See to it that you send us a beautiful gold pigment. We want to try *aurum pigment*; never had it before."[12] Although the clergy

7 Vera Morton, "Introduction," in *Guidance for Women in Twelfth-Century Convents in Library of Medieval Women*, ed. Jane Chance (Rochester, NY: D. S. Brewer, 2003), 8

8 Morton, "Introduction," 9.

9 Morton, "Introduction," 8.

10 "However strictly enclosed they might be, women's houses were part of the wider community of Western Christendom…" Morton, "Introduction," 9. *See also*, Jeanne de Jussie's *Short Chronicle* in which she details the drawn-out legal proceedings the Poor Sisters Clare were involved in and the extensive self-advocacy they had to engage in during the Protestant Reformation. A notable example came in the form of the ringing of the bells, which they were forbidden from doing by the local government, but they pushed back, "the sisters of Saint Clare were not allowed to ring bells for matins…They asked the messeigneurs of the Council to allowed them to ring bells for matins, and their request was granted…" Jeanne de Jussie, *The Short Chronicle: A Poor Clare's Account of the Reformation in Geneva,* trans. Carrie F. Klaus (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 42

11 Vera Morton, "Introduction," in *Guidance for Women in Twelfth-Century Convents in Library of Medieval Women*, ed. Jane Chance (Rochester, NY: D. S. Brewer, 2003), 8

12 Jeffrey F. Hamburger, "Nun's Work," in *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent,* (Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 201.

operationally failed to limit artistic productions to those which were sacred in nature, they continued to actively encourage artistic practice as it could, "foster discipline, quell idleness, and supply the church with the ornaments required for the celebration of the liturgy."[13]

This is not to say that the convent system only had positive impacts on women's lives. One must recognize that many women were stripped of personal agency and placed in convents against their will.[14] However, it is important to establish that the convent provided a rigidly structured environment, within which some women religious were able to find personal enrichment both through individual religious cultivation and artistic creation; all without being liable to suffer the less savory aspects of medieval female life, like marital rape or the dangers of childbirth.

As noted earlier, this structure was regulated by a strict set of rules and corresponding disciplinary action. Some punishments involved simply reciting a prescribed number of Our Fathers, or more extreme punishments like having one's "hands tied behind her back saying the psalm *Misere Mei Deus*," as detailed in *The Chronicle of Le Murate*.[15] When no specific punishment was named and only the ambiguous word "discipline" was used, it often meant that women religious were engaging in self-flagellation. Self-flagellation was a cornerstone of medieval religious life, which could put religious practitioners' lives at risk. Self-flagellation was an especially precarious practice, given that self-harm has the potential to become addictive. The psychological and physiological reasons for which are outlined by Dr. Sharon Klayman Farber in her book, *When the Body is the Target*. A simplification of her argument is as follows: due to humans' incredible capacity to become emotionally and physiologically attached to both physical things and symbolic ideas, an unhealthy attachment or addiction to self-harm has the potential to emerge.[16] Further, when the body is injured, it releases natural painkillers called endorphins, which simultaneously

13 Hamburger, "Nun's Work", 181.
14 A notable source of a woman's voice on this issue is *Paternal Tyranny* written by Arcangelo Tarabotti, in which she makes a passionate argument against the systematic oppression of women which was enabled by the convent structure. Arcangela Tarabotti, *Paternal Tyranny,* trans. Letizia Panizza (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
15 Giustina Niccolini, *The Chronicle of Le Murate*, trans. Saundra Weddle (Toronto: Iter Inc, 2001), 119.
16 Sharon Klayman Farber, *When the Body is the Target: Self-Harm and Traumatic Attachments* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson).

reduce the body's ability to register pain and enhance one's sense of well-being.[17] Thus, an emotionally motivated and physiologically enhanced attachment has the potential to emerge and become addictive. Convent leaders understood the dangers associated with self-harm and implemented preventative measures for the sisters to follow. One example being the communal and standardized nature of self-flagellation as seen in *The Short Chronicle* by Jeanne de Jussie of the Convent of Saint Clare in Geneva, "The poor nuns watched for them every night, praying to God for the holy religion and for the poor world, and they all disciplined themselves after matins and asked God for mercy."[18] Not all convents subscribed to communal acts of self-flagellation, in which case, women religious were expected to engage in moderation. When the sisters at Corpus Domini could no longer be trusted to exercise moderation with individually guided self-harm, they were ordered to surrender their whips and chains and were thereafter required to ask either Giovanni or the vicaress for permission to "scourge herself."[19] These regulatory practices aimed to reduce the risk associated with self-harm as a religious practice.

Through the employment of these strict rules and emotional support provided by the convent structure, there is some evidence that women religious lived longer than the average medieval woman, with the important stipulation that many young women died in childbirth, which was not a risk for penitents. According to the bioarcheologist Sharon DeWitte, the average life expectancy of this era was around fifty-years old, with the stipulation that the older one became, the longer they were likely to live.[20] Meaning that the further one got from childhood, and for women specifically getting through their fertile years, the longer one was likely to live. These claims are supported by data collected by researchers at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health who used the Florentine *Monte Delle Doti* records to determine the life-cycle patterns of Florentine women between 1425 and 1545. The *Monte Delle Doti* was a government-funded dowery investment fund

17 "Endorphins," Cleveland Clinic, May 19, 2022, https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/body/23040-endorphins (accessed December 15, 2024).
18 Jeanne de Jussie, The Short Chronicle: A Poor Clare's Account of the Reformation in Geneva, trans. Carrie F. Klaus (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 54.
19 *Bartolomea Riccoboni, Life and Death in a Venetian Convent, 1395-1436*: The Chronicle and Necrology of Corpus Domini, trans. Daniel Bornstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 36.
20 University of South Carolina, August 10, 2022, https://www.sc.edu/uofsc/posts/2022/08/conversation-old-age-is-not-a-modern-phenomenon.php (accessed December 15, 2024).

which recorded each girl's date-of-birth and, if she died before her dowery was withdrawn from the fund, her date-of-death. From these numbers, they were able to determine that "the youngest girls had the highest mortality rate. The lowest observed rate is for those 10-14 years old, and there is a moderate increase in rate apparent for 15-19 and the 20+ categories."[21] In comparison to the number of women dying outside of the convent, the necrology of Corpus Domini shows that numerous women lived for 50+ years within the convent walls. These numbers are notable when one considers that this is a relatively limited necrology which only records the deaths of about fifty women between the years of 1395 and 1436.[22]

Thus, the previously noted restrictions on and intrusions into women religious' lives served a double purpose–whether intended or not–to both regulate their free-will for the glory of God and safeguard their physical and mental well-being. In this way, the convent became a safety net for women religious in which they could engage with God on a personal level, have access to multiple community networks, and find avenues of self-cultivation.

The Unstable Nature of the Third Order

IN tandem with the religious fervor of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and religious orders' need to restrict the number of convents, there was a similar increase in the number of women who chose to live on the cusp of both secular and religious societies as religious tertiaries. As tertiaries, they embodied the same ideals as cloistered women, but they did not have a comparable support network, neither in the form of the convent nor the family. This lack of familial support is partially derived from the feelings of resentment which were harbored by the male members of the family as a result of the financial and emotional burden the tertiary's refusal to marry put on the household, "[the tertiary] was seen as a burden on the family's economy, occupying more space in the paternal household than her domestic and social "passivity"

21 Anthony Molho, Alan S Morrison, and Julius Kirshner, "Life Cycle Events in 15th Century Florence: Records of the *Monte Delle Doti*," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 106, (1977), 487-492, https://academic.oup.com/aje/article/106/6/487/56452?login=true (accessed December 15, 2024), 489.
22 Bartolomea Riccoboni, *Life and Death in a Venetian Convent*, 1395-1436: *The Chronicle and Necrology of Corpus Domini*, trans. Daniel Bornstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 10.

merited–her maintenance was an unwelcome imposition."[23] The breakdown of the familiar support network is even more dire when there is no convent structure present, with Anna Benvenuti Papi, a scholar of female tertiaries, regarding the convent structure as being synonymous with that of the secular family. The untethered nature of female tertiaries is supported by their characterization from the perspective of contemporaneous scholars like the renowned Franciscan, Gilbert of Tournai, who wrote in one of his reports, "'there are among us women whom we have no idea what to call, ordinary women or nuns, because they live neither in the world nor out of it."[24] His statement reveals the suspicion and hesitance with which tertiary women were initially regarded, because their mere existence posed a threat to accepted measures of female control, which made religious leaders nervous. Thus, Benvenuti Papi has also taken to characterizing their existences as "destabilized" due to their lack of support networks and the ostracization they initially suffered. The scholar Katherine Jane Gill masterfully summarizes the environment within which these tertiaries had to live, explaining, "two contradictory attitudes toward the phenomenon: admiration and suspicion. These attitudes would color the environment in which pious laywomen lived for centuries."[25]

The vulnerability these women suffered can be contextualized by taking an analytical reading of their lives and how they toed the line between the religious and secular worlds, all while being unable to fully engage or integrate with either group. One of the most notorious tertiaries was Catherine of Siena, a Dominican mystic who famously died from starvation in 1380 at just thirty-three years old. The *Miracoli of Catherine of Siena* was likely written by an unknown author after encountering her during the meeting of the Dominican General Chapter in May of 1374.[26] The rationale behind utilizing this specific source for a majority of the analysis instead of Catherine's official *vita*, as written by

23 Anna Benvenuti Papi, "Mendicant Friars and Female Tertiaries in Tuscany: From Social Margins to Models of Sanctity," in *Women and Religion in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. Daniel Bornstein and Roberto Rusconi (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 88.
24 Gilbert of Tournai, *Collectio de scandalis ecclesiae*. ed. Ignaz von Dollinger, *Betrage zur politischen, kirchlichen und Kulturgeschichte*, vol. 3 (Vienna: Manz,1882), 3: 197. This translation and quote were located via Katherine Jane Gill, "Penitents, *pinzochere*, and *mantellate*: *Varieties of Women's Religious Communities in Central Italy*, c.1300-1520," PhD diss., (Princeton University, 1994), 65.
25 Katherine Jane Gill, "Penitents, *pinzochere*, and *mantellate*: Varieties of Women's Religious Communities in Central Italy, c.1300-1520," PhD diss., (Princeton University, 1994), 65.
26 Editor's Note to "The *Miracoli* of Catherine of Siena," in *Dominican Penitent Women*, ed. and trans. Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner (New York/Mahwah NJ, Paulist Press: 2005), 87.

her personal confessor, Raymond of Capua, is that this source is potentially less propagandic in nature. Raymond manipulated the story of Catherine's life so that he could construct, standardize, and argue for a uniquely Dominican ideal of female religious devotion. Further, his association with Catherine elevated his status within the Dominican religious order as evidenced by his promotion to the role of 'Master General of the Dominican Order and the Latin Church' immediately following Catherine's death.[27] The *Miracoli* is a comparatively simplistic record of Catherine's life in which the author picks out the most extraordinary components of her religious career and records them without significant embellishment. However, given that this source was completed several years before her death, it offers no insight into the desecration her body suffered in her final weeks; thus, Raymond's hagiography will be utilized to contextualize the extremity of her physical decline.

Although the end of Catherine's life was defined by phenomenal acts of starvation, the author of the *Miracoli* uncovers her fundamental religious fervor by detailing her isolationist tendencies for spiritual meditation: "She looked for solitary places inside her home…She sneaked out of the house early in the morning to go to a church that was fairly close to her home."[28] As a result of her propensity to engage in physical isolation, Catherine also began to suffer natal isolation following her family's inability to understand the reasoning for her religious devotion. This lack of understanding led to angry outbursts, such as one recorded by the author in which her brother yelled at her for being enraptured by religious imagery inside a church, "As the girl stood, her eyes fixed on the wonder… The enraged brother yelled at her, cursed her, and called her to move on."[29] The emotional fallout of this event was dire, as the author notes that Catherine refused to share what she had seen during her early visions, stating that she "did not tell her father or her mother or anybody else what she had seen."[30] This event marks the depth of emotional disengagement Catherine felt from her family–one of the most vital and natural support networks during this period in history. Following her father's death when she was just fifteen-years old, Catherine made the decision to align

27 Editor's Note to "The *Miracoli* of Catherine of Siena," in *Dominican Penitent Women*, ed. and trans. Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner (NewYork/Mahwah NJ, Paulist Press: 2005), 88.
28 "The *Miracoli* of Catherine of Siena," in *Dominican Penitent Women*, ed. and trans. Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner (NewYork/Mahwah NJ, Paulist Press: 2005), 90.
29 "The *Miracoli* of Catherine of Siena," 90.
30 "The *Miracoli* of Catherine of Siena," 91.

herself with religious penitence by cutting off all of her hair. This final act of rebellion against secular marriage customs severed the last means of control her natal family had over her as Catherine declared, "I only ask for bread and water. Let me stay on my own and follow my own way."[31] Following this proclamation of seclusionist intent, Catherine is recorded as going into near total isolation for seven years, during which she developed her famous inclination for starvation.[32] The author specifically notes that Catherine steadily, "imposed further limits and restrictions upon herself," and continuously strove to "stop eating even the small amounts of corporal food she still consumed."[33]

Seeing as Catherine started on this religious path while outside of the convent structure, she was more vulnerable to falling into overzealous forms of worship, as she did not have the benefit of a leader who understood her devotion but was also able to regulate her practices. If Catherine were to have lived in a convent, her superiors would have personally encouraged her to eat; if she refused, she would have been singled out for a discussion with the abbess. During this discussion, the leadership would have been able to determine if Catherine needed special assistance for an emotional issue and given the proper emotional support, like having a companion assigned to her, as was common in convents. [34]Conversely, if it were determined that she was being insolent to church authority, she would have been appropriately disciplined. However, in the secular world, where the power and authority that her natal family had over her was slipping, and her mystical authority was expanding, nobody had enough influence to stop her. In fact, instead of being criticized for these extreme acts, Catherine was praised and regarded as being miraculous for her ability to withstand the impact starvation had on her corporeal form. Evidence of this phenomenon lies in the very existence of the *Miracoli* and the context within which it was produced–that being,

31 "The *Miracoli* of Catherine of Siena," 92-93.

32 "After this, the girl stayed in the upper part of the house in a room that was appointed to her. She remained enclosed for about seven years, and she performed rigorous penance. She did not sleep on a bed, or eat any meat, or drink any wine. She only ate bread and water…From this day she never ate more than once a day." "The *Miracoli* of Catherine of Siena," 94.

33 "The *Miracoli* of Catherine of Siena," 93.

34 See the case of Benedetta Carlini who had a companion, Bartolomea Crivelli, assigned to her by the Abbess of the Convent of the Mother God at Pescia after the physical and emotional impact of the visions she suffered from became apparent. Crivelli's presence was intended to, "help her [Benedetta] in her battles with the devil." Judith C. Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 52.

the fascination that the church authorities had with her, to the point that she was a central topic during the Dominican General Chapter meeting.

Raymond was assigned as Catherine's personal confessor following the 1374 meeting, and he continued the pattern of uplifting Catherine's dramatic starvation. In the official vita, interspliced with the graphic descriptions of her physical decline are lengthy explanations as to how her blessed nature allowed her to starve, including saying that Jesus gave her a "sweet drink" which satiated her soul, "From that moment Catherine's stomach had no more need of food, nor could it digest any."[35] So, instead of making any attempts to coax Catherine to eat after being assigned as her spiritual handler, Raymond praised her Godly commitment and watched as her body faded away. Until the end, Raymond juxtaposed her unyielding dedication to pious acts with her bodily desecration, "Her poor body... was reduced to mere skin and bone and seemed not to be alive but already devoured by the grave; nevertheless, she went on walking about, praying and working, seeming to everyone a walking miracle rather than a creature of nature."[36] Catherine of Siena suffered greatly in her pursuit of an idealized tertiary penitent as she steadily became more competitive with herself so as to reach a self-defined pinnacle of religious devotion. However, her pious efforts were rewarded with a premature demise and a posthumous elevation to Saint, where she has long served as an insurmountable pillar of Dominican penitential excellence.

The Dominicans were not the only religious order to produce tertiary penitents and in 1452, the widow Elena Valentini de Udine joined the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine.[37] Upon becoming an Augustinian tertiary, Elena quickly took a vow of silence after taking an extremely literal interpretation of a passage from the Book of James 3:2 in which he, "submitted that anyone who does not offend a neighbor with words is perfect."[38] This decision resulted in extreme social isolation as her only contacts soon became her

35 Raymond of Capua, *The Life of St. Catherine of Siena*, trans. George Lamb (Charlotte, NC: 2011), 259.
36 Raymond of Capua, *The Life of St. Catherine of Siena*, trans. George Lamb (Charlotte, NC: 2011), 258.
37 Unfortunately, there is no English translation of her biography, Legenda della beata Helena as written by the Augustinian theologian and professor, Simone de Roma. Thus, this analysis relies upon a summary of her life in English from the book *Tempting the Tempter*: *Imitatio Christi and the Encounters of Quattrocento Holy Women with the Devil*, which was crafted with ample reference to Simone's text.
38 Amy R. Huesman, "Beata Elena Valentini da Udine, Augustinian Tertiary" in *Tempting the Tempter: Imitatio Christi and the Encounters of Quattrocento Holy Women with the Devil,* ed. Robert J. Bast and others (Boston, MA: 2023), 47.

confessor, whom she met with every day to take Communion, and her sister Profeta. For the first three years of her penitential life, she spent the majority of the day locked in her room, crying and praying.[39]

Aside from her vow of silence, many of the acts performed by Elena in her pursuit of a penitent life served three purposes: *Imitatio Christi*, penance, and humiliation.

> *She wore a crown of iron spikes upon her head day and night as a constant reminder of the Passion of her lord. She often tied a wide rope around her neck and used another to bind her hands behind her back, instructing her sister's servants to lead her through the house as Jesus was led along the road to Mount Calvary...She walked with thirty-three stones in her shoes under the soles of her feet, as penance for her love of dancing in her youth and as a reminder of the thirty-three years Jesus walked the earth. She flogged her own body, as penance for her former pleasures of the flesh and as a reminder of the whippings Christ endured while tied to a column.*[40]

Elena's choice to retroactively punish herself for sins committed before taking tertiary vows is especially striking because it was incongruent with prevailing theological thought. When widows joined convents and became nuns, they were not prescribed special penance for having once participated in marital duties. Widows often became greatly respected members of convents and were often voted into office as abbesses due to their worldly experiences and acquired financial knowledge by virtue of having to resolve their deceased husbands' estates. Further, her interpretation of *Imitatio Christi* is especially extreme, as many religious devotees of the time largely chose to imitate Christ in a tamer manner by dedicating themselves to a life of poverty and chastity, not one that was built upon patterns of self-harm.

Elena's practices were substantially enabled by her isolationist practices and the continuous encouragement from her confessor–a

39 "she prayed and wept copious tears every day for nine hours–seven for each canonical hours and for the Passion of Christ, one for confession and Communion, and one for the remission of sin for all sinners" and "immediately after he presented the details of her vow of silence, where he explained that she spent a great deal of time in solitude, leaving the isolation of her cell only to go to Santa Lucia every morning for prayers." Huesman, *Tempting the Tempter*, 47 and 51.
40 Huesman, *Tempting the Tempter*, 46.

man who retained sole authority over Elena's right to speak.[41] In addition to the humiliation she suffered from the extreme acts of *Imitatio Christi* and self-prescribed penance, Elena also committed acute acts of violence against herself without any clear religious reason, like taking up a large rock and beating her chest with it until she bled. So, although Simone attempted to offer logical and religiously minded explanations for her acts of self-discipline, even he could not thoroughly qualify all of them. Illogical acts such as this would not have been allowed to take place within the convent, as the extremity of the acts may have themselves warranted discipline, as they likely would have been regarded as being prideful and boastful of one's own religious devotion. Further, indiscriminate acts of self-harm were not permitted, as the practice was carefully regulated and required the usage of specific tools, which were less likely to cause death, like whips. A dramatic act of beating one's chest with a rock presented direct peril to the sister's life and would have been halted by her superiors.

Elena died in 1458, only living for six more years after becoming an Augustinian tertiary. The last three years of her life were spent bedridden with maladies, for which she refused treatment. Her physical suffering and subsequent death were avoidable events, seeing as she had already passed the highest risk ages for women, in that she had survived both childhood and the births of all six of her children. Elena's weakened countenance and success in refusing treatment can be attributed to the social and emotional isolation she suffered despite being recognized as a devotee of the Augustinian order.

Another Layer of Vulnerability

IN his book *Ecstatic Religion*, the anthropologist I.M. Lewis suggests that "possession" most often affects marginalized or peripheral groups within society, a description that is easily extended to women in medieval Europe. Though these tertiaries were not in a constant state of possession, one can interpret their violently religious actions as a sort of possessed state. He also argues that these possessions act as a means of coping with their situation without isolating themselves from other members of the community. Thus, although this paper has made claims regarding

41 "speaking to no one without the permission of her confessor, except on Christmas" Huesman, *Tempting the Tempter*, 47.

the isolationist tendencies of tertiaries, there is also room to interpret their maintained connection with a religious order as a resistance to full isolation while also maintaining a perceived sense of freedom.[42] This claim is supported by the encouragement that tertiaries often received from their local communities via financial support, turning to them for guidance in a difficult period of life, or going to them for a miracle. Thus, the unbalanced acts that tertiaries performed simultaneously fed the parts of their psyche that desired to be separated from the pressures of secular society, while also positing themselves as productive members via their spiritual contributions to the community.

Lewis also makes the point that the vulnerable societal position these women possess, in turn, makes them more vulnerable to possession, as they face the particular pressures surrounding marriage, including: the end of a marriage, being in an unsuccessful marriage, or not wanting to be married. Lewis' argument is made directly relevant to medieval penitent women given Benvenuti's observation that their holiness tended to emerge after familial disruption and the resulting breakdown of social networks, "certain types of women keep cropping up in the hagiographical writings examined here: widows, orphans, victims of familial breakdown, social disruption, and economic dislocation."[43] Lewis regards marriage as an institution that prevents women from securing a dominating role within society, and that the clearest avenue through which to reclaim a sense of dominance and independence was to secure "the seal of divine approved possession" via joining a religious institution which had the potential to, "enhance [her] influences immeasurably."[44] However, the restrictions on the number of nunneries severely limited their opportunities; thus, they turned to the tertiary lifestyle, which continued to make them vulnerable to overzealous conduct via the addictive nature of self-harm and the positive feedback loop they experienced.

The last tertiary penitent whose life will be analyzed is Margaret of Cortona, a Franciscan tertiary whose performances of piety largely

42 I.M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession* (New York, NY: 1989), 167.
43 Anna Benvenuti Papi, "Mendicant Friars and Female Tertiaries in Tuscany: From Social Margins to Models of Sanctity," in *Women and Religion in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. Daniel Bornstein and Roberto Rusconi (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 86.
44 "The keenest recruits and the most committed enthusiast are women who, for one reason or another, do not make a success of their marital roles, react against new domestic confinement or who, having fulfilled these roles, seek a new career in which they can give free rein to the desire to manage and dominate others" I.M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession* (New York, NY: 1989), 171.

involved instances of self-mortification, including self-flagellation and starvation. As she is written about by Antonio Francisco Giovagnoli in her official biography, Margaret matches Lewis's characterization of a peripheral shamanistic figure, as she suffered from a turbulent childhood. At seven-years old, Margaret's mother died, and thereafter her father remarried a woman who mistreated Margaret. To escape the tense and traumatic surroundings of her home, Margaret ran away at seventeen with a young knight, with whom she had a bastard child. After nine years of sinful existence, Margaret left her new home upon finding her lover murdered in a nearby forest. She was taken in by the Franciscan order in Cortona because her father refused to provide shelter to her and her son. Upon being exposed to their religious ideals, Margaret began reflecting on her young adult life with revulsion. Even prior to being permitted to receive the habit of a tertiary, this disgust resulted in a strong desire to engage in extreme forms of penance to punish her body for the sinful actions it had committed. She began this journey by isolating herself in a hovel so, "she might better devote herself to the contemplation of her crucified God, and, less observed by man, might more severely chastise her hated body."[45] This marks the beginning of her project of self-mortification as she also began giving her best food to the poor and only saved meager supplies for her own consumption.[46] This led to a lifelong infatuation with starvation as a form of penance.

After receiving the habit, Margaret's acts of piety only became more extreme as she engaged in "lengthened fasts, more cruel scourgings, sharper hair cloths, longer vigils at night, and perpetual silence by day…"[47] These increasingly violent acts in turn increased Margaret's vulnerability to possession. Christ spoke to her for the first time after she almost drowned herself during a late-night walk-through Cortona. Instead of comforting Margaret, Christ scolded her and, "infused into her mind a clear discernment of her demerit for any good, her capacity for evil alone," however even as he reprimanded her, he also encouraged her to continue on her path to purification saying, "Fear not to obtain full remission of thy

45 Anthony Francis Giovagnoli, *The Life of Saint Margaret of Cortona*, (New York, NY: P.J. Kennedy & Sons, 1858), 35-36.
46 Giovagnoli, *Life of Saint Margaret*, 36.
47 Giovagnoli, *Life of Saint Margaret*, 44.

sins…"[48] After this first conversation with Christ, he communicated with her on a regular basis, particularly after her, "outburst[s] of insatiable contrition."[49] During these meetings, he encouraged her strong emotions and absolved her of previous sins. However, Margaret was not satisfied, as his appearances only served to fuel her increasingly extreme penitential actions. Her extended and direct communication with Christ, in which he gave her clear direction on how she should conduct herself, further supports Lewis' argument regarding peripheral shamanistic figures, as Christ's presence drove her to desire further isolation. This is evidenced by her begging Christ to allow her to remain locked in a cell for the rest of her life. He denies her request and requires her to continue dedicating her life to serving others as penance for her actions.[50]

After this denial, she turned to other avenues to appease Christ, including reinvigorating her engagement in self-flagellation, "To appease him, she employed against herself unmerciful scourgings that made the blood flow freely from her whole lacerated body."[51] The Christ who appears to Margaret is often characterized by possessing a lack of mercy toward sinners, who is only deterred from punishing other peasants by Margaret's "most rigorous penances." Thus Margaret's body becomes the battleground not only for the absolution of her own sins, but also the sins of those around her.[52] Despite her many years of dedicated service and sacrificing her body for the absolution of her fellow man, Margaret lived in isolated contemplation for the last decade of her life. The third and final book of her vita, titled "Margaret's Death and Miracles," opens with descriptions of the ecstatic moments she experienced with heaven during this isolated period. She is repeatedly informed by Christ that she will not live a long life, in which she rejoices.[53]

48 Giovagnoli, *Life of Saint Margaret,* 46.
49 Giovagnoli, *Life of Saint Margaret*, 50.
50 Giovagnoli, *Life of Saint Margaret*, 52.
51 Giovagnoli, *Life of Saint Margaret*, 81.
52 "But Margaret's zeal aided the people of Cortona, even more than the prelate. Jesus often showed himself armed against them with destroying scourges: to disarm him, she interposed most fervent prayers, undertook the more rigorous penances, and so successfully, that she often heard him declare, that her mere look saved those citizens from the impending chastisements of his just wrath." Giovagnoli, *Life of Saint Margaret*, 89.
53 "she shrunk from the promise of a long life, and rejoiced at the threats of anticipated death–a horror and joy increased in her daily by that cruel minister of her interior martyrdom, the continual fear of falling into sin…" Giovagnoli, *Life of Saint Margaret,* 201-202.

The Complicated Case of Bendetta Carlini

FROM the space between the regulatory and protective structure of the convent and the untethered and destabilized nature of the tertiary, the interesting case of Benedetta Carlini emerges. Carlini's case stands out from the annals of history due to the nature of the performances she was engaged in during her tenure as the abbess of the convent of the Mother of God at Pescia. These actions led to two separate investigations, with the first being headed by the Provost of Pescia and the second by the *papal nuncios*. After the first investigation, Carlini was allowed to remain abbess of the convent, but after the second, she was removed from her position of authority and imprisoned there for the rest of her life.

At twenty-three years old, Benedetta reported her first vision to her mother-superior and her confessor, after which she began to regularly experience visions. However, her visionary skill did not immediately warrant any special attention, and she was instructed by her confessor to "disbelieve everything she saw so as to not give the devil grounds on which to work his tricks," and to actively repress the onset of her visions so as to avoid becoming too prideful in her visionary gift.[54] As a result of her resistance, Benedetta was gifted physical illness by God, and she often spent her nights writhing in pain, as corroborated by her companion at the time, Mea Crivello. Crivello testified in the first investigation that, "Often I did not go to sleep until the eighth or ninth hour so that I could help her because she had those pains. She had those pains on her heart and often throughout her entire body, but the former were the strongest."[55] Due to her divine maladies, Benedetta was formally excused from having to be involved in the everyday chores of the convent, marking her unique isolation from the community by virtue of her special gifts.

In 1618, at the age of twenty-eight, Benedetta reported that she received the stigmata - the ultimate sign of her devotion to, and connection with, Christ. Two years later, at just thirty-years old, Benedetta became the first abbess of the newly established cloister at the convent of the Mother God at Pescia. As abbess, Benedetta gave sermons while in a trance-like state. This "possession" gave

54 Judith C. Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 52.
55 Brown, *Immodest Acts*, 152.

her the right to transgress into activities that were not acceptable for women religious, as she was able to claim that it was God using her body as a vessel to exert His will, rather than her own personal authority.

In 1619, Benedetta's relationship with Christ reached a new peak, as he instructed her to organize a grand wedding with full decorations to celebrate their union. Benedetta could do nothing but obey and thus held a semi-public wedding to Christ, during which the groom spoke through Benedetta and declared to all those present that they would be punished if they doubted and refused to obey any of Benedetta's commands.[56] These claims are what triggered the first investigation into her actions. While her visions and the reception of the stigmata were miraculous, they still existed within the realm of reason for female religious life. However, these outlandish claims and direct threats from "Christ" caused the local government to take notice.

The first investigation largely proceeded without issue because Benedetta exhibited fresh wounds on her hands, head, feet, and side–as promised by Christ during one of her sermons–which was a unique manifestation of the stigmata. These wounds were inspected and recorded by the Provost and a group of his advisors. During one of their visits to the convent, they instructed Benedetta to partially undress herself so that they could inspect her wounds more closely. Upon being excused to the next room to reaffix her attire, "she turned around and going towards them with her hands to her head and her face down, she said, 'Jesus, what is this?' And one could see from a puncture of the head the blood instantly spilling on her face and on to the ground."[57] The fresh wounds and the support from her fellow nuns were substantial enough evidence that Benedetta was not disingenuous, and the Provost closed the investigation.

Unfortunately, under the immense pressure that the role of abbess entailed and the upkeep of her role as a mystic, Benedetta's visions became more severe. During one episode, Benedetta was told that she was going to die soon and that she should begin preparing her grave.[58] Then, in an unclear turn of events, a second

56 Brown, *Immodest Acts,* 150-151.
57 Brown, *Immodest Acts,* 159.
58 Brown, *Immodest Acts,* 102.

investigation was initiated by the *papal nuncios* to confirm the truth of Benedetta's visions and determine whether she was a genuine visionary or not. Over the course of this investigation, her nun's loyalty quickly disintegrated as they testified to witnessing her engaging in self-harm in order to maintain her stigmata, "She has been seen by two nuns renewing her wounds at various times with a large needle, as they themselves confess" and to the inconsistency of her wounds, "And three other nuns state they have observed that her wounds sometimes seem very small and almost dry and later, after she has locked herself in her study for a while, they are fresh, as if they had been made recently."[59] These testaments, the crude language Benedetta often used during her sermons, and the sexual acts she committed with her companion Bartolomea led the *nuncios* to conclude that Benedetta had been possessed by the Devil. Consequently, Benedetta was removed from her role as abbess and sentenced to a lifetime of imprisonment within the convent.

Benedetta evidently lacked an appropriate amount of support despite being a member of an official religious order for the duration of her visions. Her removal from the regular operations of the convent only served to isolate Benedetta from the social and religious happenings of the convent and forced her to rely on a small number of people. This state of being was more similar to the social and physical isolation suffered by tertiaries than the support network usually afforded to convent nuns. The authority imparted to her by the visions, and particularly the gift of the stigmata, elevated her status within the convent and allowed her special privileges. Thus, Benedetta learned that the more extreme her connection with Christ became, the more special attention and support she would receive, including having a companion, a private room, and permission to give sermons. However, this positive feedback led to an unintended effect, an increased intensity of religious devotion, and the perceived need to offer proof of her connection to Christ both via the maintenance of the physical wounds "caused" by stigmata and the yellow band of her wedding ring appearing upon her finger.[60] In this manner, Benedetta suffered from a similar

59 Brown, *Immodest Acts*, 160.

60 "Five nuns say they saw another ring, a yellow one with a red stone, on the index ringer of her right hand. But one nun says that even the ring was red, and three others say that they saw another ring that was all yellow and without a stone on her middle finger. And two of these suspected that she herself made the ring with saffron and the stone with blood from her wound." Brown, *Immodest Acts*, 161.

positive feedback loop as tertiaries, which was uniquely afforded to her by virtue of her position of authority within the convent.

Conclusion

MEDIEVAL women faced pressure from all sides. They had minimal agency or legal recourse for declarations of independence and were left with two options: join a convent or get married. However, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a trailblazing sub-group of women religious emerged–penitent tertiaries. For all the empowerment their peripheral positionality provided to them, its accompanying destabilization had a profoundly negative impact on their ability to engage in measured or safe religious devotion. Further, the unfettered access the secular world had to their devotional practices served as a positive feedback loop for their self-destructive tendencies, as the general population actively encouraged increasingly extreme acts of piety. This is opposed to the checks and balances within the convent, which served to protect medieval women from both the corruption of the outside world and self-destructive devotional practices. Benedetta Carlini's case poses a unique problem, as her early isolation from convent life and her rapid rise to power fostered the emergence of the same factors that damaged female tertiaries. The negative conditions created by the collision of the secular and religious worlds had the potential to be recreated even within the cloister. The mentality of these religious tertiaries is difficult to dissect, but through a careful analysis of their lives, a modern reader can begin to scratch the surface in understanding the complicated factors they grappled with and acknowledge why they took radical action.

Ω

THE DEVIL IN THE SEA

Tracing the Origins of the Demonic Association with Sea Monsters

Kaitlin Silva

Abstract

THE history of the Devil encompasses many different disciplines, ranging from religion to politics. However, a less explored facet of the Devil is how ideas of the demonic influenced folklore across many different cultures. In this paper, the connection between the Christian Devil and European oceanic folklore is explored through four case studies: the ocean, Leviathan, mermaids, and the Kraken. These four case studies follow the individual folklore as they develop, and explain when and how the Devil became associated with them. First, an examination is conducted of the Devil's connection with the ocean, from biblical mentions to modern-day superstitions. Next, the paper examines how the creature of Leviathan evolved from a biblical beast to influencing 19th-century literature. After this, the paper examines how the Devil was incorporated into ideas of Sirens from classical mythology to influence the current depictions of mermaids. Lastly, the paper traces the development of the folklore surrounding the Kraken and how it was connected to the Devil.

Introduction

THE year is 1687, and a monster has appeared on the beach. No one knows what this monster is, only that it is far larger than anything they've ever seen before. It has arisen from the sea and now lies upon the sand, thrashing its large body around. Sand is flying everywhere. The creature has rough skin, is covered in unidentifiable prickles, and has a forked tail. When it opens its mouth, there are large, sharp teeth, many of which are crooked or jagged. Two black horns extend above its eyes. As people look on, it lets out a terrible noise. Everyone jumps back. This is not a creature to trifle with. There is only one place safe enough to protect people from this monster's wrath. The only choice is to run to the church and pray for God's protection from this creature sent straight from the Devil.

Fear of the ocean and its inhabitants was a notable part of Western culture for generations. The above story is a real account, sent from the West Indies to a London Merchant.[1] From Moby Dick to Nessie to Jaws, sea monsters occupy an ever-expanding niche of our societal folklore. Why is that? The sea monster is a universal phenomenon across different cultures, but how did this specific understanding of sea monsters develop? The answer lies in another equally notable figure, the Devil. Ideas of the Devil and the demonic ran rampant in people's minds in the medieval and early modern periods, appearing in art, literature, and songs. Dominant religious views of Christianity blamed the demonic for a variety of issues, including the unknown of the oceans. Combined with local superstitions and folklore, sea monsters grew past logical explanations and became agents of the Devil. This paper argues that religious ideas of the Devil influence European folklore surrounding the ocean and sea monsters across various time periods, as illustrated by fears of the ocean, Leviathan, mermaids, and the Kraken.

The Demonic Ocean

THE ocean itself has deep ties to the demonic. This stems back to biblical associations, and the original translation of the Hebrew Bible. In The Book of Revelation, the last book of the New Testament, the ocean is described with a specific Hebrew word designating it as the "primeval sea." This, Jonathan Moo writes, means the ocean is not "merely the Mediterranean or earthly sea, but it is the primeval sea to which all other seas are linked, the deep abyss which can yield springs of water but which also conceals the dark spirits and imprisons the giants of old."[2] This creates the negative connotation surrounding the ocean early on and opens up the gate for further interpretation of the ocean as linked to the Devil. Later in the same book of the Bible, it is written that John sees "a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away – and the sea is no more."[3] In this apocalyptic end, the new heaven and new earth are seemingly perfected by God and notably don't include an ocean. This starkly

1 H., F, *Great nevvs from the west-indies sent in a letter to a merchant of London, november the 28th, 1687* [Great news from the West-Indies.] (London, 1687).
2 Jonathan Moo, "The Sea That Is No More Rev 21:1 and the Function of Sea Imagery in the Apocalypse of John", (*Novum Testamentum* 51, no. 2, 2009), 149-156
3 Moo, "The Sea That Is No More Rev 21:1 and the Function of Sea Imagery in the Apocalypse of John", 149.

puts the ocean within the evil category, tying it into ideas of Satan that need to be eradicated by God's omnipotent power.

The ocean has also been used as a tool to punish within the Bible. Specifically seen in the story of Noah's Ark within The Book of Genesis, God can use the ocean to punish those who are corrupt. In Genesis six through nine, "God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth." Seeing only sin, God decides, "I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die."[4] Here, God is using the ocean and its water to punish those who are corrupt. While the water is God's tool, this only strengthens the ocean's connection to the demonic. The Devil's origin, or specifically Satan's origin, was as a tool of God. Often throughout his early appearances, the Devil was sent to test Christians' morality.[5] If they failed, the Devil served as punishment. Now, the ocean is being used in the same way. Both the Devil and the ocean serve as the "evil" tools at God's disposal to ensure that Christians are following good morality, and act as punishments against those who stray from Christian ideals.

As time went on, the ocean continued to be viewed as evil. Even sailors viewed the ocean as an enemy and constantly sought God's protection in their journey. In a 1879 book titled Notes on the Folk-lore of the *Northern Counties of England and the Borders*, William Henderson wrote about the superstition of bread and cakes made on Good Friday. He explained that, "The Sunderland wives see that their husbands take some [Good Friday bread] to sea with them to avert shipwrecks."[6] The idea that God was needed to protect against the sea directly invokes the sea as demonic, or opposing God's grace. Additionally, preachers used shipwreck and sailing stories in their sermons, preaching warnings against the dangers of the seas. In a 1618 religious text, John Pickford wrote that the world would undergo shipwrecks, and only God could protect them. He stated "the church of *Peter*, whē the world shall burne, shall presēt all, whome it cōprehendeth, safe and without harme."[7] While this

4 KJV, Genesis 6-7
5 KJV, Job 1-22
6 William Henderson, *Notes on the folk-lore of the northern counties of England and the borders,* (London, Pub, 1879) 82
7 IJ. Pickford, *The safegarde from ship-wracke, or heauens hauen compiled by I.P. priest,* (1618).

shipwreck was meant to be a metaphor, the use of "shipwreck" to allude to a disaster exemplified the level of danger the ocean was seen to possess. Just as the Devil attacked Christians, so did the ocean. Only God could protect from both, linking the ocean and the Devil together in the minds of believers.

Another sailor's story reveals a new way in which the ocean has been viewed as demonic. In an exploration report from 1613, sailors wrote about a specific area of the ocean believed to be evil. They explained, "the Ilands of the Barmudas, as euery man knoweth that hath heard or read of them, were neuer inhabited by any Christian or Heathen people, but euer esteemed, and reputed, a most prodigious and inchanted place, affoording nothing but gusts, stormes, and foule weather." This source is describing the Sommer Islands, known today as Bermuda. This source specifically mentions how no one would go to the Islands of the Bermudas, due to it being an "inchanted" place. The source goes on to say "euery Nauigator and Mariner to auoide them, as Scylla and Charibdis; or as they would shun the Diuell himselfe."[8] Here, the ocean is described in two ways: by associating it with Greek depictions of evil, and by associating it with the Devil. Therefore, this presented version of the ocean can create monsters or the demonic. The ocean around Bermuda is still considered cursed, connecting back to the demonic. This area of the ocean has even been called the Devil's Triangle, cementing the demonic correlation.[9] To this day, many people still fear The Devil's Triangle and claim it causes mysterious disappearances, shipwrecks, and deaths.

The demonic imagery of the ocean was also present in historical maps starting in the 16th century. Early cartographers often included images within their maps beyond the physical landscape they saw, including the example in Figure 1.[10] This map details multiple monsters in addition to geographic figures. It is important to note that this map only includes monsters within the sea, and not on land. This highlights the intense fear of the ocean and the

8 Silvester Jourdain, *A Plaine Description of the Barmudas, Now Called Sommer Ilands VVith the Manner of their Discouerie Anno 1609. by the Shipwrack and Admirable Deliuerance of Sir Thomas Gates, and Sir George Sommers, Wherein are Truly Set Forth the Commodities and Profits of that Rich, Pleasant, and Healthfull Countrie. with an Addition, Or More Ample Relation of Diuers Other Remarkeable Matters Concerning those Ilands since then Experienced, Lately Sent from Thence by One of the Colonie Now there Resident* (1613)
9 Howard L. Rosenberg, *Exorcizing the Devil's Triangle*, (1974)
10 Gudbrandur Thorlaksson, *Islandia*, re-engraved from the 1585 edition of a map published by Ortelius. (Library of Congress, ca. 1620)

creatures that may lie within it. These monsters often included a mix of features from multiple animals, many of which have associations with the demonic. In this way, they were also extensions of the Devil, who at this time was believed to take multiple animalistic and human forms. The four-legged creatures at the bottom middle provide a specific example. These, though partially hidden by the water, have goat-like horns and hooves while also possessing long tails. Both the goat and lion tie into demonic imagery, both as a goat or as a lion. These creatures, as well as all others pictured on medieval and early modern maps, reinforce the fear of sea monsters within the ocean. These demonic creatures were believed to be present and important within the ocean, making their way even onto maps. With this level of monstrous activity, it is easy to see how the ocean continued to be associated with the Devil.

Images of the ocean were also present beyond maps, as more people attempted to connect ideas of the Devil with their blossoming curiosity for the ocean. This can be seen in Figure 2, involving a large "sea snake" made in the 19th century.[11] While attacking the ship, this snake clearly invokes ideas of the demonic, specifically in the name. By titling this "the Great Sea Serpent," the author Robert Hamilton clearly wants his viewers to associate the beast with the biblical ideas about the demonic serpent. Additionally, the sea monster is depicted as sizing up a ship. The monster is comically large, with a special focus on the large mouth. The two water spouts from its head are imitating horns. The horns, as previously mentioned, connect to the idea of the Devil, since he is often portrayed as a goat.

Across multiple artistic perspectives of sea creatures, the ocean's beasts are all closely connected with imagery of the Devil. With all of this information in mind, the ocean became a prime location for folklore to develop, growing within it a wide variety of sea monsters.

Leviathan

THE first of these oceanic sea monsters is the Leviathan. Once again, the history of the Leviathan begins with the Bible. In the Old Testament, Leviathan is described in great detail in Chapter Forty-One of The Book of Job. The opening line establishes

11 Robert Hamilton, *The Great Sea Serpent* (according to Hans Egede), (W.H. Lizars, 1839)

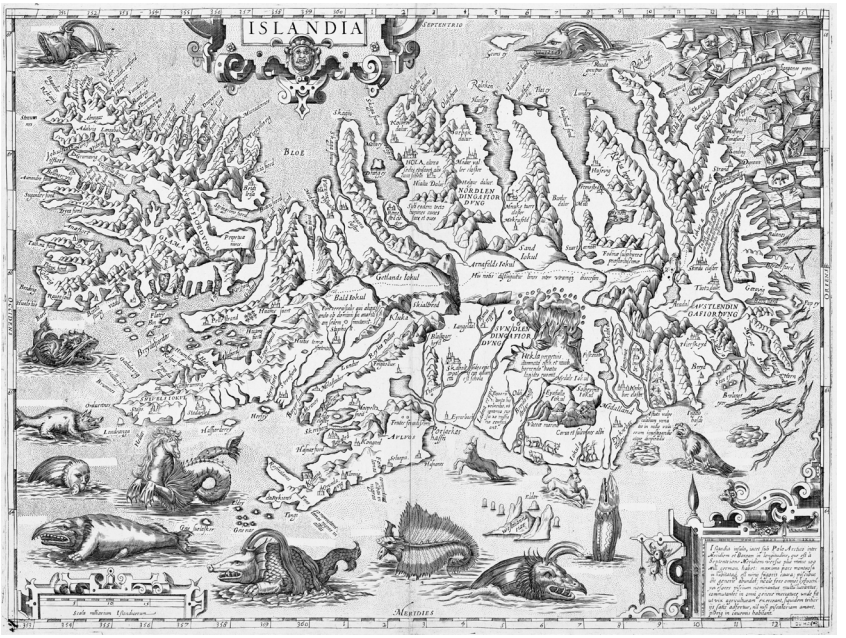


Figure 1. A map of Iceland from Islandia, map in the Titled Collection. Islandia by Gudbrandur Thorlaksson, re-engraved from the 1585 edition of the map published by Ortelius. Ca. 1620. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division

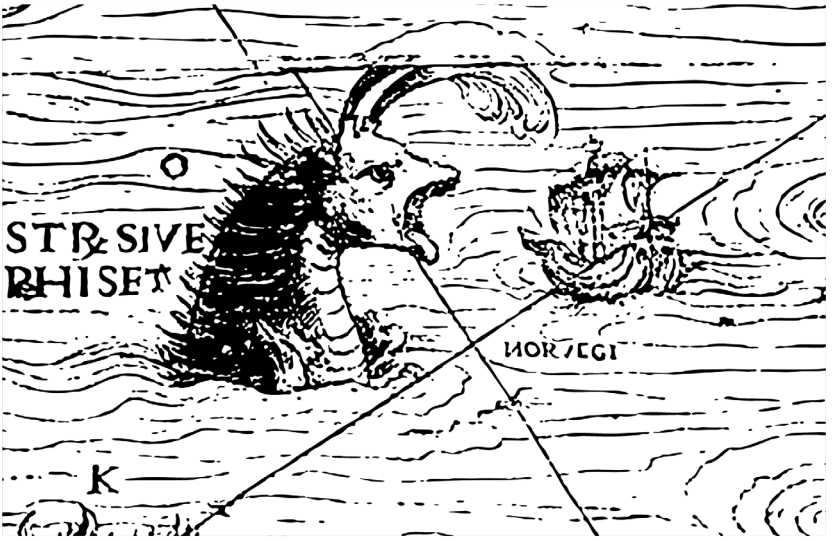


Figure 2. Robert Hamilton, The Great Sea Serpent (according to Hans Egede), (W.H. Lizars, 1839)

Leviathan as a creature of the sea, with the phrase, "Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?" Here, Leviathan is no different than a fish, able to be drawn by a hook. However, Job goes on to describe Leviathan further, "Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. / Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron. / His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth." Despite Leviathan being a creature of the ocean, it is closely correlated with imagery of heat and fire, just like the Devil. Job's most important depiction of Leviathan, however, is his symbolism of pride. First, Job states, "His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal." Later, he declares that Leviathan is "a king over all the children of pride."[12] Pride is a trait often associated with the Devil, furthering Leviathan's demonic ties. By appointing him as king of this trait, he pits Leviathan in opposition to the Christian God, who is also referred to as King.

This is not the only time Leviathan is referenced in the Bible. In The Book of Revelation, the last book of the Christian Bible, John reintroduces the character of Leviathan. It is written that, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.The passages preceding and following this include other large beasts, all of which are connected to both Leviathan and the Devil.[13] Within this context, it is clear that the Devil reigns over Leviathan and that it is one of many demonic creatures. He is given horns, like the Devil, and is specifically "the name of blasphemy" to draw a direct contrast with God. This blasphemy is expanded, and Leviathan is said to act "against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints."[14] Now, Leviathan opposes heaven, furthering the dichotomy between the sea and heaven. By making war with all those in heaven and the saints, Leviathan is given incredible power in the spiritual lives of the faithful

Leviathan existed within the popular imagination as a foreboding creature of the Devil. However, scientific progression questioned the existence of such a monster. While this could have killed the

12 KJV, Job 41
13 KJV, Revelations 12-15
14 KJV, Revelations 12-15

folklore surrounding Leviathan, it instead changed it from physical to symbolic. In doing so, Leviathan became connected with another large ocean creature; the whale. Thomas Brightman, a clergyman in the 17th century, wrote about his revelations for the apocalypse and stated, "There is added the habitation of this *serpent to be in the Sea*, for which cause he is called *Leviathan* or *Whale*."[15] The content of this passage aside, we must look at the description of Leviathan as "called Leviathan or Whale." To this author, it does not matter which term is used; Leviathan could be something as common as a whale since both represent the demonic serpent of the sea. Later, an account was given of a whale sighting by an anonymous author in 1677. He ended his description with "Those that would see a discription of this wonderful Creature called a Whale and its nature, may find it incomparably drawn by a Divine pencill in the one and fortieth Chapter of Job. under the Name of Leviathan."[16] Here, the author acknowledges the similarities between the whale and Leviathan. They may understand what a whale is, but the author wants to ensure the history of Leviathan is not ignored.

At this time, Leviathan was also being used symbolically within political philosophy. Thomas Hobbes, a philosopher of an authoritarian persuasion, wrote a book titled Leviathan in 1651.Hobbes used Leviathan to explain why the state should be centralized and authoritarian. It decided who received punishment or reward, and it had to have almost complete control over everything to function.[17] In this way, the folklore of Leviathan grew to also be associated with large, powerful temporal forces. At the time Hobbes was writing Leviathan, King Charles II had recently been beheaded, and a new monarchy was put in place.[18] Considering this context, the Leviathan metaphor explains how the government supersedes all individuals, even a monarch. Hobbes's Leviathan government was afforded more power than ever before, and would use that power in potentially deadly ways. In doing so,

15 Thomas Brightman, *A revelation of the Apocalyps, that is, the Apocalyps of S. Iohn illustrated vvith an analysis & scolions where the sense is opened by the scripture, & the events of things foretold, shewed by histories. Hereunto is prefixed a generall view: and at the end of the 17. chapter, is inserted a refutation of R. Bellarmine touching Antichrist, in his 3. book of the B. of Rome,* (Iudocus Hondius & Hendrick Laurenss, 1611), 666

16 *Wonders from the Deep, Or, A True and Exact Account and Description of the Monstrous Whale Lately Taken Near Colchester, being Two and Forty Foot in Length, and of Bigness Proportionable, with the Manner of its Coming, and being Kill'd on Thursday the 9th of April, being so Rare and Strange a Sight that Multitudes of People from all Parts Dayly Go to See it as Thick as to a Market Or Fair* (1677).

17 Alex J Pollock, "Taking on Leviathan", (2016)

18 Pollock, "Taking on Leviathan".

Hobbes connects his government metaphor back to its biblical history. The Leviathan government can be just as dangerous as its folkloric namesake. The term Leviathan still is used within a governmental capacity to this day, with Merriam-Webster listing one of Leviathan's definitions as "the political state especially: a totalitarian state having a vast bureaucracy."[19] The prevalence of this term allowed Leviathan to extend beyond its literal folklore, which was especially crucial as scientific discoveries challenged the legitimacy of such a creature. Now, Leviathan could live on and continue to inspire images of power and fear within popular imagination.

The image of Leviathan has also influenced more modern literature. The best example is the American classic Moby Dick, which follows a whaling ship in its battle against a large whale. As previously mentioned, Leviathan became associated with whales due to their immense size. By 1851, when Melville published Moby Dick, whales were a known species, and sailors had far more interactions with them because of the whaling industry. However, their connection with the demonic remained. According to William Young, in his article titled, "Leviathan in the Book of Job and Moby Dick", Melville's religious background was foundational to his development of the titular villain of the story: the whale Moby Dick. Melville was raised in the Dutch Reformed Church, and his Calvinist ideas gave him a fairly informed understanding of the Bible. He focused on the association of Moby Dick with Leviathan, with the biblical passages quoted in the epigraphs of each chapter. Young notes that Melville used three of the first five references to Leviathan in the King James Version of the Bible, three descriptions of Leviathan from Yahweh's second speech, and "virtually every dragon-slaying myth known to Melville is mentioned in relation to Leviathan." Melville doesn't need Leviathan to be a mythological creature; rather, he can use whales in the same way. Moby Dick is still seen as just as antagonistic as Leviathan. Though interpretations vary, Young attributes Ahab's quest to conquer Moby Dick as an extreme Calvinist interpretation of the book of Job. Leviathan becomes God, and his animosity toward sailors represents God's frustration with corruption in society. In this way, Levaithan, as a whale or a representation of God, still resulted in problems for

19 "Leviathan", Merriam-Webster

the characters. Rather than being a benevolent God, this whale image of God was hateful and resented society.[20] Therefore, this God takes on traits of the Devil, and connects the idea of Leviathan back to the Christian representation of evil.

The term Leviathan has continued to be used through the present day, though the word has adopted multiple meanings. However, these different meanings showcase the continuous legacy of the demonic in the understanding of Leviathan. According to Merriam-Webster, there are three definitions of Leviathan. The first two, are the previously mentioned biblical account and the political implication. The third definition is as follows: "something large or formidable."[21] This is the most common use of Leviathan today, and the specific word "formidable" does much to showcase the Devil's legacy on the word. Even in the modern day, Leviathan's connection to the Devil is impossible to ignore.

Mermaids

ACROSS history, multiple words have been attributed to the creature we currently know to be a mermaid, most notably the Siren. Historically, the term Siren has been used more often, though in the modern-day mermaid is more widely accepted. For the sake of this paper, Siren and mermaid will be considered a continuation of the same folklore, with adaptations of certain traits between the two, rather than two distinct phenomena.

The origin of mermaids is seen before Christianity even began, dating back to Classical Greek mythology with references to water nymphs. In these classical stories, a nymph is the spirit of a young woman, with water nymphs specifically living in bodies of water such as a river, lake, or fountain.[22] Notably, water nymphs are associated with negative characteristics and narratively often meet unsatisfactory endings. The nymph cannot be ignored in the origins of mermaids, as both are characterized by their beauty, humanoid features, and the sea. Folklore about mermaids often used tropes correlated with the water nymph, including their fundamental differences from humans. While they may be considered beautiful,

20 William Young, "Leviathan in the Book of Job and 'Moby Dick", (by: Penn State University Press, 1982)
21 "Leviathan", Merriam-Webster
22 "Water Nymph", The Cambridge Dictionary

and often their allure is part of the story, they are always distinctly nonhuman. Within folklore, it is made clear that mermaids "have no immortal soul," separating them from any humans who may pursue them as love interests.[23]

Beyond the historical foundations of water nymphs, there are also Greek ideas of Sirens, such as the ones seen within Homer's Odyssey. The Siren in the historical artistic imagination consists of a half-human, half-animal body, with variations of half-birds, half-fish, or a mix of the two. The image of the half-human, half-fish became popular in the seventh century, becoming the origin of the artistic depiction of mermaids we know today.[24] While the physical appearance may have changed across folkloric history, the traits of Sirens remain constant. Sirens are physical figures of sexual temptation, who "seduce sailors with their splendid figure and the sweetness of their song." Sirens embody the aims of the Devil in their use of temptation and perfection of physical features associated with beauty.[25] They tempt sailors away from moral behavior, and with that, away from their lives and God. Sailors who fall for their temptation lose their lives to the unforgiving ocean and are therefore delivered to the Devil.

The historical foundations of water nymphs and Sirens continued to play a role in the depictions of mermaids in the late medieval and early modern period. In a religious pamphlet about the Last Judgement, a chaplain writes, "Why dost thou delight in the Voice of a deceitful Siren, when thou hast him whose Voice comforts the Mourners of *Sion* to delight in?"[26] Here, a Siren is being placed directly in opposition to God, who is the referenced voice that comforts mourners. Once again, this is invoking the Siren's connection to the demonic. Her voice is "deceitful," tying again into the idea that Sirens serve Satan to tempt those around them.

While a mermaid is typically given the face of a woman, there

23 A. A. Barb, "Antaura. The Mermaid and the Devil's Grandmother: A Lecture." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 29, 1966, 1-2

24 Ricardo Piñero Moral, "Aesthetics of Evil in Middle Ages: Beasts as Symbol of the Devil" (Universidad de Navarra, 2021)

25 Ricardo Piñero Moral, "Aesthetics of Evil in Middle Ages: Beasts as Symbol of the Devil" (Universidad de Navarra, 2021), quoted from Moriz Haupt, *Liber Monstrorum de Diversis Generibus,* (1863) 42-43

26 Anthony. Horneck, *The sirenes, or, delight and judgment represented in a discourse concerning the great day of judgment and its power to damp and imbitter sensual delights, sports, and recreations* [Sirenes. Delight and judgment] (1690), 278

are other accounts of similar creatures with male appearances. In a text written in 1569, two figures are seen within the water, both bearing the top half appearance of a male and female, with the rest of their body concealed in water. In response to the male creature, people "adiured hym in the name of God, that if he were any wicked spirite, he shoulde retire to the place ordeined for hym by his creator."[27] The people here immediately assumed such a creature was the work of the Devil and sought religious solutions to the threat this creature posed. Additionally, further descriptions of other male mermaids confirm their association with the Devil, regardless of gender. Another male sea monster is described as resembling "the fourme of a man, sauyng that hys skynne was like the sloughe of an Eele, and had two little hornes on his head: he hadde on eyther hande but two fyngers, and his féete dyd ende like two little tayles, and on his armes he had two little winges, as a balde Mouse hath." This creature, written alongside descriptions of mermaids, has multiple instances of demonic imagery. The "two little hornes on his head" and "two fuyngers" evoke imagery of a goat, often associated with the Devil. Additionally, this man is attributed to stealing children, a trait believed to be the work of the Devil.[28] All of this explains that the perceived female gender of mermaids is not a requirement for the Devil; the actions and physical characteristics are seen as the true verification of demonic connections.

The modern image of the mermaid still has demonic associations. This can best be seen in *The Little Mermaid*, both the Hans Christian Andersen original and the 1989 Disney film. In both of these versions, a young mermaid longs to be amongst the humans, since she has fallen in love with one. This portrays the mermaid as distinctly not human, just as the historical mermaid was before her. She may love a prince, but she is unable to end up with him, because as a mermaid, she is othered. In both versions, the mermaid also makes a bargain to become human. This bargain mirrors all the elements of a deal with the Devil, right down to the idea that Ursula, who is offering her the deal, has a collection of

27 P. Boaistuau, *Certaine secrete wonders of nature containing a descriptio[n] of sundry strange things, seming monstrous in our eyes and iudgement, bicause we are not priuie to the reasons of them. gathered out of diuers learned authors as well greeke as latine, sacred as prophane. by E. fenton. seene and allowed according to the order appointed,* (1569), 52-53

28 Boaistuau, *Certaine secrete wonders of nature containing a descriptio[n] of sundry strange things,* 53

damned souls.[29] In the Disney version, the mermaid is essentially offering up her voice to become human, engaging in demonic magic in order to overcome her fundamental differences. The ending of these tales also reveals the mermaids' demonic associations. In the original tale, she does not gain the prince's love. Rather, she spends the rest of her life as sea foam. This idea harkens back to sentiments that a mermaid cannot have a happy ending, because she is not human. In the Disney version, the mermaid does get her happy ending, but only at the expense of her mermaid identity. In order to be happy, she has to give up everything that made her a mermaid, and therefore everything that connected her to the Devil. In this way, the demonic associations of mermaids are present even in a Disney version of The Little Mermaid, making the Devil present even within modern mermaid folklore.

The Kraken

UNLIKE some of the previous sea monsters, the Kraken does not have biblical origins. Instead, the Kraken first came out of local folklore, and later merged with Christian ideals. The Kraken is a folkloric creature that emerged from the idea of the giant squid, and has distinctive Scandinavian origins.[30] However, many different sea-based cultures all had ideas of a giant squid that would attack ships. Myths are present in places like Greece, Japan, New Zealand, and the Caribbean. Ideas from each of these cultures came together to form the popular image of the Kraken, a large squid that attacks boats out at sea. Before being named the Kraken, this creature had other names, many of which intertwine it with Christian imagery. Specifically, "In Norway, the Kraken myth grew and such washed-up specimens were interpreted as messages from God or the Devil, sometimes called sea angels, sea devils or sea monks."[31] While the name may have changed, the historical association between the Kraken and a sign of the divine remained. Since the Kraken was typically depicted in a negative light by attacking ships and killing sailors, the myth of the Kraken became strongly connected to the Devil.

29 A. Waller Hastings, "Moral Simplification in Disney's The Little Mermaid", (Johns Hopkins,1993), 87
30 Grace Constantino, "Release the Kraken", (Biodiversity Heritage Museum)
31 Kerry Lotzof, "Sea Monsters and Their Inspiration: Serpents, Mermaids, the Kraken and More" (Natural History Museum)

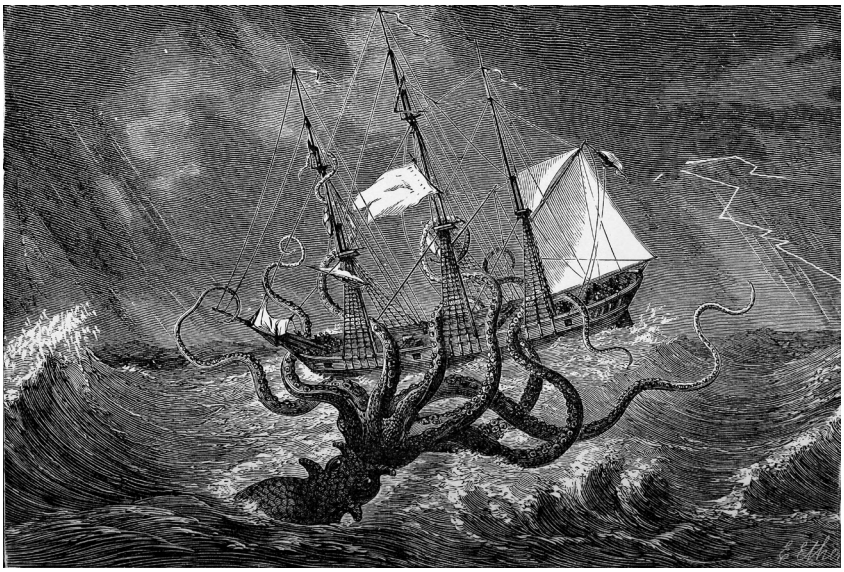


Figure 3.John Gibson, "Kraken of the Imagination", (1887).

Images of the Kraken depict the devilish association in stark ways. In Figure 3, the Kraken is depicted as significantly darker than the rest of the image, and has long curled tentacles.[32] This ties back into the image of the Devil as a serpent, which the Devil is often associated with due to the snake from the Garden of Eden. The Kraken is situated on the bottom of the boat, pulling the boat directly down, similar to the description of the Hell Mouth in medieval art. In another image, Figure 4, from 1916, the Kraken breaks a large ship.[33] Here, the scene is less dark than the previous one, but the Kraken's raw power is still the central focus. The Kraken once again has its characteristic features of curled tentacles and large saucer-like eyes. There is a lack of humanization in the creature; it is simply destroying a ship without any apparent cause. Once again, it's dragging the boat into the ocean, mirroring the hellmouth, the historical term for a depiction of hell's entrance. In this way, the overall focus of both images of the Kraken as the aggressor situates it within the context of delivering sailors to the Devil and creates an image of the Kraken as a serious threat to sailors.

The Kraken has also been present in popular culture. An example

32 John Gibson, "Kraken of the imagination", (1887).
33 "Kraken attacking a fleet after a fashion described by Montfort", (1916)

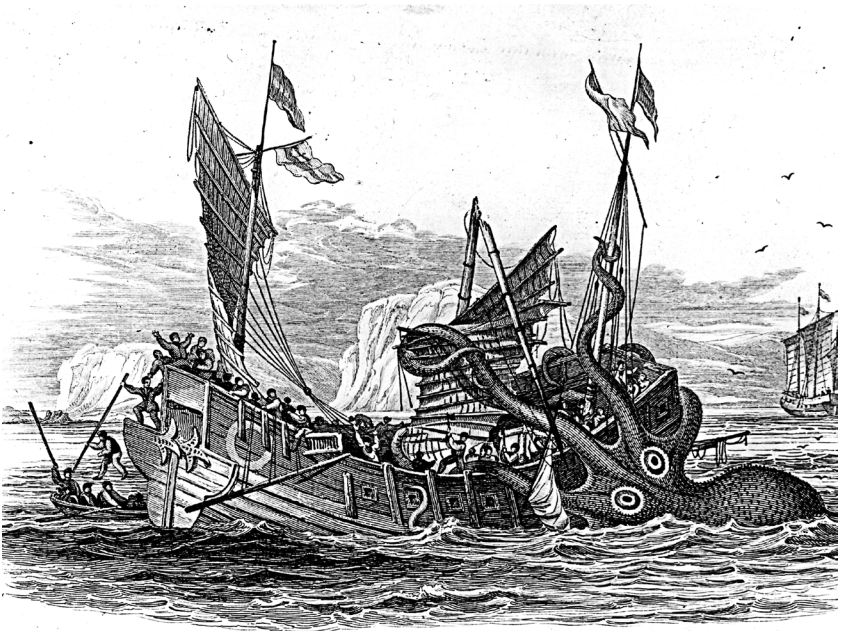


Figure 4. "Kraken" attacking a fleet after a fashion described by Montfort. Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution. 1916.

of this can be seen in the 1830 poem The Kraken by Lord Alfred Tennyson. The Kraken is described as living "in the abysmal sea", a reminder of the ocean's demonic ties. The contents of the poem further build upon the historical associations of the Kraken and the Devil. In this poem, the Kraken lies deep in the ocean asleep, but one day "the latter fire shall heat the deep/ Then once by man and angels to be seen / In roaring he shall rise and on the surface die." [34]

Here, the latter fire is a reference to the end of days. And Tennyson believes this will involve the ocean turning incredibly hot and potentially boiling. The inclusion of angels to witness the Kraken further orients the Kraken in Christian imagery. Since the Kraken cannot die until this apocalyptic event, Tennyson is giving the Kraken immortality and a sense of power with it. The Kraken, like the devil, will only die once the end of days occurs, which will result in God's final triumph over the devil, and by extension, creatures like the Kraken.

Another example of the Kraken in popular culture can be seen in the Pirates of the Caribbean movie franchise. In the second Pirates

34 Lord Alfred Tennyson, The Kraken, (1830)

of the Caribbean, the main character, Jack Sparrow, needs to evade the mighty Kraken. The Kraken is an instrument of Davy Jones, a half-squid, half-man creature, who is hunting Sparrow. This movie brought the Kraken to movie screens in the 21st century and ensured it was still a fearful beast. The physical depiction of the Kraken in this movie is significant due to the large focus on the Kraken's mouth. One of the most captivating images of the whole movie is when Sparrow is about to be eaten, and the viewer sees rows and rows of sharp teeth within the Kraken's mouth. This large, dangerous mouth ties back into ideas of the Hellsmouth, a large mouth that was an entrance to hell. In paintings, the hellsmouth includes demonic creatures and beasts ready to torture anyone who came through. Like the Kraken's mouth, the Hellsmouth involved layers in the entrance. The Kraken in Pirates of the Caribbean 2 also has connections to Leviathan, as the Kraken is referred to as "Jones' terrible leviathan."[35] In this way, the Kraken is being associated with the legend of Leviathan, becoming a tool of the Devil. All of these elements connect ideas of the demonic into even the 21st century depictions of this folklore.

Conclusion

The fear of the ocean and sea monsters comes directly from fears of the Devil, a result of centuries' worth of demonic associations being made between folklore and Christianity. While this paper is not a comprehensive list of folklore inspired by the demonic, it showcases how folklore surrounding sea monsters holds ties to the Devil, which persist throughout time. Even as the sea monster changes, the connection with the devil is constant. From the ocean as demonic to ideas surrounding mermaids or the Kraken, the Devil is an idea that connects folklore to larger themes of good and evil. In this globalized modern world, oceanic folklore has expanded from coastal locations, and the influence of these sea monsters can now be seen in blockbuster movies, inspiring a fear of the ocean today.

35 Verbinski, Gore, *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest.* Walt Disney Pictures, 2007.

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CONSUMPTION & MODERNITY

The Industrious Revolution and the Rise of Market Society in England

Cole Nelson

Abstract

THIS essay examines how the Industrious and Consumer revolutions from 1300 to 1830 reshaped economic and social life. Expanding markets and rising incomes broadened access to goods like clothing, mirrors, and clocks, transforming households, class emulation, and cultural practices. Fashion, the secondhand clothing trade, and new household amenities encouraged class emulation and changing daily habits, yet these developments remained structured by long-standing expectations about gender, hierarchy, and the moral economy. Gendered patterns of purchasing and ownership show how men and women participated in consumption in different ways that reflected and sometimes adjusted patriarchal roles. Contemporary critiques of luxury reveal that moral concerns continued to shape responses to expanding markets. By examining how consumer culture both relied on and modified these inherited customs, the essay presents the Industrious and Consumer Revolutions as a transitional moment that helped lay the social and cultural foundations for England's shift toward modern economic life.

Introduction

THE Industrious Revolution, a period defined by economic historians R. C. Allen and J.L. Weisdorf as taking place between 1300 and 1830, and the subsequent 'Consumer Revolution' in England saw the rise of consumer culture driven by newfound prosperity and increasing demand that reshaped the market economy.[1] As England transitioned from a predominantly subsistence-based economy to one characterized by market-oriented production and increasing specialization, the purchasing power of the population grew alongside their appetite for material

1 R. C. Allen & J. L. Weisdorf. 'Was there an "industrious revolution" before the industrial revolution? An empirical exercise for England, c. 1300-1830', *The Economic History Review*, 64, 3 (2011), 716.

goods. The new availability of goods like mirrors, clocks, clothing, and furniture brought the English people opportunities for social differentiation, leisure, and comfort. The same items previously only passed down upon a relative's death were suddenly stocking shelves at local markets and stores.[2] A vibrant commercial world began to emerge, populated by shopkeepers, advertisers, manufacturers, and consumers who collectively helped drive this economic shift. It was this newfound ability to buy goods that helped reshape social and class dynamics as well as the fundamental institution of the household.[3,4]

This development was not universal in its effects, and consumer culture had to bend to the same pre-established rules and norms as the people of England. Consumption was filtered through the enduring structures of early modern society. For example, patterns of consumption were deeply gendered in accordance with the existing patriarchal social order. Additionally, the moral effects of consumer culture were a cause for concern, as the relatively new practice of 'shopping,' or the act of purchasing unneeded items, seemed to point toward English society's descent into a more 'cheap and vulgar culture.'[5] These anxieties did not halt the spread of consumption, but they revealed that economic transformations were entangled with social judgment, moral debate, and ideological tension. However, the emergence of the market economy and subsequent rise in consumer culture was irreversable, and its rise, with all that it entailed, pushed England into a state more easily comparable to today.

The rise of consumer culture coincided with not just the development of a new economic reality but also pushed society toward a new way of envisioning the world. To engage with consumer culture as both producers and purchasers, Englishmen and women had to participate in a society of rapid social and economic advancement. This new way of thinking, as historian J.H. Plumb argues, signified a step towards modernity. In examining the extent and limits of consumer culture, however, it is also clear that modernity was deeply rooted in and shaped by the norms and

2 Neil McKendrick et al. 'The Birth of a Consumer Society', *Indiana University Press* (1982), 1.
3 McKendrick et al. 'The Birth of a Consumer Society', 2.
4 Note that use of the word "class" is anachronistic for the analysis of pre-19th century history. It appears in this paper because its argument relies upon the Marxist theoretical model of historical materialism. See Karl Marx, 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy', *Progress Publishers* (1970), 19-27.
5 Plumb et al. 'The Birth of a Consumer Society', 333-334.

customs of the pre-modern age. Thus, the rise of consumer culture in early modern England provides a crucial lens through which to examine the intersection of economic change, social tradition, and cultural transformation. It reveals how a society steeped in hierarchy and custom adapted to the forces of modernization. This makes the rise of consumer culture a useful perspective from which to understand the bridge between pre-modernity and modernity.[6] While many point to the Industrial Revolution as the definitive marker of modern transition in Western history, the Consumer Revolution and its effects on demand, trade, and culture shaped the social psyche that made the Industrial Revolution possible. Without first molding a culture that embraced change and consumption's role in personal enrichment, technological and scientific innovations would not have had the footholds they needed to embed themselves within the production side of the free market as they eventually did. Observing this transition also helps disassemble the old and new components of early modern Western society and better understand what makes a time and place truly 'modern.' This paper will disentangle and analyze the origins of the rise in consumer culture; it will explain the cultural significance of emulation in the fashion market; it will provide some of the critiques and defenses of consumer culture as they appeared at the time; lastly, it will argue the Industrious Revolution and Consumer Revolution's significance and utility in charting England's historical and economic transition to modernity. First, to understand consumer culture's role in driving modernity, it is crucial to understand how such a drastic economic shift occurred.

Economic Transformation

IN the early modern period, England experienced the greatest economic growth and prosperity in England's history up to that point, surpassed only by the later years of the Industrial Revolution. Gross domestic product rose by sixty percent between 1600 and 1700, and citizens across the social spectrum enjoyed rising per capita incomes.[7] This economic transformation was not merely statistical, but visible in everyday life. Trade expanded, land improved in productivity, and employment opportunities

6 Plumb et al. 'The Birth of a Consumer Society', 317.
7 Paul Slack. 'Material progress and the challenge of affluence in seventeenth-century England', *The Economic History Review* (2009), 578.

multiplied. Contemporary observers, such as economist and merchant Josiah Child, remarked on the "riches and splendor" of the kingdom during this period, evidenced by luxury coaches, refined clothing, increased coinage and customs revenue, and the growth of both domestic and overseas commerce.[8] The wealth accumulated from commercial growth allowed even the laboring poor to attain a standard of living that earlier generations had not imagined.[9] This broad-based economic uplift gave rise to a new culture of consumption. The elite initially led this transformation; historian Neil McKendrick describes their behavior as an 'orgy of spending', marked by lavish construction and heightened consumption of fashionable goods.[10] But consumption gradually permeated all levels of society. As McKendrick observes, "what men and women had once hoped to inherit from their parents, they now expected to buy for themselves."[11] Probate inventories collected by Gregory King revealed that people well below the gentry were frequently 'well-clad', owning new garments that indicated increased access to material goods and personal consumption.[12]

Even among the poorest households, signs of expanded consumption were clear. Historian Jan de Vries showed that the value of wardrobes among the lowest income groups doubled between 1700 and 1789, a development that reflected a shift in the structure and goals of household economies.[13] De Vries argued that this transformation stemmed from what he termed the 'Industrious Revolution.' It was a reorganization of domestic labor that prioritized market-oriented production and supported increased consumer spending.[14] England's unique social and commercial structure accelerated this process. According to de Vries, "English society provided an ideal breeding ground for those commercially intent on exploiting new consumer wants," due to its compressed social hierarchy, the cultural influence of London, and a large servant class that transmitted elite tastes downward through society.[15] As British historian Paul Slack noted, the benefits of this prosperity

8 Slack. 'Material progress and the challenge of affluence in seventeenth-century England', 580.
9 Slack. 'Material progress and the challenge of affluence in seventeenth-century England', 576.
10 McKendrick et al. 'The Birth of a Consumer Society', 20.
11 McKendrick et al. 'The Birth of a Consumer Society', 1.
12 Margaret Spufford. 'The cost of apparel in seventeenth-century England, and the accuracy of Gregory King', Economic History Society (2000), 704.
13 Jan De Vries. 'The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present', *Cambridge University Press* (2008), 139.
14 De Vries. 'The Industrious Revolution', 178-179.
15 De Vries. 'The Industrious Revolution', 50-51.

were not confined to urban centers alone; rural households also showed signs of greater wealth and engagement with the market economy, evidenced by their growing inventories of household goods and clothing.[16] Meanwhile, probate records and household inventories revealed that many working-class families sought to purchase not only necessities but also items that symbolized refinement and upward aspiration, such as mirrors, clocks, and decorated crockery.[17]

Fashion & Emulation

THE growing appetite for material goods, particularly clothing, not only reshaped household economies but also fueled the rapid expansion of the fashion industry, which became one of the most dynamic and influential sectors of the burgeoning consumer market. The largest market in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries demonstrates the production side of consumer culture in early modern England. The fashion market sought to tap into untapped markets and developed a multitude of business strategies to widen its reach. As McKendrick wrote, "the fashion doll…, the fashion magazine, the fashion advertisement, [and] the fashion shops" were new advancements and adaptations to the trend of consumer culture, resulting in both an increase in participation in fashion among all social classes and a monumental increase in profits for wool, linen, and cotton producers across England. Prior to the seventeenth century, these industries were 'by a very wide margin the most important industrial activity in Europe.'[18,19] These innovations not only stimulated demand but also established new cultural practices, such as browsing and seasonal shopping, which became central to the consumer experience. The rise of ready-made clothing and more standardized garment production further allowed a broader segment of society to participate in fashion cycles that had been exclusive to the wealthy. This expansion of fashion creation also meant that manufacturers, merchants, and marketers had to respond rapidly to changes in taste, setting the stage for a trend-driven fashion market. Moreover, as historian Beverly Lemire noted, the proliferation of secondhand clothing markets

16 Slack. 'Material progress and the challenge of affluence in seventeenth-century England', 580.
17 Lorna Weatherill. 'A Possession of One's Own: Women and Consumer Behavior in England, 1660-1740', *Journal of British Studies* 25 (1986), 143-144.
18 McKendrick et al. 'The Birth of Consumer Society', 98.
19 T. A. Morris. 'Europe and England in the Sixteenth Century', *Routledge* (1998), 15.

and the accompanying recycling of garments created an intricate system that connected producers, retailers, and consumers at multiple levels of society. [20]

The commercial success of the fashion market, however, was only part of the story. Beyond its economic impact, fashion also became a powerful cultural force, reshaping how individuals conceived of status, identity, and social mobility within the shifting structures of early modern England. Consumer culture, and specifically the commercial fashion industry, pushed a new social paradigm in some aspects and was inversely shaped by others. The main area where fashion pushed change was through its conflation of consumer demand with desires for personal differentiation and class posturing. Dress and wardrobe were the clearest manifestations of wealth before the Industrious Revolution, but with increasing availability, fine clothing found its way into the lower classes' possession. The desire to 'wear' class or to emulate a higher position in the social order was a strong driver of demand amongst all ranks of society. Fashion was soon designed to help lower classes imitate wealth, blurring visible social distinctions, all while driving many higher-class Englishmen to spend on increasingly extravagant garments to retain their 'distinctive badge of identity.'[21] However the prevalence of sumptuary and vagrancy laws, pre-dating the industrious revolution, serves as a caveat to the rise of class emulation through fashion posturing in early modern England.

Sumptuary law, policies that sought to dictate dress code and material possessions to maintain visible class distinctions, were common and enforceable up through the seventeenth century in England. In fact, the rise of class emulation through fashion made sumptuary policies a more poignant political issue. Legal historian Alan Hunt wrote, "As fashion expanded it became more accessible to wider sections of the population and, correspondingly, the possibilities of competitive conspicuous consumption were augmented". He continued, "Thus anxieties and complaints about the difficulty of reading rank from appearance had a materiality."[22]

20 Beverly Lemire. 'Consumerism in Preindustrial and Early Industrial England: The Trade in Secondhand Clothes', *Journal of British Studies* 27 (1988), 2-3.
21 McKendrick et al. 'The Birth of Consumer Society', 55.
22 Alan Hunt. 'Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law', *St. Martin's Press* (1996), 136.

In the eyes of European legislators, the rise of consumption and class emulation bred social disorder. However, as Hunt argued, the rise of a capitalist market economy in England also served to dilute and negate sumptuary laws and their enforcement after 1666.[23] The new availability of clothing to lower classes changed the social dynamics of self presentation and thus, the applicability of sumptuary regulation. "Now, the ownership and display of goods became evidence of an individual's accomplishments and attributes; ownership could make an individual appear wealthy and in possession of refined sensibilities," Hunt continued, "but it could never guarantee it and was not in itself the main examination set and marked by the entrepreneurs of cultural capital. The hierarchic dimensions of the sumptuary logic were undermined."[24] As for the legislative shift in the seventeenth century, the legal discourse did not fully disappear, but as Hunt argued, "sumptuary regulation became entwined with protectionist economic regulation" in England.[25] The economic growth that the birth of consumer society brought England was not stifled by sumptuary laws, but transformed social and economic conditions making the legal and social implementation of dress-code regulation less effective and desirable.

The transformation of vagrancy laws tell a similar story. Laws regulating the migration and movement of the workless poor came from a political and social tradition that imposed strict class delineations. Vagrancy laws in seventeenth century England sought to criminalize common behaviors seen in impoverished unemployed parish dwellers, such as wandering, avoiding work, and begging. However, historian A. L. Beier argued that with the rise in economic prosperity in England, opportunities to work increased and the government passed poor-relief policies which eased the conditions of the impoverished, thus lessening vagrant behaviors in England.[26] Beier wrote, "Parish poor relief also mitigated vagrancy by removing the need to wander. The provision of relief increased in the seventeenth century, even when population growth petered out after 1650."[27] Thus, with newfound economic stability and prosperity, the English government adapted their means to control

23 Hunt. 'Governance of the Consuming Passions', 393.
24 Hunt. 'Governance of the Consuming Passions', 377.
25 Hunt. 'Governance of the Consuming Passions', 393.
26 A. L. Beier. 'Masterless Men: The Vagrancy Problem in England 1560-1640', Methuen & Co. (1985), 172.
27 Beier. 'Masterless Men', 173.

what they saw as disorder presented by the wandering poor, converting criminalization to government sanctioned poor-relief. "The penal element declined and settlement laws redefined the transient pauper," Beier continued, "Henceforth instead of being punished as a vagabond, he was removed to his place of origin where he received statutory relief, which kept him from becoming a permanent itinerant."[28] From Beier and Hunt's arguments, it is clear that the economic prosperity and the rise of consumer society gave England remodelled the legal and social systems of dress code, poverty, and vagrancy which negated their original effects and pushed such systems towards their modern iterations.

The Secondhand Clothes Market

THE secondhand clothes trade demonstrates how the social desire for class emulation drove consumer demand among the middling and lower classes.[29] The development of strict social expectations surrounding clothes due to their increased accessibility compounded this desire. Many Englishmen expected linen clothes to be clean, with an "acute sense of shame… attached to being seen in dirty shirts."[30] The secondhand market could assuage the customer's desires to fit this expectation because, though commonly less durable, secondhand clothes were generally reliable while remaining cheaper than new garments.[31] As Lemire pointed out, this trade was not merely a marginal or charity-driven sector but a vital part of the commercial fabric of early modern England, channeling goods from wealthier to poorer households in a highly organized system of redistribution.[32] It provided a necessary economic outlet that kept older garments in circulation, allowing working-class people to participate in the same visual gentility-adjacent posturing that defined the aspirations of the period.

By the eighteenth century, the second-hand clothes market grew to be a formidable competitor to the brand-new market. As historian John Styles pointed out, some shoppers would prefer second-hand clothes over cheaper new ones, evidenced by a "young woman described by a London shopkeeper's daughter in 1753, who

28 Beier. 'Masterless Men', 171.
29 Lemire. 'Consumerism in Preindustrial and Early Industrial England', 1.
30 John Styles. 'The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England', *Yale University Press* (2007), 80.
31 Lemire. 'Consumerism in Preindustrial and Early Industrial England', 24.
32 Lemire. 'Consumerism in Preindustrial and Early Industrial England, 3, 5.

'came to my mother's shop, and asked for a striped camblet gown; I asked her whether she would have a new one or an old one; she said, a second-hand one'."[33] Because higher classes often passed down their clothes to the second-hand market, they could become even more desirable than new garments that, while cheaper, might not have fit the desire for fashionable class-emulation of plebian English shoppers.

Not only were whole garments circulated in the second-hand market, but a new industry of tailors emerged who stitched together old cloths, parts of used garments, and linings to then put on sale in their shops. These garments were easier to make than bespoke or new garments and hence were cheaper while having the appearance of quality. In an argumentative paper submitted to parliament which presented a debate over English laws and regulations on the cloth and clothing trade market in 1681, an anonymous author wrote of these new tailors, "the reason that they appear so cheap, is, because the stuff they use in the sale garments, so very slight, that nobody would buy the same in the shop." He went on to comment on the speed at which these tailors could accomplish. They wrote, "because the linings are very ordinary, being often take out of old Garments: and farther, they make up that in a day, that the customed taylor doth not make up in four days at the least."[34] Despite this author's criticisms on the quality of these stitched-together clothes, and the potential competition it posed to the makers of new bespoke garments, this shows that the rise of the consumer economy in England and therein the second-hand market helped develop a new, more competitive market with different tiers of tailors, shopkeepers, and shopper preferences.

This system reflected a 'two-tiered' demand structure, in which new goods fueled the aspirations of the middle and upper classes, while used goods satisfied the persistent ambitions of lower-income groups to maintain respectable appearances.[35] The prevalence of the secondhand trade shows that consumer culture did not only depend on the continuous production of new goods but also thrived on a circulating economy of reuse and resale, then

33 Styles. 'The Dress of the People', 176.
34 Anonymous. 'The Trade of England Revived: And the Abuses Rectified, In Relation to Wooll and Woollen Cloth, Silk and Silk-Weavers, Hawkers, Bankrupts, Stage-Coaches, Shop-keepers, Companies, Markets, Linen-Cloath. Also what statutes in force may be injurious to Trade and Tradesmen, with several proposals', *Dorman Newman* (1681), 37.
35 Anonymous. 'The Trade of England Revived', 2.

a novel characteristic of the Industrious Revolution and the market logic it produced. This circulation helped reinforce and sustain the widespread expectation that even those of modest means should strive to meet rising standards of decency and fashionability.

Gender, Class, & Domestic Life

THOUGH fashion was the most socially significant for the blurring of class distinctions in early modern England, chances for visual class emulation were more abundant in the consumer revolution than just clothes. Household amenities such as clocks and mirrors communicated both status and character, as both were expensive while providing unique functions that complemented one's daily life. In the words of historian Lorna Weatherill, mirrors were not just tools for examining a person's physical appearance, but also imparted an "awareness of individuality and the distinctions between individuals."[36] The spread of mirrors in middling households, 'reflected' a shift toward personal independence and self-consciousness that signaled one's ability to introspect and, by extension, social prestige. Mirror ownership became linked with ideals of civility and self-improvement, showing how consumer goods could foster new habits of thought and behavior. Clocks also had great significance. One's ownership of a clock conveyed a household's alignment with values of order, punctuality, and productivity, marking a clear connection between material possessions and evolving cultural norms.[37] In a society increasingly attuned to discipline and efficiency, clocks symbolized not just wealth but modern sensibilities, reinforcing social expectations around timekeeping and routine. Mirrors and clocks, alongside clothing, were essential indicators of class and changing social expectations. Their dual role as practical tools and social markers allowed households to project refinement while adapting to new standards of respectability. In this way, from class emulation to introspection and timeliness, the growing consumer culture transformed daily life. Yet while it pushed new social paradigms, it was also shaped by enduring norms, especially around gender, which continued to influence how consumption was experienced and displayed.

36 Weatherill. 'Consumerism in Preindustrial and Early Industrial England', 144.
37 Weatherill. 'Consumerism in Preindustrial and Early Industrial England', 143.

Examining gender in its role in the consumer revolution and the emergence of consumer culture reveals the contrast between eagerly adopted change and pre-existing cultural norms. In early modern England, men held authority over household finances, while women typically managed day-to-day household tasks. According to historians Jane Whittle and Elizabeth Griffiths, 'shopping was seen as a feminine activity,'[38] reinforcing the association between women and domestic provisioning. Yet, while women were often the visible consumers in markets and shops, men were even more engaged in consumption. Men routinely engaged in the aforementioned consumption of possessions that signified wealth, power, and social standing.[39]

The consumption patterns of English men and women in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries closely followed gendered cultural distinctions aligned with the existing patriarchal social order. For example, Sir Hamon Le Strange, an English gentleman who lived between 1583 and 1654, meticulously recorded his expenditures, which reveal a focus on items that projected status and masculinity: coaches, muskets, and hawks, the latter reflecting his participation in elite sports and leisure.[40] In contrast, his wife Alice Le Strange's purchases reflected her role maintaining the household. She bought items like foodstuffs and cleaning materials.[41] This contrast underscores how consumption was not just about material comfort but also about reinforcing one's role within a rigid social hierarchy. Ownership patterns further highlight these gendered dynamics. Weatherill's study of personal inventories between 1675 and 1725 found that women consistently had fewer personal possessions of value than men. In Durham and Northumberland, the average value of personal inventories was £105 for men but only £60 for women, a gap that reflects broader financial inequalities and access to wealth.[42] This disparity illustrates that although women were strongly associated with shopping and consumption, meaningful ownership and capital accumulation were predominantly male domains. Even the concept of 'shopping' as inherently feminine was a cultural construct shaped over time. Whittle and Griffiths

38 Jane Whittle & Elizabeth Griffiths. 'Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household', *Oxford University Press* (2012), 242.
39 Whittle & Griffiths. 'Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household', 242.
40 Whittle & Griffiths. 'Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household', 13.
41 Whittle & Griffiths. 'Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household', 242.
42 Weatherill. 'Consumerism in Preindustrial and Early Industrial England', 142.

noted that the Oxford English Dictionary, between 1764 and 1845, defined shopping in a way that emphasized women's non-essential purchases, though this feminization had deeper historical roots.[43] On the other hand, upper-class men were highly involved in what might today be called domestic self-fashioning. Diaries and household accounts reveal that eighteenth-century gentlemen took considerable interest in selecting fine china, glassware, and tea sets, all objects that displayed taste and refinement and allowed them to compete in subtle status games with their peers.[44] Gentlemen were also keen observers of their neighbors' furnishings and material culture, using such cues to assess social standing and cultural capital. Thus, while women were frequently tasked with the logistical aspects of household shopping, men were deeply invested in domestic consumption as a way to showcase status and masculinity. Men's emulative consumption served as a badge of identity, while women's consumption was often tied to household maintenance and the performance of domestic virtue. Gender, therefore, shaped not just who bought what, but also the meanings behind and ambitions tied to acts of consumption.

While these gendered dynamics shaped the experiences of the elite and middling classes, the spread of consumer culture also had profound and distinct effects on the lives of the lower classes, whose interactions with the market economy reflected a different set of challenges and adaptations. As mentioned before, fashion was an opportunity for middling and plebeian people to emulate class, but the market economy had much broader and more unique implications for social life that merged pre-existing norms and customs with the adaptations it provided. Consumer culture's role in changing daily life in early modern England was complex, as the market economy was both an opportunity for the dissemination of new social norms while being demonstrably molded by the existing world it appeared in. The gentry's ability to keep servants set apart consumption in the domestic setting from that of plebeian consumers. According to Vries, many domestic comforts were still inaccessible to the laboring poor and commoners, encouraging them to adapt to the Consumer Revolution by means specific to their economic circumstances. Lower classes used the increased

43 Whittle & Griffith. 'Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household', 9.
44 Margot Finn. 'Men's things: masculine possession in the consumer revolution' Social History, Vol. 25, No. 2 (2000), 142.

choice of food and drink to simplify their meal preparation, and were able to shift their focus to sociability outside the household.[45] This trend pushed the English institution of the household into its more modern function. Before the Consumer Revolution, the household was often a productive organization, in which people performed regular tasks of spinning, craftwork, and food preparation for personal consumption and business, coming with their own 'consumption bundles' of goods for the maintenance of the household productive unit. However, as markets grew and goods became more readily available, consumer culture diminished the plebeian household's productive role. The household, in Vries' words, became increasingly 'rudderless' and household purpose shifted towards the modern concept of family dwelling, rather than a productive organization.[46]

While class was a major factor shaping access to consumer goods, regional location also played a significant role. As historian Antony Buxton noted, market culture did not spread evenly across the country. For instance, households in towns like Thame, though increasingly drawn into the commercial orbit of the metropolis, still retained elements of communal and agrarian life, such as open-field farming and parish-based social institutions.[47] In such settings, the integration of consumer habits was gradual and often blended with older, localized traditions of production and exchange. This regional variation suggests that while the Consumer Revolution was widespread, it was experienced differently across space. Nonetheless, the rise of consumer culture impacted all tiers of English society in a variety of ways, all while existing English customs inversely shaped it. The mixing of the existing society with such a new economic reality reveals the true nature of modernity from a social and cultural perspective. The customs of gender and class became inseparably entwined with the Consumer Revolution's effects on daily life, charting the transition from a pre-modern to modern age as not a sudden jump between antiquity and an age of abundant progress, but as an adaptation to the existing world on the historical continuum. This transitory era brought rapid economic and social change to England within the limitations of

45 De Vries. 'The Industrious Revolution', 178.
46 De Vries. 'The Industrious Revolution', 179.
47 Antony Buxton. 'Domestic Culture in Early Modern England', *Studies in Early Modern Cultural, Political and Social History*, Vol 24 (2015), 279.

many structural social customs, and with any change of such scale, the Consumer Revolution and accompanying culture met resistance and criticism.

Moral Debate & Legacy

MUCH like the contemporary probing of social welfare and individual well-being, critics of consumer culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries questioned the link between consumption and comfort or happiness.[48] Some even questioned consumption's morality and economic benefits. These critiques were rooted not only in concerns about personal virtue but also in a deeper belief that customary norms of fairness and communal well-being should govern market activity. Historian Margot Finn argued that Edward Thompson's theory of the 'moral economy' helps clarify this worldview. According to Thompson, early modern English society expected economic exchanges to uphold shared standards of justice and mutual obligation, even as markets grew more complex and profit-oriented.[49] Critics of burgeoning consumerism, therefore, feared that luxury and overconsumption were not just personal failings but signs that market logic was overtaking long-held moral frameworks, and even that the free market could topple the 'moral economy.' One notable critique of overconsumption and high living came in the form of *The Grand Concern of England Explained* in 1673. Written by an anonymous author (possibly Edward Chamberlayne, according to Slack) for Parliament in lieu of a rise in French-Anglo trade, the paper criticised "French fashions, extravagance and expense at every social level, and 'high living' in general."[50] On top of questioning the consequences of excessive commercial indulgence, rhetorically asking, 'How many gentlemen of England spend their whole yearly incomes on clothing themselves…?', the anonymous writer also criticised parliament for not adequately addressing the unfair trade relationship between France and England.[51] This led Parliament to implement a prohibition of French imports in 1678.[52]

48 Slack. 'Material progress and the challenge of affluence in seventeenth-century England', 577.
49 Finn. 'Men's Things', 152-153.
50 Paul Slack. 'The Politics of Consumption and England's Happiness in the Later Seventeenth Century', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 122, No. 497 (2007), 612.
51 Anonymous. 'The Grand Concern of England Explained', University of London (1673), 49-55.
52 Slack. 'The Politics of Consumption and England's Happiness in the Later Seventeenth Century', 612.

Overconsumption risked devaluing modest personal possessions while creating insatiable consumer appetites. As Slack wrote, "once incomes rise to permit their indulgence, devalue 'the stock of pre-existing possessions, virtues, relations and values', produce 'impatience' rather than satisfied content, and require 'moderation' and 'a return to greater civility' to restrain them."[53] Additionally, the Consumer Revolution brought about the depersonalization of consumption, in which personal relationships and neighborliness became much less important to trade as production became increasingly detached from the social lives of English people.[54] There were also concerns over consumer culture's consequences for labor. In 1702, Lawyer Thomas Tryon expressed concern over the 'vast shift' of labor from agriculture to services that made trade "'overstocked' and 'the generality of the people. . . poor and miserable'."[55] To critics, the consequences of the market economy meant that individual buy-in to consumer culture carried 'ideological baggage', as overconsumption communicated a lack of moral worth.[56] This was backed up by Plumb when he wrote that "The middle and lower middle classes, not only in England but increasingly too in Western Europe. . . had been taught to buy, to expect novelty, to relish change. . . many feared that it would create greed and excess."[57] However, the newfound prosperity of the Industrious Revolution meant that many were driven to consumerism's defense. The counterargument centered around material betterment's 'natural' and 'legitimate' ability to provide happiness to consumers.[58] In 1677, responding to the anonymous author's critique of consumerism, English writer and shopkeeper John Houghton wrote in defense of consumer culture in *England's Great Happiness or, a Dialogue Between Content and Complaint*, a fictionalized debate between a man 'content' with the market economy's ability to improve happiness, and a 'complainer' who questioned it. Houghton's complainer argued that England's new prosperity and market economy carried five consequences:

53 Slack. 'Material progress and the challenge of affluence in seventeenth-century England', 584.
54 Buxton. 'Domestic Culture in Early Modern England', 279.
55 Slack. 'Material progress and the challenge of affluence in seventeenth-century England', 582.
56 Slack. 'The Politics of Consumption and England's Happiness in the Later Seventeenth Century', 609.
57 Plumb et al. 'The Birth of Consumer Society', 332.
58 Slack. 'Material progress and the challenge of affluence in seventeenth-century England', 591.

"1. Carrying the Money out of the Nation.
2. People's over-high living.
3. The too many Foreigners
4. The Enclosure of the Commons.
5. The multitude of people that run in trade,
and sell so cheap that one can't live by another."[59]

The content man's defense (and Houghton's) acknowledged such consequences, but in his retort throughout the debate, he gave a perspicacious assessment of the nature of the market economy, holding as an impressively insightful analysis of the time. He argued that the effects of the market economy became so benevolent that prosperity previously unimaginable became a mundanity, and hence critics could no longer make an accurate comparison between the past and present after England's economic growth in the seventeenth century. Using the contrasting conditions of the biblical accounts of King Saul and King Solomon, he argued that because the Jews under King Saul went from poverty to riches, his subjects had a clear sense of their material betterment. However, the people in King Solomon's time were born into prosperity and the "custom of their wealth took away the sense of it, and they cry'd that times were hard."[60] The nuance of Houghton's argument hinges on the paradoxical conflict between economic prosperity's material and objective benefit and the ever-rising generational standards the economy must meet in order to produce happiness. Houghton's conclusion falls somewhere in the middle: the rise of the market economy was overall to the betterment of all who lived through it, but the normalization of societal wealth brought with it constant dissatisfaction and the desire for more. [61]The market economy pounced on this insatiable need for more, defining the nature of consumer demand and the driver of the market economy. Houghton later intensified his moral argument in *A Collection of Letters for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*, writing, "those who are guilty of prodigality, pride, vanity, and luxury, do cause more wealth to the kingdom than loss to their own estates."[62] Despite concerns over the potential immorality of consumer culture, Houghton firmly wagered that the pursuit of personal riches was overall beneficial to

59 John Houghton. 'England's Great Happiness or, a Dialogue Between Content and Complaint', University of London (1677), 3.
60 Houghton. 'England's Great Happiness', 20.
61 Houghton. 'England's Great Happiness', 22.
62 Slack. 'The Politics of Consumption and England's Happiness in the Later Seventeenth Century', 613.

England. The paradigm of a consumer culture built upon material dissatisfaction, while objectively contributing to the betterment of individual lives, made the morality of consumer culture somewhat ambiguous. However, besides Houghton's personal assertions, he identified the market economy's costs and benefits as structural and fundamental to society. The lasting legacy of the Consumer Revolution better reflects the significance of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the global path toward an industrial, consumerist society.

The Industrious Revolution was not only a precursor to industrialization in terms of shifting labor and increasing production, but also a cultural revolution in how individuals engaged with material goods, time, and social identity. By fostering new habits of consumption, stimulating demand for manufactured goods, and encouraging an appetite for novelty, the Consumer Revolution laid the ideological and commercial groundwork that made technological and scientific innovations economically viable and socially desirable. Importantly, it also helped normalize the capitalist ethos of endless acquisition and market expansion. As Plumb noted, belief in modernity defined by innovation, growth, and aggressive consumption was essential to the emergence of the consumer society.[63] This belief system empowered the bourgeoisie to define new cultural values based on taste, domestic refinement, and economic independence. In doing so, it undermined older systems of aristocratic and religious authority and redrew the social order around market participation. Yet this transformation came at a cost. The same consumer habits and economic structures that enabled upward mobility for some also entrenched new forms of inequality and alienation. The ideological contradictions of this era between tradition and progress, innovation and moral concern, demonstrate that the Consumer Revolution was not merely a period of material improvement. It was a foundational moment in the making of the modern world for better and for worse: an economic world governed not by machines, but by markets, desires, and deeply ingrained habits of consumption that reflect even older institutions of class and gender. Understanding the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a period of profound economic and cultural transition thus offers critical insight into the structures

63 Plumb et al. 'The Birth of Consumer Society', 317.

of modern capitalism and the unresolved tensions still embedded within it.

In tracing the rise of consumer culture during the Industrious Revolution and Consumer Revolution, it becomes clear that this period was pivotal not merely for its economic achievements but for the shifts it triggered in social life, cultural norms, and personal identity. The spread of consumer goods from fashion to household amenities reshaped expectations across class lines, offering new avenues for self-expression, status emulation, and domestic refinement. Yet, these transformations did not occur in a vacuum; rather, they were molded by enduring social institutions of gender, class, and the household. Consumer culture's development both challenged and reinforced existing hierarchies, demonstrating England's path to modernity as anything but linear. Furthermore, the anxieties and critiques sparked by burgeoning consumption reveal the intrinsic friction between economic growth and individual virtue. The Consumer Revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries laid essential groundwork for the rise of Western capitalist society. By fostering new ways of thinking about goods, selfhood, and society, it provided the ideological and practical tools that made industrialization not only possible but also sustainable. Plumb wrote, "To change the attitudes of men, the ideas of intellectual elites must be socially acceptable."[64] The Consumer Revolution set such a standard through the exploitation of personal desires and existing social norms. This transition and training of the English psyche to accept change, utilize the market economy, and indulge in non-essential personal consumption are what made the Consumer Revolution one of the first steps in making England and the Western world truly 'modern.'

64 Plumb et al. 'The Birth of Consumer Society', 333.

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PLURAL PEACE

How Different Actors Facilitated Peacemaking and Stability in Liberia

Owen Reid

Abstract

THIS paper examines how differing conceptions of peace among key actors shaped both the resolution of the Second Liberian Civil War and the postwar stability that followed. Focusing on three principal groups, the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace movement, Liberian rebel factions, and the United States diplomatic corps, the paper argues that peace was not a singular or uniform objective but a plural concept grounded in distinct motivations and worldviews. Drawing on primary sources including documentary film, archival materials from the John W. Blaney Papers, and contemporaneous media, the paper analyzes how women activists understood peace as an immediate, nonviolent end to suffering, while rebel groups pursued peace through the violent removal of Charles Taylor, and U.S. officials framed peace in terms of economic stability, humanitarian response, and international order. By synthesizing these perspectives, the article contends that Liberia's durable postwar stability emerged from the interaction of grassroots mobilization and coordinated international intervention rather than from any single actor's efforts alone.

Introduction

WHEN Leymah Gbowee and other Liberian women staged a sit-in at peace negotiations between leaders of the Liberian government and rebel factions, their goal was to physically prevent those leaders from leaving the negotiations site until a ceasefire was implemented and peace had been declared.[1] When threatened with arrest by local Ghanaian officials for "obstructing justice," Gbowee began to strip naked both to make arresting her easier for the police and to figuratively convey that they would do anything to prove their points.[2] The women finally agreed to disperse on

1 Ewing, Abigail, and Gini Reticker, dirs. *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*. Produced by Abigail Disney. Fork Films, 2008.
2 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*.

the sole condition that the peace talks advanced meaningfully and that the leaders reach a peace agreement within two weeks.[3] A full ceasefire and declaration of peace were achieved two weeks later.[4] For Gbowee and other women who were part of the "Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace," the difficult decision to leave their warring nation behind and journey to Accra to be present for peace negotiations was motivated by one single objective: to achieve peace by ending the violence and fighting throughout the nation.[5] Indeed, their incredible resistance and non-violent protests in the months leading up to the declaration of a ceasefire were deeply personal.[6] Achieving peace meant the ensured protection of their own children, the safety of their own communities, and the stability of their own country.[7]

United States Ambassador to Liberia John W. Blaney was also in attendance at the 2003 peace summit in Accra. Ambassador Blaney was instrumental in coordinating the international response to the Liberian crisis. At a certain point, Blaney himself met with the Liberian rebel group Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), clarifying to the group the terms of the peace negotiation and facilitating stability in the post-war era.[8] Blaney's motives for seeking peace were different from Gbowee and the women's movement. Rather than a deeply personal interest in achieving peace, Blaney's interest in a Liberian ceasefire and continued stability in West Africa stemmed from American interests in economic stability and international order. Blaney's coordinated efforts with the United Nations (UN) underscored his and the United States' commitment to protect human rights and abate the Liberian humanitarian crisis.[9]

This paper will explore the differing perspectives on peace that contributed to the ceasefire that ultimately ended the Second Liberian Civil War. After reviewing important context relevant to the conflict, this article explores the literature on peacemaking in Liberia that has focused on how one specific actor or conception

3 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
4 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
5 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
6 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
7 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
8 "Blaney Discusses Time in Liberia: interview with John Blaney by Ky Luu" YouTube video, 10:12. Filmed 2009. Posted by dmlatulane. September 12, 2009. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gWDGsEtMbLY
9 Blaney, "Blaney Discusses Time in Liberia", 10:12.

of peace contributed to the end of the Second Liberian Civil War. This article synthesizes these unique perspectives, highlighting how a consideration of multiple factors lends itself to a proper understanding of the peace agreement and the post-war stability that endures. Primary source material illuminates the perspectives of the women's peace movement, Ambassador Blaney and the United States, and certain revolutionary Liberian perspectives. This essay then explores these differing conceptions of peace before making an argument regarding post-war stability in Liberia. While the American embassy understood peace through the lens of economic and humanitarian interests that required international cooperation, the Liberian rebels saw violence as the primary mechanism for peace, and the women's peace movement saw nonviolent protest as the best way to achieve peace. The success of the women's movement and the international cooperation coordinated by the United States contributed to the stability that has defined Liberia since 2005.

Existing Literature

WHILE the literature in political science regarding peacemaking and statebuilding is extremely rich, case studies on the Second Liberian Civil War are more limited. Alan Kuperman's 2015 work "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War" highlights the role that the international community played in facilitating the peace agreements.[10] Kuperman argues that "smart diplomacy," was crucial to the Liberian conflict's end, noting "that enlightened diplomacy succeeded in Liberia."[11] Kuperman's work, while certainly substantial, neglects the important role that the women's peace movement played in resolving the conflict. Understanding diplomacy's place in resolving the Liberian conflict is crucial to understanding the conflict as a whole. Still, one would be remiss to recount the ceasefire agreement without considering the effect that women like Leymah Gbowee had on the negotiations.

Conversely, Leymah Gbowee's own 2019 work *When Women Stand Together As One: The Power of Women's Grassroots Peace Movements* published in the *Journal of International Affairs*, undervalues the essential role that international cooperation

10 Kuperman, "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War."
11 Kuperman, "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War" p. 155.

played in facilitating a sustained peace effort.[12] Gbowee argues that "Liberia's war years were filled with unsuccessful peace talks…" and that "to be successful, women had to claim space at the peace talks."[13] While it is certainly true that the women's peace movement forced President Taylor to enter peace negotiations, this line of reasoning ignores the crucial part that the United States and other international bodies played in bringing the peace agreement to fruition in war-torn Liberia. D. Elwood Dunn's 2011 work *The Liberian Experience: Fostering Stable Post-Conflict Governance* provides a similar analysis to Gbowee's piece, emphasizing the role of the Liberian people's resilience, specifically through the women's peace movement. He argues that "the rebuilding of post-crisis communities must foremost be the responsibility of those groups."[14] Dunn emphasizes the utility of community resilience in rebuilding a state after a significant conflict, which is certainly substantial, but is not the sole contributing factor to peace and stability in Liberia.[15] More realistically, international coordination and the women's movement were equally important to efforts to achieve and sustain peace.

Babatunde Afolabi's 2017 book *The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War* strikes this balance well.[16] Considering both the First and Second Liberian Civil Wars, Afolabi weighs the influence of the international community with the influence of explicitly Liberian actors like Gbowee or other religious movements.[17] While realizing the presence of multiple factors in the peacemaking process is an important contribution to the literature, Afolabi's book does not attempt to make an argument about how this confluence of factors shaped the post-war stability that has endured in Liberia since 2005.[18]

Identifying the positive contributions that Kuperman, Gbowee, Dunn, and Afolabi make, this paper examines primary source material to reach a deeper understanding of how these actors had differing conceptions of peace. This paper then makes the argument that the plurality of notions of peace shaped the post-

12 Gbowee, "When Women Stand Together As One."
13 Gbowee, "When Women Stand Together As One", 15.
14 Dunn, "The Liberian Experience: Fostering Stable Post-Conflict Governance", 8.
15 Dunn, "The Liberian Experience: Fostering Stable Post-Conflict Governance", 8.
16 Afolabi, The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War.
17 Afolabi, The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War.
18 Afolabi, The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War.

war environment Liberia is defined by.

Background

LIBERIA was originally an American colony populated by formerly enslaved people born in the United States 'returned' to Africa by the American government.[19] Liberia was granted independence by the United States in 1847, and throughout its history, the United States has enjoyed a friendly relationship with Liberia.[20] American-owned company Firestone has held economic stake in Liberia since 1926, which has mandated American military presence in the country for most of the 20th and 21st centuries.[21] Liberia's largely stable and prosperous 20th century was plunged into civil war in 1989.[22] Charles Taylor, one of the main actors in the Second Liberian Civil War, led an insurgency called the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) from the Ivory Coast to overthrow the sitting authority, President Samuel Doe. Taylor's aggression initiated nearly a decade and a half of violence, human rights violations, and struggle in Liberia.[23] Becoming a popular and well-liked leader during his operations as head of the NPFL, Taylor was elected to the Presidency of Liberia in 1997.[24] Throughout his administration, Taylor mishandled funds, enabled human rights violations, and generally abused his power as president.[25] George Kieh's 2009 *The Roots of the Second Liberian Civil War* details specific actions that Taylor took as an insurgent and as president, including a failure to address the undercurrents of the original civil war.[26] Taylor used Liberian money to finance neighboring terrorist and insurgent movements, such as the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone or the Rally of Democratic Forces in Guinea.[27] Taylor

19 Veronica Nmoma. "Round 2 of the Liberian Civil Crisis: US and Liberia, Presumed Historical Ties." *Journal of Third World Studies* 23, no. 1 (2006): 169–98.
20 Veronica Nmoma. "Round 2 of the Liberian Civil Crisis: US and Liberia, Presumed Historical Ties." *Journal of Third World Studies* 23, no. 1 (2006): 169–98.
21 Hahn Niels. "US Covert and Overt Operations in Liberia, 1970s to 2003," *Air & Space Power Journal–Africa and Francophonie* 5, no. 3 (2014): 19–47.
22 Hahn Niels. "US Covert and Overt Operations in Liberia, 1970s to 2003," *Air & Space Power Journal–Africa and Francophonie* 5, no. 3 (2014): 19–47.
23 Hahn Niels. "US Covert and Overt Operations in Liberia, 1970s to 2003," *Air & Space Power Journal–Africa and Francophonie* 5, no. 3 (2014): 19–47.
24 George Klay Kieh. "The Roots of the Second Liberian Civil War." *International Journal on World Peace* 26, no. 1 (2009): 7–30.
25 George Klay Kieh. "The Roots of the Second Liberian Civil War." *International Journal on World Peace* 26, no. 1 (2009): 7–30.
26 George Klay Kieh. "The Roots of the Second Liberian Civil War." *International Journal on World Peace* 26, no. 1 (2009): 7–30.
27 Babatunde Tolu Afolabi. "The Liberian Civil War: Interests, Actors & Interventions." *The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War*, NED-New edition., Boydell & Brewer,

was the ruling authority of the Liberian government during the Second Liberian Civil War from 1999-2003, and his actions, or lack thereof of, contributed to one of West Africa's worst humanitarian crises in modern history.[28] Taylor would eventually be indicted and convicted by the International Criminal Court. Taylor was prosecuted for war crimes and crimes against humanity, evidenced mostly by his leading role in supplying arms to rebel groups and spurring violence in the Second Liberian Civil War.[29]

The main revolutionary forces fighting against Taylor's government were the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). LURD, financed by neighboring state Guinea, invaded Liberia to depose Taylor in 1999, while MODEL, financed by neighboring state Ivory Coast, joined the war as it escalated years later.[30] For the first three years of the conflict, the civil war was primarily contained to the countryside in the east of the country.[31] As the groups closed in on the centrally located capital city of Liberia, Monrovia, they consistently committed atrocities against local communities, displacing many and inciting refugee migration into the country towards the capital.[32] By early 2002, LURD was within 50 miles of Monrovia, and MODEL would join less than a year later in 2003. The worst of the Second Liberian Civil War came during the Siege of Monrovia in July and August of 2003, with some figures estimating that nearly 1 million Liberian civilians were either internally displaced persons (IDPs) or murdered.[33] Throughout the conflict, Taylor's government and the rebel factions used child infantry, often on drugs, to support their military force.[34]

In 2002, the leader of the Liberian wing of the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET), Leymah Gbowee, had a

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(2017): 73–99.

28 Babatunde Tolu Afolabi. "The Liberian Civil War: Interests, Actors & Interventions." *The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War*, NED-New edition., Boydell & Brewer, (2017): 73–99.

29 Babatunde Tolu Afolabi. "The Liberian Civil War: Interests, Actors & Interventions." *The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War*, NED-New edition., Boydell & Brewer, (2017): 73–99

30 Babatunde Tolu Afolabi. "The Liberian Civil War: Interests, Actors & Interventions." *The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War,* NED-New edition., Boydell & Brewer, (2017): 73–99.

31 Leymah Gbowee. "When Women Stand Together As One: The Power of Women's Grassroots Peace Movements." *Journal of International Affairs* 72, no. 2 (2019): 13–18.

32 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*

33 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*

34 Disney et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*

dream of uniting women from her religious community to protest for peace and an end to the civil war.[35] Gbowee organized women from her Christian church alongside women from local Muslim mosques to wear white and join in a non-violent protest against the war, a powerful cross-religious demonstration.[36] The women began non-violent protests regularly in a local fish market that they knew President Taylor would have to drive by on his way to work.[37] They wore white to symbolize peace and to insist on an end to the war that had plagued the country for decades.[38] When President Taylor altered his route to work, the women took their protest directly to him, demanding a meeting with him at his Presidential Palace.[39] Gbowee personally read a statement listing the movement's grievances and imploring the president to go to peace negotiations in Ghana: "We are tired of war. We are tired of running. We are tired of begging for bulgur wheat. We are tired of our children being raped."[40] Taylor left the group with a promise that he would entertain peace talks, and consequently went to Ghana in the summer of 2003 to negotiate with neighboring African countries and the rebel factions.[41] Gbowee and other members of the women's peace movement travelled to Ghana to protest outside the hotel where negotiations were taking place and to pressure leaders into taking action.[42] For her incredible activism and non-violent resistance, Gbowee won the Nobel Peace Laureate in 2011.[43]

International representatives played an equally important role in the peace developments. United States Ambassador to Liberia John W. Blaney was confirmed and installed into the embassy in Monrovia in late 2002, just as the war was escalating.[44] Blaney entered, intending to immediately stabilize the region and put an end to the civil war.[45] As fighting intensified into the siege of Monrovia in the summer of 2003, Blaney and other American embassy officials faced a choice: provide aid to IDPs and facilitate

35 "Leymah Gbowee: The Dream | Peace Films by Errol Morris | The New York Times." Youtube, uploaded by The New York Times, 4 Oct. 2014. youtube.com/watch?v=aOFyn6pF9qU
36 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
37 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
38 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
39 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
40 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
41 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
42 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
43 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
44 Hahn, "US Covert and Overt Operations in Liberia, 1970s to 2003", 21.
45 Hahn, "US Cover and Overt Operations in Liberia, 1970s to 2003", 21.

an end to the conflict, or leave.[46] Blaney, now accompanied by the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, decided to stay in Monrovia despite diplomats from other countries leaving the besieged Liberian capital.[47] Blaney was also present at the peace negotiations in Accra.[48] The United States and the United Nations played an important role in facilitating the terms of the peace agreement.

Ahead of the adoption of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement on August 18th, 2003, President Taylor resigned from his office and was transported to Nigeria on August 11th.[49] Even after peace had been agreed to, some rebel groups continued fighting and perpetrating violence.[50] Ambassador Blaney worked intimately with the rebel groups to ensure that they complied with the terms of the ceasefire and made peace.[51] The terms of the peace agreement mandated that a UN-sanctioned peacekeeping operation enter Monrovia to deal with the ongoing humanitarian crisis and the continued violence.[52] The UN mission deployed from Nigeria and worked closely with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which had been coordinating peace efforts throughout the civil war.[53] This UN peacekeeping mission facilitated the de-escalation of violence and the maintenance of an interim state until elections were held again. In 2005, Liberians elected Ellen Sirleaf, the first elected female leader of any African country.[54]

Differing Conceptions of Peace

UNDERSTANDING that peace may mean different things to different people or entities, this section uses primary source materials to uncover how the different actors within the context of the Second Liberian Civil War understood peace. The paper examines the documentary *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, which showcases the activism and protest by the women's peace movement, footage from the front lines of the LURD, which showcases perspectives

46 "Blaney Discusses Time in Liberia," YouTube video.
47 "Blaney Discusses Time in Liberia," YouTube video.
48 "Blaney Discusses Time in Liberia," YouTube video.
49 Alan J Kuperman. "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War," *Negotiating in Times of Conflict, eds. Gilead Sher and Anat Kurz* (Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, 2015): 155-171.
50 Kuperman, *Liberia*, 155-171.
51 "Blaney Discusses Time in Liberia," YouTube video.
52 Kuperman, "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War."
53 Kuperman, "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War."
54 D. Elwood Dunn. "The Liberian Experience: Fostering Stable Post-Conflict Governance." *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 12, no. 2 (2011): 7–14.

from young men fighting for the rebel cause, and materials from the John W. Blaney papers, a collection of documents housed in Georgetown University's Booth Family Special Collections gifted to the archive by Ambassador Blaney himself. Comparison of these different sources and mindsets conducts a form of archival analysis by using comparison and juxtaposition. Not only does this article methodologically assess each primary source at face value, but it also uses the intersection of all of those sources as an archival reference to make arguments about a particular worldview and conception of Liberian stability.

Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace Movement

GBOWEE and the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace Movement had a very direct and narrow conception of peace. Because they had seen family members and friends die at the hands[55] of the violence of the civil war, the women's peace movement was grounded in a deeply personal conception of peace. Characterized not by an abstract view of some moral principle, these Liberian women were grounded in their faith and in seeing peace realized so that their communities would not be devastated. The women held signs that read "Peace Peace Peace," "Peace Peace Peace Now Now Now," and "Our Children Are Dying."[56] Gibowee addressed President Charles Taylor directly at his mansion prior to his departure for the peace conference in Accra: "We are tired. We are tired of running. We are tired of our children being raped. We are now taking this stand to secure the future of our children."[57] After their sit-in at the peace talks in Accra, Gbowee spoke with media coverage of the day's events, saying, "We, the Liberian women in Ghana at this conference, are doing this to tell the world that we are tired of fighting [and] the killing of our people."[58] These stated goals and grievances of the women's peace movement reflect their conception of peace. For these women, the question of whether peace could be achieved was literally a matter of life and death, for themselves and for their families.

Because of this, their method of protest to achieve peace was explicitly non-violent. In an interview with the New York Times,

55 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.*
56 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.* 33:53.
57 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell,* 32:00.
58 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell,* 56:20.

Gbowee remarked, "The only language [Taylor and rebel groups] know is violence. You come at them with non-violence and they don't know how to function."[59] This reflects the spirit of the non-violent demonstrations that the women engaged in at the fish market in Monrovia or at the sit-in during the peace conferences in Accra. Gbowee and the other Liberian women conceived of peace as a complete and utter end to all violence in any capacity, and by being explicitly non-violent, the women's peace movement changed the narrative of what it meant to achieve peace in Liberia.

Rebel Groups

THE Liberian rebel groups LURD and MODEL had a much different conception of peace. Instead of peace being a complete and utter end to all violence, peace was characterized by a lack of Charles Taylor. Sekou Conneh, National Chairman of LURD, explained the position of the rebel group, saying, "Taylor does not listen to any peace, any negotiation, except the barrel of the gun. This is why we are in the bush."[60] For LURD, peace could only be attained if Taylor was ousted from the government. Peace did not correspond to any notion of non-violence, but rather a lack of President Taylor.

Therefore, the means by which they attempted to achieve that peace were exclusively violent. In *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, LURD soldiers are seen at all times with a gun.[61] LURD and MODEL rebel forces had no interest in non-violent ventures to achieve their vision of peace. Rather, the revolutionary members saw violence as the only way to achieve peace. It is because of this mindset that they plundered, raped, stole, and committed other atrocities against Liberian citizens along their way to the capital Monrovia.[62] Without any regard for human life, the way in which they went about conducting themselves was explicitly violent and harmful in nature. Unlike the women's peace group, which was inherently non-violent and inherently peaceful, LURD and other rebel forces' only known way of achieving their interests was through violence and harm.

59 "Leymah Gbowee: The Dream", YouTube, 7:45.
60 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, 11:15.
61 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell,* 11:15.
62 Ewing et al., *Pray the Devil Back to Hell,* 11:15.

Blaney and the United States

AMBASSADOR Blaney and the United States had noticeably different perspectives on war and the importance of peace and a much different conception of why peace was important compared to the women's movement or the rebel movements. Although the United States had a vested interest in protecting Liberians, given America's strong historical relationship with Liberia,[63] Blaney admits in meeting notes for a town hall event that, "We are here, of course, to pursue American interests. And that is how it should be."[64] Blaney and American forces were interested in peace for two reasons: economic interests and global-order principles.

Although President Bush did cite the strong historical relationship with Liberia as a reason for assistance, the substantial oil supply from the West African region also proved a relevant economic consideration.[65] Ensuring the region's stability contributed significantly to the economic security interests of the United States. The fact that the United States imported oil and other natural resources from West African countries contributed to Blaney and the United States' conception of why peace mattered.

More broadly, the United States at this time was interested in ensuring the protection of human rights around the world and responding to humanitarian crises. In a letter that Ambassador Blaney received from President Bush's Chief of Staff, he thanked Mr. Blaney for helping to realize America's goal "to bring freedom and democracy to oppressed peoples."[66] In a document of testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on June 11th, 2002, Assistant Secretary of State Walter Kansteiner noted that "of paramount importance is ensuring an adequate food supply until commercial mechanisms are restored."[67] After Blaney was confirmed as Ambassador to Liberia later that year, he held a press conference in which he declared that the situation particularly in Monrovia was a humanitarian disaster and that "the United States

63 "Blaney Discusses Time in Liberia," YouTube video.
64 "Crisis Period" in Liberia correspondence, articles, and administrative materials, (1 of 4), 2001 - 2003, Box: 5, Folder: 3. John W. Blaney Papers, GTM-20230821. Georgetown University Manuscripts, Booth Family Center for Special Collections.
65 Press clippings and articles, 1 of 2, 2001 - 2003. John W. Blaney Papers, GTM-20230821. Georgetown University Manuscripts, Booth Family Center for Special Collections.
66 "Crisis Period" in Liberia correspondence, articles, and administrative materials, (4 of 4), 2002 - 2003, Box: 5, Folder: 6. John W. Blaney Papers, GTM-20230821. Georgetown University
67 "Crisis Period" in Liberia correspondence, articles, and administrative materials, (1 of 4), 2001 - 2003. John W. Blaney Papers, GTM-20230821. Georgetown University Manuscripts, Booth Family Center for Special Collections.

wants peace here."[68] Indeed, the United States maintained a vested interest in promoting democratic and humanitarian ideals around the world during the Bush administration, not only in Africa, but around the world.[69] Not only was humanitarianism perceived as the morally righteous foreign policy, but, properly executed, it functioned as a form of soft power that strengthened the global order's view of the United States.

With those specific American interests in mind, the United States turned to its international partners to help realize its goal of peace in Liberia. The United States coordinated with the United Nations to organize a peacekeeping force that would ensure that all parties complied with the Accra Peace Accords and to address the humanitarian crises present during the siege of Monrovia.[70] The United States also coordinated with ECOWAS to ensure that the surrounding countries in the West African region were properly stable and that the violence did not spread.[71] Grounded in American interests, Ambassador Blaney and the United States foreign policy apparatus conceived of peace primarily through its desire to protect its economic and global order goals. To realize these interests, the United States played a crucial role in bringing international actors together to form a peace deal and enforce it.

Post-War Stability

AFTER peace agreements were reached and President Taylor fled to Nigeria, an interim government, composed of representatives from the warring factions and existing civil servants, oversaw the Liberian government for almost two years.[72] The United States' insistence on international involvement and cooperation helped to identify who should participate in the interim government. The international response that actors agreed to at the peace talks in Accra significantly influenced the first part of the post-war government. Additionally, the UN peacekeeping force skillfully deescalated the violence and helped to end the then ongoing humanitarian crisis. This specific coordination, set up by the United States and Ambassador Blaney, maintained the post-

68 "Crisis Period" in Liberia correspondence, articles, and administrative materials, (4 of 4), 2002 - 2003, Box: 5, Folder: 6. John W. Blaney Papers, GTM-20230821. Georgetown University Manuscripts, Booth Family Center for Special Collections.
69 *See*, for example, President Bush's PEPFAR initiative in 2003.
70 Kuperman, "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War."
71 Kuperman, "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War."
72 Kuperman, "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War."

war stability that endured for the first two years of the Taylor-less government.

In 2005, Liberia held presidential elections in which Ellen Johnson Sirleaf won. She was the first female elected head of any African country.[73] The communal resistance demonstrated by the Liberian people, and particularly the Liberian women, inspired the whole nation and allowed them to elect a woman to the highest office in the country. The specific elements of the protests and advocacy by Leymah Gbowee and the women's peace movement contributed significantly to how post-war Liberia continues to be known today.

Conclusion

THIS article presents an alternative view of how the different actors in the Second Liberian Civil War contributed to the eventual agreement for a ceasefire conceived of the idea of peace, highlighting that a proper understanding of the differences between Leymah Gbowee and the women's movement and the American embassy helps inform us of the way in which post-war Liberia stabilized. While Gbowee and her fellow female activists had a deeply personal connection to the advocacy of peace, the United States conceived of peace in terms of its national interests. The differences in these two perspectives not only led to different approaches to achieving peace but also influenced the reshaping of the Liberian government after the war ended. The emphasis on community resilience and the role of women in a successful protest led to the election of the first female head of state in modern African history. Additionally, the emphasis on international cooperation allowed the international community to embrace the rejuvenated state. This paper not only bridges a gap in the existing literature on peacemaking and stability following the Second Liberian Civil War, but also poses interesting questions about the viability of some evidence as a type of archive to be used in historical analysis.

73 Kuperman, "Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War."

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