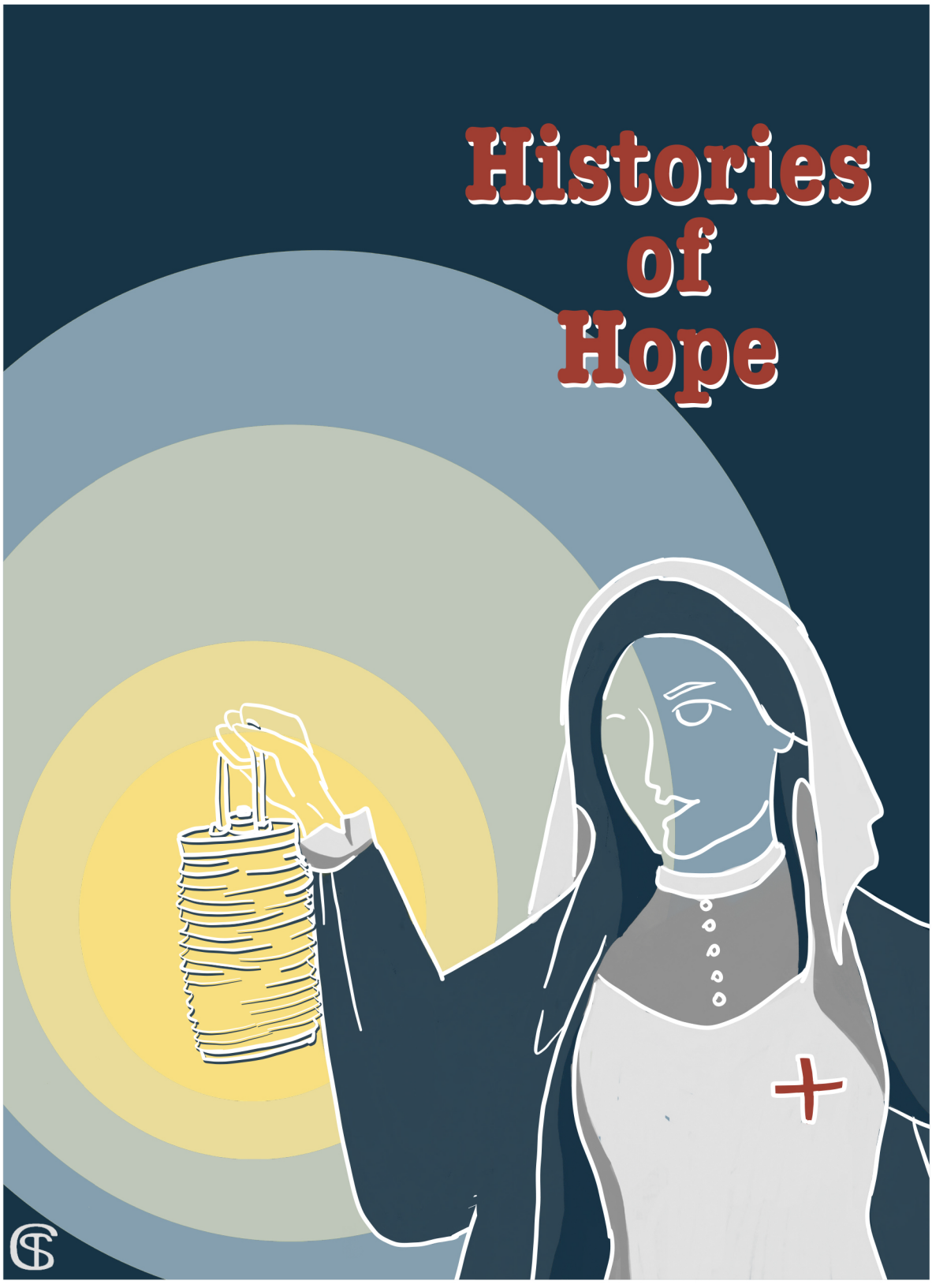
{r} Retrospect Journal

Histories of Hope



SCHOOL OF HISTORY, CLASSICS, AND ARCHAEOLOGY

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From the Editor

In Greek mythology, “hope” (Elpis) emerged into the world via Pandora’s Box. Last to leave, Pandora closed the lid before hope could escape. The reasoning behind this was, and remains, hotly contested (for more detail see Justin Biggi and João Pedro Hallett Cravinho’s piece in this issue). In many respects, the association between hope and vice remains valid in the present day. Inherently future-orientated, hope is an emotion that frees us from the melancholia of the present.

It is in this light, that we present “Histories of Hope”. We have not sought to chart a false march of progress. Rather, our authors meditate on specific historical contexts, concluding that hopes were often deashed and dreams were often crushed. From the pessimism that engulfed followers of the “Red Star” to the tragic decisions that confronted enslaved women in the British Caribbean, it is clear that hopes have rarely been fulfilled.

Despite this, the pieces that make up this issue collectively demonstrate the infinite capacity for hope among individuals and groups. Even under the most desperate circumstances, people in the past have consistently hoped for better futures. From the prison writings of Oscar Wilde to the dreams so crucial to Mayan and Mapuche epistemologies hope has generated resilience and created new worlds.

In some cases, we may tentatively claim that hopes and dreams have, on occasion, come to fruition. Whether that’s the bonds of camaraderie formed among French soldiers during the Napoleonic Wars or the formation of the first independent American Black Republic, hopes have been realised.

For many of us, the past year has been difficult (to say the least). Many have lost loved ones, many have lost jobs, and all of us face an uncertain future. Yet, there have been glimmers of hope. Multiple vaccines have been produced in the space of a year, potentially offering a route to a future free of Covid-19. The Black Lives Matter protests have shaken existing paradigms, with some signs that systems of white supremacy may be weakening. Whilst the future will always remain unclear, history tells us that when individuals and groups hope, and act on those hopes, new futures can emerge.

In this small contribution, we hope to offer some lessons on the power of hope in the historical past.

This issue would not be possible without hard work and determination. I would like to thank all of our contributors for putting together pieces that are academically rigorous yet accessible. Our copy editors have done a fantastic job, tirelessly perfecting each article. Our illustrators have produced a cover and accompanying illustrations that capture the essence of this issue and its articles. Retrospect’s Deputy Editors, Alice Goodwin and Tristan Craig, have played an essential role throughout, from assessing pitches to formatting each article. Without any of these individuals, this issue, and the work of Retrospect generally, would be impossible so I thank you all for your determination, patience, and time. I would also like to thank the University of Edinburgh’s School of History, Classics, and Archaeology and Edinburgh University Students Association. Funding from these institutions has ensured the work of Retrospect can continue and remain free and accessible for all.

Happy Reading!

Jamie Gemmell
Editor in Chief

The Story Behind the Cover

By Tara Chintapatla

Light is a timeless symbol of hope. During the Crimean War, the light of Florence Nightingale carried hope to millions of people through the crises. The Crimean War was a time of devastation and chaos. “The Lady With The Lamp” stood as a guiding light of hope in these times.

In the contemporary, nurses are making history standing at the forefront of a pandemic.

Whether it is frontline care or vaccines, NHS workers stand as the shining symbol of hope. Vogue’s front cover recognised this in July 2020 featuring midwife, Rachel Millar, on its front cover where glamourous celebrities normally reign. There was a shift in societies attention. Through NHS workers we witness hope in the face of adversity.

But as we often have come to realise this is history repeating itself. In May 1918, six months before the end of World War One, Vogue showed a nurse on its front cover. A symbol of hope throughout history.

The “Histories of Hope” issue is, for me, a conjunction of history and our present day; it shows us how, in cases of tragedy, we can reflect and see glimpses of hope. Articles about women, war, and colonialism show us how much society has grown and how much we still need to grow. The figure of Florence Nightingale is also a symbol of this. She is a symbol of change and movement. Sometimes when we reflect on history, we see how times have changed and yet sometimes it dawns on us how easily times are repeated.

When we look at last year’s Vogue cover 2020 showing an NHS worker, as a symbol of respect and hope, we might have initially thought this was a unique moment in this era. However, we only need to look back to the 1918 Vogue cover to see the same subject. And with that, the similarities between the present day and 100 years ago seem to merge together in cohesion.

Retrospect’s articles point this out and I hope that the cover reflects this as well. Where there is hope in history there is hope now.

Vogue 1918 (left) Citation: Woodruff, Porter. Vogue, 1918. In British Vogue, 2020. https://www.vogue.com/article/past-present-nurses-personal-protective-equipment.

Vogue 2020 (right) Citation: Hawkesworth, Jamie. The New Front Line, 2020. In British Vogue. London, 2020. https://www.vogue.co.uk/news/article/editors-letter-new-frontline-july-2020.

ArchSoc

I would like to start by thanking everyone who has been involved in ArchSoc over my four years of involvement, including my three years on committee.

Our regular online events continued to be successful this semester, from our Lecture Series, Coffee Afternoons, and socials. Our thanks to all our lecturers this semester: Dr. Helen Chittock (AOC), Stefano Bordoni, Prof. Ian Ralston, Dr. Graeme Cavers (AOC), and Dr. Linda Fibiger, for providing varied and interesting discussions.

In February, ArchSoc co-organised and co-hosted the fourth annual Scottish Student Archaeology Society Conference alongside Glasgow and UHI Perth ArchSocs. The two-day conference was a resounding success, with brilliant talks from students on various periods of Scottish archaeology. Furthermore, there was insightful discussion from professionals working across the archaeological spectrum on the current state of the profession and discussions on how to get students into archaeology. Our thanks to Glasgow and UHI Perth for their excellent work in organising the event.

ArchSoc hosted our annual Women in Heritage event on 14 March. This fourth edition was hosted via Zoom. Dr. Hannah Cobb gave an inspiring keynote speech on equality and diversity in the Archaeology and Heritage sectors, informing attendees of the vital grassroot level activist groups which are collaborating with organisations like CIFA and FAME to develop initiatives to support and fairly represent working women in the sectors. Participants acknowledged that although there have been great advances, there are continued struggles for women, such as the difficulties around promotions to high positions. Discussion also raised the issue that a one-size-fits-all approach to feminism, especially in academia, does not benefit all. To achieve equality in heritage this must be intersectional, rather than simply acknowledging diversity on a surface-level. Overall, the event was well-received, and attendees have provided positive feedback on the empowering and inspirational atmosphere fostered by events such as this.

It is my pleasure to hand over to next year's committee who I am sure will do an excellent job: Becky Underwood (President), Darcey Spenner (Secretary), Patricia Hromadova (Treasurer), Ross Dempster (Social Secretary), John Strachan (Academic Events Officer), Alex Strauss-Jones (Publicity Officer), Claudette Day and Grayson Thomas (Dig Chiefs), Alex Strauss-Jones (BAME Officer), and Hannah Boyd and Hannah Braniff (General Members). Our committee positions of First-Year Rep and Postgrad Rep will be elected in September so keep an eye out if you're interested in joining the committee!

Look out for our annual Fieldwork Fair on Thursday 22 April to find fieldwork and connect with professionals from commercial archaeology.

My thanks to everyone who attended any of our events this year, you made it worthwhile, and thank you to the outgoing committee; you were a joy to work with in these difficult times! Finally, my thanks to Retrospect for the chance to share ArchSoc's semester with you. You can get in contact with ArchSoc at edin.archsoc@gmail.com.

Sam Land
ArchSoc President (2020-2021)

Classics Society

Salvete!

What a year! Coming back to university in September 2020, was a daunting and uncertain time, especially for committee members of the University of Edinburgh Classics Society, as we had no idea how we were going to provide our usual service for our members, in this unusual situation. However, we soon got into the swing of things with regular online socials, the success of which is a testament to the hard work of our social secretaries Charlie Hodgson and Jenny Shearer, who managed to bring a much needed distraction from the current world and academic responsibilities.

One definite positive of the strange new times we find ourselves in, is the use of technology to connect with people across the world. One of my personal favourite events we held this year was our “Evening With” series organised and hosted by our incredible Academic Liaison Molly McDowell. Using Zoom meant that we were able to host guest lecturers from outside Edinburgh, including Edinburgh University alum Hardeep Dhindsa, and Hamilton College Professor Shelley Haley from the US. These talks were both aimed at decolonising classics, and were a refreshing and much needed perspective on the importance of making classics accessible for all.

The Classics Society social media accounts, run by the fantastic Tessa Rodriguez, have been crucial assets this year in bringing the classics community at the University together. A great feature we have started is the “Classics Staff Spotlight” in which we interview and get to know the lecturers more, as a way to make students, especially first years, more familiar with the staff.

Frances Butland
Classics Society President (2020-2021)

I would like to thank the two other members of my Triumvirate, James Lawson and Jurriaan Gouw, for their role as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. Their level-headedness and creativity made making hard decisions so much easier. Special thanks also goes out to Isabelle Chasey, our Charity and Outreach Officer who dedicated so much time to producing online lessons for primary school children in Edinburgh. I would also like to thank Mia Morgalla and Caspar Temple, the EVCS trip secretaries. Unfortunately, our planned trip to Athens was not able to go ahead, however they still made our Flexible Learning Week entertaining with their Athens vs. Sparta Debate and Classical Murder Mystery. I am immensely proud also of the newest member of our committee Ananya Ambekar, filling the position of BAME Officer, a brand new role. Ananya has shown dedication to inciting real change within the study of Classics at Edinburgh University, and I am excited to see how she can continue her work next year as she has been re-elected to this position.

The Classics Society holds such a dear place in my heart and I am so honoured to have been a part of the community we have created over the past four years. I am so sad to be leaving my position here in the society, but I am also hugely excited and proud to be leaving EVCS in the capable and nurturing hands of Charlie Hodgson, who will be President for the 2021/2 academic year. I am so grateful for the hard work of my committee during this tough academic year, and it is my hope that the society continues to be a place for students of all backgrounds to share their love of classics.

Bonam fortunam!

History Society

In Semester Two of this academic year, History Society have yet again been very busy.

Both of our First Year Representatives held their own respective academic events: the first was entitled 'The Beginning of the End: Operation Barbarossa, 1941', where we were joined by Dr David Stahel, who called us all the way from Canberra at 6am Australia time. The second event marked Women's History Month, as we were joined by Dr Kate Mathis who discussed the impact of Gaelic women in medieval and early modern Scottish poetry. She spoke alongside Dr Alasdair Whyte, an award-winning Gaelic singer and conservationist of the Gaelic language who performed for us the poetry discussed. Our first-year representatives were both re-elected to join committee next year which is a testament to the work they've put in.

Our Academic Secretaries also have been working hard, delivering events including 'The Visual Histories of AIDS' and 'The Politics of the Anglo-Scottish Union'. Our Postgraduate Representative and PhD Student, Daniel Heathcote, also gave a talk to the Society on 'Gay American Tourism in Kenya, 1970-1978'. It was exciting for us all to learn more about his research on postcolonial Nairobi.

Our Social Secretary and Student Experience Officer, alongside film nights and quizzes, have been working hard on projects such as establishing an Academic Clan system in the History Department, having created a contingency plan for next year in agreement with senior management. They have been working hard, after this difficult year, to put community-building and welfare at the forefront of the School's agenda as we transition into the next academic year.

The Society also carried out a series of workshops entitled 'Scotland Slavery and Black History: Wikipedia Editing Project' in collaboration with Professor Diana Paton and Ewen Cameron, Edinburgh University's WIkimedian in Residence. The project focused on improving public knowledge of Scotland's Black history, and to help make Scotland's deep connections to Atlantic slavery better understood. In total we created four new articles, edited fifty-four and have garnered over 1.62 million article views. Thank you those who participated on the project.

Lastly, the Society collaborated with The Broadcast and recorded a podcast in conversation with senior management, putting some of the student body's concerns to Dr Talat Ahmed, Dr Fabian Hilfrich, and Dr Ewen Cameron surrounding institutional racism. If you have the time, have a listen to what the History Department have to say on issues such as diversity in the department, welfare for marginalised students and decolonising the curriculum.

It has been my pleasure being the President of History Society this year – my committee never failed to make laugh and impress me with their hard work and support for each other. I wish the committee and new President, Scarlett Attari, good luck. You will be amazing.

Lucy Parfitt
History Society President (2020-2021)

Hope in Archaic Greece

By Justin Biggi and João Pedro Hallett Cravinho

Hope in the *Iliad*

Subtle and yet powerful, the theme of hope inhabits the world of the *Iliad* as starkly and as importantly as war, tragedy, or fate. Yet it often takes second place to themes deemed more universal: the nature of heroism, the role man has in determining his own destiny and the ways in which early humanity interrogated itself about its own nature. In the *Iliad*, hope is a complex emotion, both fragile and strengthening, mired in fatalism.

Few characters' narratives focus on hope more than Hektor's. As prince of Troy and heir to Priam, Hektor represents the city and his people's hopes – for continuation, for endurance and for survival. As a father, he expresses hope for his son, Astyanax, and, by extension, the survival and success of the city, which Astyanax is destined to inherit from his father. But Hektor's hope is a doomed hope: the end of Troy is foretold, the fate of the city, of his people and of his family, one of ruination. Hektor himself is destined to die at the hands of Achilles, unable to escape his duty as protector of the city.

"Hektor alone saved Ilion" (*Iliad* 6.403), the text tells us, and to echo this, his son is nicknamed Astyanax, "Lord of the Citadel". As the city's last hope, Hektor represents more than just the royal family, a fact which he is acutely aware of: "I would feel deep shame before all the Trojans ... if like a coward I were to shrink away from the fighting" (*Iliad* 6.441—442). But, unlike his family, who to an extent seem to believe that the hope Hektor represents is still within grasp, he is fully aware of the fate that awaits Troy: "For I know this thing well in my heart, and my mind knows it: there will come a day when sacred Ilion shall perish" (*Iliad* 6.447—448). Hektor pushes back against hope, but does not abandon himself completely to despair. Taking Astyanax into his arms, he prays to the gods for good fortune to befall his child, and for him to surpass his father in valour amongst the Trojans (*Iliad* 6.476—481). Yet, in light of Hektor's previous words, this hopefulness feels melancholic at best; fatalistic at worst.

Those who speak to Hektor see the end of their hopes represented by his death: Andromache his wife, Hekuba his mother and Priam his father all describe to him the ways in which his death would doom them. With Hektor dead, they argue, the city is destined to fall. Were he to survive, there may still be a chance, as Priam says: "Come inside the wall, my child, so that you can rescue the Trojans and the women of Troy" (*Iliad* 22.56—57). Hektor refuses to come back inside, and dies at the hands of Achilles.

With his death, Troy loses all hope. When Iris, sent by Zeus, comes to the house of Priam, she finds it deep in mourning with the king bereft and the women desperate. Yet Iris brings with her an important message: Priam is to go to Achilles and ransom the body of Hektor from him (*Iliad* 24.175—180). Hekuba is dismayed at the prospect, and attempts to convince him not to go (*Iliad* 24.200—212). However, Priam knows that this is the will of Zeus, and, accompanied by an elderly servant, embarks on the voyage towards the Greek camp.

Priam's hope is impossible. It relies exclusively on the word of the gods; figures which the epic has shown are as fallible as the human characters, and whose capricious whims plunged Troy into chaos in the first place. He himself seems aware of this, and claims that he does not care if Achilles lets him live or die, as long as he can properly mourn for his son (*Iliad* 24.226—227). Hektor's corpse must be honoured properly: in life, he was a symbol of hope for his city and his family.

But hope is not enough to remove the danger from Priam's trip. Though Zeus ensures that Achilles will not be violent towards his guest, the fact that Priam, against all odds, holds hope that he will be able to retrieve his son's body does not mean the journey is without peril or ambiguity. In fact, the imagery and themes concerning Priam's trip to Achilles' tent are rife with the imagery of death: Priam and his companion cross a river under cover of darkness, and are then accompanied by Hermes. Hermes is a psychopomp, tasked with guiding the souls of the dead to Hades. In another literary journey to the Underworld, that of Heracles, he accompanied the hero on his journey. Although Priam is successful in recovering Hektor's body, the epic never conceals the real danger the Trojan king finds himself in.

Hope was an ambiguous force for the Greeks. In the narrative of the *Iliad*, it is not always positive, nor does it leave those who experience it feeling good or invigorated. Rather, in the figure of Hektor and in the narrative surrounding him, it becomes a double-

edged sword: on the one hand, Hektor must maintain the hope of the Trojans by attempting to secure victory. But because of this pressure, Hektor's own hope is cynical and underpinned by doubt. The same tension between hope and darkness comes to a culmination in the journey his father must undertake to retrieve his body: fueled by hope, Priam must make a visual trip to the Underworld in order to conduct the proper mourning rites worthy of his son.

Justin Biggi

Hope in Hesiod and the *Works and Days*

Before the *Histories* of Herodotus and Thucydides, which would go on to define the conventions of ancient historiography, memory of the past was retained in the genealogies of an oral mythographic tradition. In part, Hesiod's poem *Works and Days* belongs to this tradition, telling of the fortunes of each successive generation of humanity and seeking to explain the origin of the wretched conditions of human life in the Iron Age, which were predicated by toilsome and unceasing labour. In telling these stories, Hesiod hopes to convince his younger brother, Perses, of the importance of work and to encourage him to follow the calendrical prescriptions of sacrifice and religious custom - essential to a prosperous life.

It is in this work that Hesiod gives us an account of humanity's first 'History of Hope'. Enraged by Prometheus' theft of fire, Zeus devises a plan to bring misery to the tribes of humankind, which "[b]efore this lived/ apart from evils and wretched toil" (*WD* 90-1). He sends Pandora, who had been made and trained by several deities, with a jar containing all the world's evils. Once opened, "these [evils], infinite and mournful, roam[ed] among men/ and the earth was full of evils, and the sea was full", while "alone, Hope remained there" in the jar (*WD* 100-1, 96).

In the *Works and Days*, the Pandora myth describes how, as the evils swarmed out of Pandora's jar, the tribes of humankind were left without the antidote to their afflictions, and how, without Hope, the miseries of human life became insurmountable: "In this way there is no fleeing from the will of Zeus", Hesiod writes (*WD* 105). In the original Greek, the word Hope, Ἐλπίς, also conveys "foresight, forethought, expectation", so that humans were not only affected by the 'Hopelessness' of these evils but, with hope's absence, they could neither anticipate them nor have knowledge of their future. In their all too human state of ignorance, the cure for these plagues and the dates of their deaths remains unknown. The Dutch classicist W.J. Verdenius argued that this ignorance was a respite, and this seems plausible, given that for most, knowledge of death-dates might be considered a troubling insight. In the final analysis, Hope is the worst of all evils, and is thankfully withheld in Pandora's jar by Zeus at the last instant: "for before

[her escape] the lid of the jar closed by the will of aegis-bearing Zeus, the cloud-gatherer" (*WD* 98-9). That humans are spared hope and foresight by Zeus may hardly seem a blessing, but perhaps other Greek poets may help explain the sense of this boon.

Pindar may have had something similar to Hesiod in mind when he wrote that the forces of fate lead mortals blindly to their ambitions, "for shameless hope binds/ our limbs: and the streams of foresight lie far away' (*Nem.* 11.45-6). The description of humankind as unknowing and blind also finds its expression in the lyrical poetry of Semonides, who writes:

"wisdom does not exist among men, and each day
we live as animals, knowing not
how god brings each thing to their end.
But hope and confidence nourish all
pondering the impossible." (1.3-7).

For Pindar and Semonides, hope leads humans into error and to setting their minds to unachievable tasks. To these authors, hope suggests the need for humans to rely on other powers and to resign themselves from the impossible tasks to which they assign themselves. This resignation must have inspired Albert Camus to write in an early essay on the Pandora myth that 'the Greeks drew out hope after all the others, as the most dreadful of all. I know no more stirring symbol; for, contrary to the general belief, hope equals resignation. And to live is not to resign oneself'. Without hope, it is possible that Hesiod is saying humans were able to retain a sense of their mortal and earthly boundaries, and that their recognition of this ignorance becomes a kind of wisdom - perhaps their only consolation in a world swarming with evils. Neither knowing nor anticipating these plagues, the humans of Hesiod's story were left with the acute but sobering truth of their ignorance and their vulnerability, only cultivating the habits of prudence that the *Works and Days* lists and only grasping the truths that lie on certain ground - the virtues of work, the importance of sacrificing to the gods and paying attention to the natural cycles of the years.

What can these verses of the *Iliad* and the *Works and Days* teach us? In the past few months, friends and colleagues have remarked that, as many countries entered a third lockdown, the possibility of a solution to the virus seems remote. The hope that might have carried many in the first lockdowns in the winter of 2019 in China, followed by those of the spring in much of the rest of the world, has dissolved, even as mass vaccination programs promise the safety and survival of many people. Looking back at Hesiod's hopeless picture of inescapable plagues infecting the tribes of humankind, it may not be amiss to resign ourselves from hope and the solutions that it offers us, and rather take to performing a work of mourning with an enduring and unresigned will, "leaning not on the empty hope of idleness" (*WD* 498), and instead seek to share in a plight, caring for those who, alone, may need friendly support in times of grief.

João Pedro Hallett Cravinho

The Hope of Israel: Messianic Figures in the Early Roman Empire

By Alex Smith

The great New Testament scholar N.T. Wright wrote in 1992:

"Modern scholarship has made one thing quite clear: there was no single monolithic and uniform 'messianic expectation' among first-century Jews."

More recently, Matthew Novenson has gone further and argued that a single ancient "idea" of a messiah never existed in Jewish thought. Instead, he argues that it was a "scriptural figure of speech" reused in different contexts by different people over the centuries to present and defend different "kinds of political order". There was a corpus of Messianic scriptural passages and traditions which provided broad constraint over what constituted a messianic claim. It would involve the arrival of Israel's king, there may be a link to King David, the temple could be involved in some way, and the claimant would decisively fight Israel's enemies. The exact details of the messianic claim would be affected by which passages were cited and the context into which the claim was being made. The focus of this article is to examine Jewish messianic figures in the early Roman Empire and understand what the common features were, why these claimants emerged, and, from this, what the Jewish people were hoping for at the time.

Our main source for the period is the historian Josephus, who was a Jewish commander during the first Jewish-Roman War and defected to the Romans after being defeated at Jotapata. He served as an advisor to the future emperor, Titus, for the rest of the war, then went to Rome under his patronage. When in Rome, he wrote great works of Jewish history, the most important being *The Jewish War* and *Jewish Antiquities*. There is only one person in the period to whom Josephus relates the word 'messiah', and that is Jesus of Nazareth. He wrote:

"He convened the judges of the Sanhedrin and brought before them a man named James, the brother of Jesus who was called messiah, and certain others. He accused them of having transgressed the law and delivered them up to be stoned." (*Ant* 20.200)

Josephus references several other individuals whom modern scholars deem to be messianic figures but does not link them to the word messiah. Instead, he calls them "graspers of the kingship", "wearers of the diadem", "bandits", and "tyrants". This may have been because he was making it easier for his Roman patrons to understand: 'king' would make more sense to them than 'messiah'. It was the same reason he referred to the Pharisees as "Stoics". Novenson has suggested that among knowledgeable Jews, like Josephus, Jesus was known so closely by the name "Christus" that it makes sense that he would call him "the one called messiah" even if he did not talk about other claimants this way.

The first Messianic movements during the early Roman Empire arose in 4 BCE against Archelaus, after the death of his father Herod the Great. Peasant revolts arose across Herod's kingdom after Archelaus refused Jewish demands for reform and slaughtered thousands of pilgrims who were in Jerusalem for the Passover. Made up of organised armed bands, they aimed to remove the Herodian family, its supporters, and the Romans from power, and restore power back to the people. The leaders of these different revolts were not of royal blood or from "distinguished families": Judah ben Hezekiah was the son of a brigand leader, Simon of Perea had been one of Herod's servants, and Athronges was a shepherd. Instead, Judah planned to get the crown "by the advantage of his superior strength" (*Ant* 17.272), Simon was "an imposing man in both size and bodily strength" (*Ant* 17.273), and Athronges was "remarkable for his stature and strength" (*Ant* 17.278). Their authority and claim to kingship lay in their physical strength and ability to rally armies of ordinary peasants and bandits. Varus, the legate of

Syria, responded by gathering the legions in Judea, the other two legions nearby, four cavalry regiments, and local auxiliary troops. He burned Sepphoris, Judah's headquarters, and Emmaus. Despite this, Athronges' movement lasted for a long time before eventually being stamped out.

The best-known Messianic claimant of the next seventy years was Jesus of Nazareth. Unlike many of the others, he was not a military figure and did not lead a revolt. How could Jesus have been so well known that Josephus referred to him as "the one called messiah" when he was different to all the other messianic figures? N.A. Dahl believed that, because Jesus was crucified as an alleged royal messiah, this was how he was viewed afterwards – by both his disciples after they claimed he had risen from the dead, and other Jewish people like Josephus. He argues that Jesus must have done certain things in his life to anger the priestly aristocracy and be killed as an alleged messiah. N.T. Wright has highlighted how many of the things that Jesus said, and the way that he used passages of the Old Testament, would contribute to a Messianic claim. He was also reported to have been descended from King David, which is an important aspect of the messianic claim.

The messianic movement of Simon bar Giora emerged during the First Jewish-Roman War (70-66 CE). At the start of the war, Simon was the leader of a rebel group who helped destroy the Roman army outside Jerusalem in 66 CE. However, the chief priests and Pharisees in charge of the new Jerusalem government refused to give him a position. A social revolution took place at the same time as the anti-Roman revolt and Simon became the head of a large army which declared him king. There are striking comparisons which can be made between the rise of Simon and the rise of the Biblical King David. Simon was eventually admitted by the Jerusalem government into the city, primarily to help deal with John of Gischala and the Zealots. When the city was taken by the Romans, Josephus reports Simon as dressed in a white tunic with a purple cape, standing where the Temple had been before he surrendered. He was taken back to Rome for the triumphal procession where he was ceremonially executed. These two events demonstrate that, at the very least, Simon saw himself as the messianic king and the Romans saw him as the one in charge of the Jewish rebellion.

The Bar Kokhba revolt was the last messianic movement of the Early Roman Empire and was a peasant revolt that arose sixty years after the First-Jewish Roman War. The leader was Shimon bar Kosiba, known in ancient Christian sources, as Bar Kokhba, "son of the star". His revolt spread across the province of Judea. In areas not directly controlled by the Romans, his forces used caves to fight with guerrilla tactics, allowing the rebels to hold off a major Roman army and force them into a war of attrition. It took several long battles, during which the Romans sustained huge casualties, to eventually defeat Shimon bar Kobiba and his forces. Significantly, during his 'rule', Bar Kokhba planned to rebuild the Temple and stamped it on the coins he issued.

The messianic claims of the early Roman Empire were situated in the context of an oppressive Roman regime: kings who had problematic claims to the throne and who aligned themselves with the occupying power, a memory of a comparatively recent age of independence, and a hearkening back to a 'golden age' under the house of David. There are Old Testament passages that linked the messiah to David which could be understood in different ways. The two key elements of David that were linked to Messianic claimants were the ancestry of the line of David, and the story of David himself – the ordaining of a peasant usurper who leads an army of brigands

A Sela from circa 133 CE during Bar Kokhba's revolt. Shows the Temple at Jerusalem with "Jerusalem" in Hebrew around on one side. From Hoard A found in the Teomim Cave in Western Jerusalemite Mountains. Photo by Boaz Zissu, Bar Ilan University.

under the protection of God. Jesus was reported to be the descendent of David. Judah ben Hezekiah, Simon of Perea, Athronges, Simon bar Giora, and Shimon bar Kosiba were all strong leaders of peasant revolts. Their understanding of the Davidic claim was linked to their military prowess and the understanding that the messiah would drive out Israel's enemies. The Temple was also used to make the claim of kingship by Simon bar Giora and Shimon bar Kosiba. The Jewish messianic hopes of the Early Roman Empire were rooted in understandings of the Jewish scriptures, which were based upon their oppression and looking back to the glory days of a Davidic king who would free them from the Romans and establish socio-economic justice for the common people. This "scriptural figure of speech" was moulded around this goal and, to some extent, affected any would-be messiah.

The Transformation of Erotic Culutre in the Middle Ages

By Scarlett Kiaras Attari

The notion of sexuality in Medieval Europe often accompanies connotations of adherence to strict celibacy laws and chastity. In some ways, that was true. Indeed, up until the fourteenth century, practices in sexuality, that is both the physical and psychological aspects of intercourse, as well as spirituality and love, were dominated by church rule. However, the Middle Ages also witnessed a transformation in perceptions of love and introduced exploration into eroticism. This article will explore how love and sex transformed in the written sources from this period, laying the foundation for a new literary tradition.

In the earlier Middle Ages, the church strictly controlled sexuality. Inspired by the hermit, Desert Fathers, who founded monasticism, the concept of virginity and retaining chastity became key to connecting with God and entering heaven. Virgins were thought to have created a "powerhouse of Prayer" which was highly valued by laypeople. Peter Brown has previously discussed that within this culture of monasticism, there emerged "virginity literature" that espoused values of abstinence. This is evident in writings from monks. The Venerable Bede, a Benedictine Monk in Northumbria, frequently idealises virginity in his writings. He even goes so far as to praise women who remain virgins in their marriages, and advocates for chastity in marriage. Moreover, the monk Aldhelm's text, *De Virginitate*, praises those who had the power to reject marriage and emphasises the power of returning to a godly chaste state should a woman become a widow. Very quickly, sexuality became a tool for determining morality and a way for the church to dominate the social lives of laypeople. This moral high ground was in turn reflected in law. In what is now present-day Scotland, the law, Cain Adomnain, which was administered by monks and abbots, called for heavy penalties if a woman suffered rape or other 'wounding', or if she secretly became pregnant. If a 'blemish' was left on her body or her clothes were torn, then money would be owed to the church. Equally in Ireland, ecclesiastical legislation punished virgins who engaged in intercourse. This Church control over reproduction continued into the beginning of the second millennium. For example, in places like Spain, declarations of virginity became requirements, and in the thirteenth century, marriage became a sacrament in the church, thereby controlling sexuality and dictating that sexual activity was solely for the purpose of reproduction.

However, a series of crises occurred in the Middle Ages that drastically changed the social landscape. It is no secret that the years leading up to the fourteenth century were burdened with grief. Famine, the notorious Black Plague, and church corruption helped to alter this strict, Church dominated culture. Indeed, these devastations wreaked havoc on the inhabitants of Europe, wiping out a significant portion of the population, thereby spawning the need for population growth, while transitions in the structures of the church shifted power to lawmakers and lay people over theologians. These factors combined to create the perfect space for a new tradition of literature that was made to inspire a sense of hope.

These new stories often dealt with erotic themes and sexuality. Sex, desire, pleasure, and love were written about to achieve happiness and a fulfilling life, creating a new literary tradition that was diametrically opposed to the constraining edicts of the Church. Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, a series of stories written in the later fourteenth century from the perspective of pilgrims travelling to Thomas Becket's shrine in Canterbury, can provide further insight into this. Sex and sexuality are major themes explored throughout the twenty-four tales, outlining a new attitude toward sexuality. In many ways, Chaucer glorifies the thrills of passion. A perfect example is "The Miller's Tale", a story of an old carpenter married to a beautiful young woman with two admirers. The most interesting element of this tale is the blatant discussion of sexuality and sensuality, particularly in the description and characterisation of Alison, the Miller's wife, in lines such as:

"a swallow perching on a barn … she would skip and frolic and make play like any kid or calf behind its dam. Her mouth was sweet as mead or ale and honey or store of apples laid in heather or hay."

Her characterisation is filled with nature, animals, and beauty. Despite "flirtatious" behaviour, she is "neat and sweet" and there are no negative descriptions of her. Sex between her and her first lover Nicholas is passionate, he "[strokes] her loins and [gives] her a sweet kiss." Here, the concept of pleasure is conjured by the reference to stroking, suggesting that there is a sense of pleasure that comes from it. This is clearly not an act of procreation and goes against the Church's understanding of sexual intercourse as solely being a means for reproduction. It is a

description of a sensual act performed on a woman and not solely for the benefit of the man. In having sex with someone who is compared to nature, sex is portrayed as something natural and joyous, and by being described so closely to something as godly as nature, the female character remains earthy and innocent. Her sexuality is portrayed almost as if it were a gift from nature. In *The Canterbury Tales*, sex is not something that should be held back and limited by the prescriptions of the Church, nor is it regarded in any way as sinful or prohibitive of salvation. Chaucer clearly regards sex and sexuality as a natural part of a happy life.

Even outside of the crude and comedic stories of Chaucer, other tales of virtuous love also included some eroticism, albeit less explicit. *The Chivalric Biography of Boucicaut, Jean II Le Meingre*, completed in the early fifteenth century by an anonymous author, is a perfect example. The biography follows the (perhaps dramatised) life of Boucicaut, a French knight, as he embarks on several crusades and military pursuits. Boucicaut is the ideal embodiment of knightly chivalry. He is a great fighter, a champion of his faith, and he protects women and 'damsels'. In his escapades, it is "love [that encourages] the desire for honourable knightly pursuits". The author later writes that once an honourable knight returned, "love reserved the most joyous and tender welcome for him from his loving lady". The idea of valiantly fighting in a foreign land to return to a beautiful woman is an erotic fantasy. It reveals a need for intimacy, to submit oneself to the physical actions of love, and to explore one's desires - all masked behind a virtuous love story. Boucicaut's crusading adventures are inspired by love and sensuality and his award for doing so is the same. The author even compares love to wine when he writes:

"With wine: it is good in itself it gives pleasure and comfort and substance … but if the drinker is reckless … he makes himself ridiculous … but this is not the fault of the wine but rather of the drinker himself."

This notion that sexual or romantic love is not inherently sinful suggests the acceptance of a new moral code prescribed by laypeople as opposed to the celibacy imposed by the Church. This is a common trope in the courtly chivalric romance writings that emerged in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. It portrays moral conduct centred around love and compassion. Although the plots are inspired by religion, and the desire is to exercise piety through crusading, the depicted behaviour and the moral codes of the characters do not adhere to Church edicts in the same way. The new character model for the nobleman was to be romantic and to act on love.

The new literary tradition that emerged in the fourteenth century does not necessarily mean that conservative views on sexuality ceased to be practised. It would be incorrect to say that society transitioned to openly relishing in sex the way Chaucer has described. However, the very presence of these literary texts at court, which was comprised of a wealthy and influential audience, suggests that these conversations were acceptable, or at the very least that such sensual scenarios could be contemplated. What is most significant about this new culture is the notion that the people, and not the church, were defining the rules and were exploring the relationship between sexuality, love, and pleasure. These literary traditions reveal new considerations for happiness and introduce the idea that sexuality could be considered a gift from nature. Such a discussion contributed to the reshaping of human existence and the reworking of moral codes.

Did the English Reformation evoke a sense of positive and hopeful change for ordinary people?

By Melissa Kane

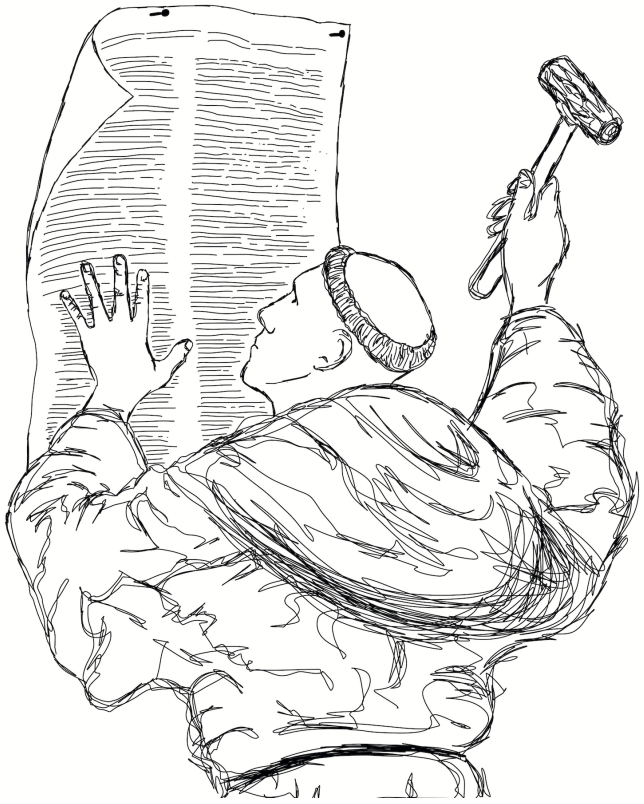
The inevitable change that came from Martin Luther's 1517 protests against the Catholic Church expanded beyond what anyone at the time could have predicted. Changes to the socio-political landscape of Europe occurred in all areas as a consequence of religious reform and development. The land of the 'Defender of the Faith', one of the most notable areas of reconstruction, in particular faced some of the most remarkable developments of the period. Historians such as J. J. Scarisbrick, Alan G. R. Smith, and Eamon Duffy have questioned the nature of this change, with conflicting historiographical accounts debating whether the events of the 1530s and early 1540s occurred as a result of top-down force, for "whatever the Crown commanded, the people, for the most part, did", or grass-roots support for "a piece of genuine reform".

The events and changes that took place over the course of a decade changed the face of the English landscape in ways that could not have been foreseen. A key question remains, concerning the impact of these developments on the ordinary people of England: from local parishes to closeted monks and nuns, did these changes create a positive impact on their lives and communities?

At the heart of the developments of the 1530s is the infamous dissolution of the monasteries. Masterminded by Thomas Cromwell, who kept meticulous accounts of monastic reforms, the dissolutions were described by Sir Howard Colvin "the greatest single act of vandalism in English and perhaps European history". To what extent is this an accurate description? Cromwell commissioned the inspections of religious houses across England in 1535, only a year after the break with Rome and Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn. Named the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (*Value of the Church*), the survey provided a detailed account of the wealth of individual monastic institutions and was used to calculate the annates, previously paid to the Pope, that were now owed to the Crown. In many cases, commissioners painted a bleak picture of institutions to highlight the levels of corruption that had justified the break with Rome. However, there are also numerous examples of reports that accounted for well-run institutions, both morally and economically. This has led to debates regarding the true nature of the *Valor*; whether it was a calculated act to smear the reputation of the abbeys that justified their actions or a true piece of reform for all.

The effect of the dissolutions on local communities was immense. As the hub of the community, religious institutions in both rural and urban areas had provided free social and economic pastoral care to locals for hundreds of years, including access to education, medical care, and poor relief. The 1536 and 1539 Acts of Dissolution removed these fundamental parts of the community, leaving large holes in social care and placing a greater strain on locals to care for their vulnerable and weak. A key example is the dissolution of Whalley Abbey in Lancaster, which resulted in a huge void in local social care and can also be linked directly to anxieties surrounding the poor, evidenced by the Pendle Witch Trials, which targeted lower-class and poor individuals. Furthermore, the sale of church land, particularly on large, rural monastic properties such as Fountains and Rievaulx Abbeys, placed a greater tension on church tenants as gentry extended their lands much more than their previous amicable landlords.

Much of this anxiety and tension reared its head in 1536, during the Pilgrimage of Grace and Lincolnshire



Risings. These involved over 30,000 rebels, classed as the largest rebellion of the Tudor period. The rebels were angered by the presence of commissioners during the first wave of dissolutions in the North and demanded in the Pontefract Articles that Henry restore sixteen monasteries for relief after the social and economic consequences of the Reformation, as well as the removal of Cromwell.

Despite this, there is evidence to suggest that many saw the reforms as a positive change, with examples of locals themselves storming abbeys after discovering fake relics, as seen at Hailes Abbey. This argument is largely formed from individual findings by historians, including Alan G.R. Smith, who suggest that the dissolutions were part of a wider movement of reform. Smith argues that dissolutions resulted from grass-roots movements, originating from the Lollards of the fourteenth century and inducing a popular form of anticlericalism that was still rife in the 1520s and can be seen in particular individuals such as Cardinal Wolsey and Bishop Stanley of Ely.

Another significant change arose from those living in the monasteries. Abbots and monks were forced out of their institutions and released from their vows; those who did not resist the surrender were compensated for their cooperation and given pensions in accordance with their religious standing and the wealth of their religious house. Monks were often able to take their personal possessions with them, a decision made to prevent mass rebellion and poverty, and those who wished to remain in their orders were transferred to alternate houses of prayer, as provided in the original 1536 Act. Those who wished to leave the constraints of orders were able to take on the new legal ability to marry – although this trend was largely limited to the South East of England and only one-third of the clergy actually married. In rural areas such as Lancashire, the rate was even lower at ten percent.

In contrast, for those forced out of religious houses there was a greater economic strain than they had previously faced. The men who entered religious orders were often the youngest sons, and therefore not able to inherit land or wealth. This led to the church and monasteries being responsible for provide their livelihood. This change meant that not only were those who previously relied on monastical poor relief now reliant on the community, but also those who had once provided it.

Another significant issue stemming from the Reformation was the change to the lives of religious women. Many nuns, like their male counterparts, were forced to leave their institutions. However, they often had much lower pensions which meant those who wished to remain in their religious lifestyle were not able to sustain themselves, again becoming reliant on either their families or poor relief. This was largely due to female institutions being much poorer than their male equivalents. As the Crown compensated cooperative institutions based on their previous income, the pensions to which nuns were entitled were much lower. Once released, most nuns had two options: retain their religious ideals and practices, but in a secular household, or embrace the changes that the Reformation provided and marry. These choices were largely dependent on both a nun's age and economic standing. For those who were young and wealthy, and thus able to marry and provide a dowry, it was possible to adjust to life in the secular world, whether for love and freedom or mere economic stability. In Germany, this was the case for Luther's own wife, Katerine von Bora, who had previously lived as a nun but took on a new role as the model for the ideal Protestant wife: "to serve men and be his assistant in producing children". However, for those who were older and not as wealthy – although there often needed to be a level of wealth to enter nunneries in the first place – this was not an option and many likely fell into poverty in the secular world.

The dissolutions forced a dramatic change for both male and female members of religious institutions. For women, it can be argued that those who had been forced into nunneries by their families likely felt a sense of new-found freedom that did not bind them to the controls of religious housing. However, for others, the dissolutions represented a closing of doors to a life that had allowed them individuality, autonomy, and power into a setting that was wholly male dominated.

Overall, the sociological changes that the Reformation induced for ordinary people, from the loss of the monasteries as a community hub to the changing roles of women, had both 'hopeful' and 'harmful' opinions from the ordinary people. Changes can be seen in both of these directions and have been considered by many historians, demonstrating that it is vital to understand individual circumstances when asking if the Reformation helped or hindered ordinary people across England.

Reproductive Lives and Experiences of Enslaved women in the British Caribbean

By Lucy Parfitt

The very basis of enslavement – where the body becomes property in its productive, reproductive, and sexual capacities – might instinctively feel incompatible with the theme of 'hope'. Indeed, in Orlando Patterson's important but universalising definition of slavery and enslavement, he highlights the concepts of "natal alienation" (the utter disconnection from genealogy and/or natural rights stemming from kinship) and "social death" (where a person has no social identity beyond their enslavers definition of them). Regarding reproduction then, slave societies in the British Caribbean seemingly embody absolute reproductive injustice with no economic, social, political, or cultural support for enslaved women's reproductive choices and health. However, the intention of this essay is to highlight how, despite violent structural oppression, enslaved women did – when they could – make highly individualised choices over their reproductive bodies. These choices were varied and context dependent, ranging from the attempted extension of kinship networks and the creative management of one's fertility, to the rejection of motherhood altogether. This piece will first contextualise enslaved women's reproductive lives and experiences in the British Caribbean, before moving on to explore some of the varied ways that they interacted with and responded to their environments. Despite the absolute reproductive injustice of slave societies, enslaved women asserted control over their reproductive bodies in moments of creativity, desperation, and hopelessness. Indeed, sometimes, this made space for hope - for herself, her community, and her children.

Before the period of amelioration in British colonies (1790s-1820s), there was a lack of interest in replenishing labour supplies via childbirth. Enslaved women's increased requirements during and after reproduction – rest, care, bonding time, and recovery – was considered an economic burden to enslavers. Therefore, most British colonies relied on importing African-born people, leading to imbalanced sex ratios where men came to outnumber women, making up two thirds of arrivals across the eighteenth century. Despite being smaller in number, enslaved women were equally as likely to experience corporal punishment, intense manual labour, a lack of medical care, and material deprivation as their male counterparts. This had been long justified by racist tropes associated with black women rooted in seventeenth century travel writings. For example, Edward Long, the English-born British colonial administrator, enslaver, and author of *The History of Jamaica* (1774) wrote that African women, being nearer to the animal world than white women, gave birth painlessly and "with little or no difficulty" and could be returned to hard labour soon after childbirth. In contrast, white women in Jamaica were urged by Dr Thomas Dancer to resist "all acts of exertion" after giving birth. Clearly there was a disregard for enslaved women's reproductive health in this period; they were often kept in productive roles until the last few weeks of pregnancy and had to return to the fields three weeks postpartum. Undoubtedly, the material deprivation they experienced directly impacted on their ability to conceive and have a healthy pregnancy: inadequate nutrition, psychological stress, and certain diseases have been linked to many reproductive complications like early infant death (which was as high as 80 per cent in the eighteenth century).

However, with the growth of abolitionist sentiments and advocation for gradualist approaches to emancipation in the metropole at end of the eighteenth century, the plantocracy began to fear and anticipate the ban on slave trades and imports. Their response was to intensify both importations of enslaved people as well as individual workload. Despite this intensification however, the total population did not grow fast enough to meet production demands, indicating high mortality rates and low fertility rates. In response to this potential demographic crisis there was a new interest in protecting and encouraging reproduction whilst also reconciling it with profit maximisation: Katherine Paugh has argued that the plantocracy were compelled to "envision the reproductive capacities of enslaved women's bodies as a source of capital accumulation" for the first time.

Regulating the treatment of pregnant women was one response: in Jamaica, corporal punishment for pregnant women was limited to ten lashes in 1826 by the Legislative Assembly. However, many ameliorative policies attempted to 'correct' the behaviour of enslaved women due to perceptions of African sexuality and cultures as corrupt, barbarous, and unchristian. Thomas Dancer, a Jamaican plantation doctor, for example, wrote "the unbound indulgences in venereal pleasures [are] a common cause of sterility", blaming the promiscuity of enslaved

women for the demographic crisis. Furthermore, medical men like Jamaica's William Sells and Saint Vincent's David Collins encouraged the building of lying-in houses to supervise births and improve the education of black midwives. Sasha Turner emphasises that the building of lying-in houses encroached on birthing rituals, relating to fire-burning, bathing, and midwifery – that had previously taken place in slave quarters. The new houses "concealed women's bodies, [opposing] the nearly nude state" they were kept in. This had previously provided enslaved women with a moment of privacy and an opportunity to build community bonds by engaging in knowledge sharing surrounding birth rituals. This period of amelioration could be considered a double-edged sword: enslaved women's reproductive lives were under increased medical surveillance alongside greater awareness surrounding reproductive health.

It is often difficult to understand how enslaved women responded to and managed these oppressive and violent environments. The archives rarely represent their voices, and their reproductive experiences are often only revealed through the reports of white enslavers who had specific agendas, tending to characterise black women as sexually deviant or malicious towards their offspring. Whilst historians must be careful to not reproduce these narratives, there is evidence to indicate that enslaved women reasserted control over their reproductive bodies in small and context-specific ways.

Some enslaved women in fact sought the extension of kinship networks through childbirth, despite inherent risks of familial dislocation in slave societies. For some this gave their lives different meanings by altering their social identities when they became mothers. Bush has argued against Patterson's claims that slave society was characterised by "unstable personal, sexual and familial relationships and an atmosphere of cultural anomie", emphasising examples of how enslaved women in Barbados were reported as audibly protesting separation from their children at auction through marronage (fleeing from slavery) and suicide. On Lewis' Cornwall Estate in Jamaica, when a carpenter of dual heritage agreed to purchase an enslaved girl from a nearby property to secure his own freedom. The enslaved girl resisted being separated from her new-born infant, ultimately running away and, it is believed, committing suicide. Yet attachment to their children was not necessarily primarily about emotional bonds either and it is important that historians avoid the romanticisation and essentialisation of motherhood and its function within womanhood. For example, enslaved women may have taken advantage of new ameliorative policies which offered material incentives to enslaved women to encourage reproduction. In the early nineteenth century, women at the Denbigh estates received gifts like rum, baby essentials, and nutritional foods when they had more children.

Furthermore, evidence from the writings of plantation owners and medical men indicates that enslaved women conflicted with them about rituals surrounding birth, post-birth, and health theories. Conflicts over reproductive rituals were commented on with much annoyance: Dr Collins of Saint Vincent remarked on the longer lactation periods practiced by enslaved women which were used to regulate fertility by spacing out births. This meant enslaved women would bring their offspring to their

location of work for up to two years post-partum, complicating and blurring the lines between their productive and reproductive roles. Jennifer Morgan similarly describes how the post-birth period of abstinence widely practiced in the Bight of Benin caused irritation amongst plantation management once fertility became a concern for them. Abstinence was traditionally seen as a practical and symbolic act to protect mother and child and was generally respected and upheld by the wider community. Scholars such as Eddins have characterised such conflicts between enslaved women and enslavers as acts of reproductive activism, and by re-asserting control over her reproductive body and ritual she was directly in defiance of the principles of her enslavement. However, Walter Johnson has warned historians about the risks of conflating "agency", "humanity", and "resistance", encouraging historians to consider "enslaved humanity" which sees the lives of enslaved people as "powerfully conditioned by, though not reduceable to, their slavery", avoiding the conflation of everyday expressions of humanity with resistance or activism.

This might be particularly relevant when discussing the ways in which some enslaved women actively rejected reproduction, coming to see their children as a further source of economic, emotional, and/or physical burden. It has been speculated by many, particularly Londa Schiebinger, that enslaved women used abortion to regulate their reproductive lives, having inherited West African knowledge of herbal abortifacients. Schiebinger characterises the peacock flower as being a well-known abortifacient in Barbados, used politically and collectively in acts of resistance to being bred like animals and sexually exploited by white men. Morgan alternatively characterises abortion as an act of desperation, arguing that records conceal the extent of abortions relative to miscarriages due to white enslavers refusing to acknowledge the structural causes of reproductive ill health, electing to blame complications during pregnancy on enslaved women themselves. Undeniably, Plantocrats frequently argued that enslaved women maliciously aborted their offspring – Bryan Edwards told the Jamaican Assembly that enslaved women "hold chastity in so little estimation, that barrenness and frequent abortions … are generally prevalent among them." This should make historians wary of emphasising abortion as an act of resistance. The controversial topic of infanticide must be similarly treated with caution: on the Thistlewood estate, midwives were accused of purposefully infecting new-borns with tetanus and mothers were described as apathetic, failing to seek medical help for their dying infants. Turner argues that the high rate of unintentional deaths recorded conceals enslaved women's rejection of motherhood through infanticide. Yet, by speculating about enslaved women's intentions without conclusive testimony, historians like Turner, risk both reproducing the narratives of enslavers, and projecting strict dichotomies of accommodation/resistance onto enslaved women. Acts of desperation and suffering are often politicised to fit narratives about 'progress' towards reproductive justice. Still, it is likely that if individuals did intentionally abort pregnancies or kill their children, they did so for many reasons, representing the full spectrum of interactions with enslavement, from active resistance, to desperation, hopelessness, or practicality.

The reproductive lives and experiences of enslaved women in the British Caribbean were, to use Johnson's phrase, "powerfully conditioned by, though not reduceable to, their slavery." Slave societies in the British Caribbean represented absolute reproductive injustice, being detrimental to enslaved women's reproductive choices and reproductive health. In pre-amelioration British slave societies, a disinterest in reproduction undermined enslaved women's fertility and reproductive health, whilst also providing enslaved women with moments to control processes like birth. However, during the period of amelioration, enslaved women experienced the double-edged sword of increased interest in their reproductive "well-being" (reconciling her reproductive and productive roles) alongside the intensification of medical surveillance. However, this essay has explored enslaved women's highly individualised, context-dependent, and often hidden reproductive choices. Whilst historians must be cautious in not reproducing the iconographies and self-serving narratives of the plantocracy when discussing enslaved women's reproduction, undeniably these women repeatedly re-asserted control over their bodies. These actions represent responses to slavey: from hopelessness to hope.

Fraternité! Friendship and the French Revolution

By Hazel Atkinson

On 29 December 1790 the radical journalist Camille Desmoulins married Lucile Duplessis in the church of Saint-Sulpice in Paris. Their wedding was witnessed by a number of prominent revolutionaries, including his close friend Georges-Jacques Danton, his old schoolmate Maximilien Robespierre, and the Girondin deputy Jacques-Pierre Brissot. Just a few years later, Brissot, Desmoulins, and Danton would be guillotined, their arrests and executions sanctioned by their former friend. By August 1794, Robespierre himself had joined them under the "national razor", and the revolutionary period of political violence known as The Terror came to an end. The Revolution had, in the words of the Girondin deputy Pierre Vergniaud, like Saturn, devoured its children. So much for friendship.

What is particularly shocking about the deadly end to these relationships, is that the coming of the Revolution in 1789 had sought to usher in a bright new dawn, which promised equality and opportunities for friendships which might not have been possible under the ancien régime. This was achieved to some extent: an increase in social mobility resulted in a multitude of new relationships, such as the friendship between Robespierre's younger brother Augustine and the rising general Napoleon Bonaparte. A hopeful emphasis on friendship and unity can be observed in many aspects of revolutionary culture, from the artwork of Jacques Louis David (The Oath of the Horatii), to the 1790 Fête de la Federation's symbolic fraternal embraces, and even the name of the journalist Marat's newspaper, *L'ami du Peuple*. But by 1794, this idealism had warped beneath the earnest philosophy of the Jacobins (the political faction which held power in the years following the removal of the monarchy in 1792 until the execution of Robespierre in 1794) and the pressures of the radicalising Revolution, to form a paradox in which it became inherently suspicious to be both with and without friends.

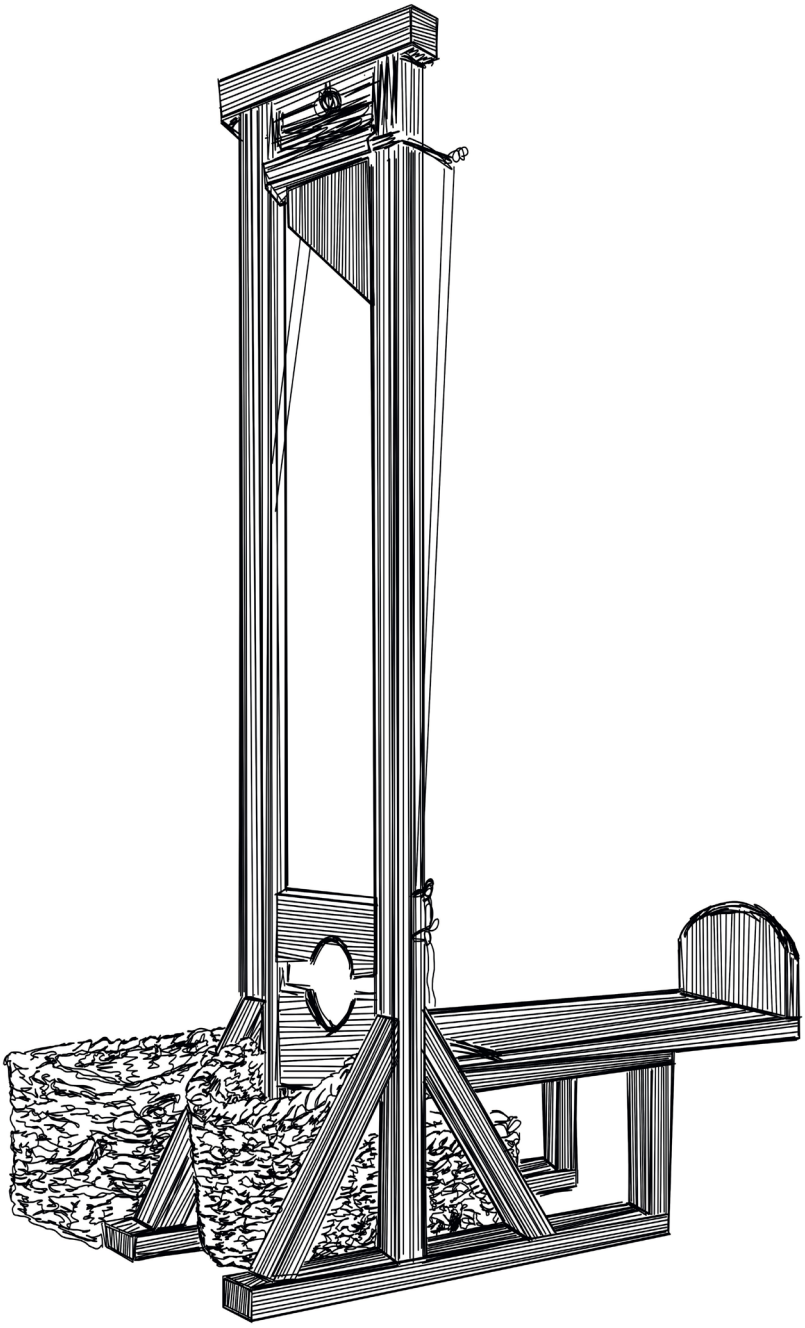
During the eighteenth century, France witnessed a profound shift in the way friendships were considered. Enlightenment authors such as Voltaire and Rousseau used the concept of the "ideal friendship" to critique contemporary society, thinly disguised beneath the veil of fiction. Virtue, as a key aspect of friendship, emerged from this literary milieu. Voltaire himself claimed that only a virtuous person could possess true friends, all others merely made do with "associates" or "accomplices". Marisa Linton has investigated the notion of virtue within Jacobin philosophy, the role of which cannot be understated, and argues that the performance of virtue made maintaining both real friendships and the appearance of an ideal Revolutionary persona virtually impossible. Revolutionary virtue was based upon both the classical Republican principles of loyalty and civic duty and the eighteenth century Rousseauian tradition, which centred "natural" goodness, sensibility, and innate feeling. Friendship, although in theory a signifier of a virtuous citizen, could also bring danger – were a revolutionary forced to choose between loyalty to a friend and loyalty to the patrie, they would be expected to prioritise the latter.

Alongside virtue, Lynn Hunt has demonstrated that transparency was another key motif in revolutionary politics. A true patriot should hide nothing, leading a life of complete authenticity with no separation between themselves, their government, and the general will. However, because it was literally impossible to peer into another's heart, a fear developed of the "false patriot", who hid beneath a façade of virtue and sensibility. The dramatic emotional language which had attached itself to friendship now became the subject of suspicion. This emphasis on transparency also dissolved the boundaries between public and private spheres, and all aspects of a Revolutionary's life – including their friendships – were strictly scrutinised.

This scrutiny created a unique tension surrounding revolutionary friendships. On the one hand, to possess friends was a sign of virtue, but these friendships could also corrupt. Friendship networks, private meetings, exclusive dinners: all were regarded as suspiciously private in this newly public world, potential cloaks for counter-revolutionary conspiracy. Furthermore, a struggle arose between the practicalities of governing a nation and maintaining revolutionary principles. The memoirs of Manon Roland, wife to a prominent Girondin minister, indicate that friendship was considered a useful tool for political climbing within the Revolution: when her husband was appointed Minister of the Interior, their acquaintances also expected to rise. Practically, these friendship-driven appointments must have been necessary, as posts

within the new governments needed to be filled. However, this personal advancement was also antithetical to the values of the Revolution.

A perfect example of just how impossible an ideal the Jacobins were chasing is found in the young Antoine's suggestion that, every year henceforth, each man should declare his friends. Those who retained life-long friendships would be buried together, but if a man should commit a crime, then he and, significantly, his friends, would all be banished. However, to prevent individuals from attempting to avoid such a fate by eschewing social relationships altogether, banishment also awaited those who were observed to have no friends. Although this bizarre concept was never translated into law, it perfectly demonstrates the Jacobin logic which connected virtue, friendship, and citizenship: to live with, or without friendship, was to put yourself in political danger.



The result of this paradox was that the same friendships responsible for an individual's rise, often led to their downfall. During the trial of the Girondins in October 1793, much was made of their friendship ties in order to accuse them first of factionalism, and then, more tenuously, of conspiring counter-revolution. Although the two men had once been close, Camille Desmoulins' pamphlet "Brissot Unmasked" contributed to Brissot's demise, accusing him of having used his friendships for personal gain. By early 1794, Desmoulins himself was under scrutiny and, as he and Danton called for clemency from the political violence of the Terror, their friendship with Robespierre became strained. At their trial, Robespierre attempted to protect himself from the taint of their longstanding friendships, claiming that he had been deceived by "false patriots", and reminded those listening that he had denounced every former friend of his who had been "unmasked". In the end, this dogged sacrifice of all else in the pursuit of virtue would not save Robespierre from suffering the same fate. Peter McPhee even suggests that the emotional stress brought on by these events led to Robespierre's rapid physical and mental deterioration, resulting in his own downfall in August 1794.

While the Revolution pertained to offer the opportunity for equality and friendship between men, the same cannot be said for its effect upon women's relationships. Despite the active participation of female citizens in its events, the Revolution often left women behind. The playwright Olympes de Gouges' pamphlet "Declaration of the Rights of Women" and her political involvement led, not to a feminist revolution, but to her death beneath the guillotine. Christine Roulston has argued that prior to the Revolution, visible female friendships were regarded with suspicion due to the fact they operated in a "liminal space", somewhere between "home and not-home", intimately private, and yet a public assertion of their legitimacy. This suspicion did not disappear in 1789: the ideal woman under revolutionary ideas of natural virtue was domestic, concerned primarily

with the running of a household and maternal duties. Other spaces within which some, mainly aristocratic, women had traditionally operated, such as the “salon”, were now also viewed with suspicion, due to their enclosed nature and the opportunity they may have provided for conspiracy. In October 1793, all women’s clubs were outlawed, suggesting that the gathering and interaction of women was a concern for those in power. Despite the hope for change, opportunities for female friendships beyond the home were subsequently limited.

There were, however, strands of society in which it is arguable that the Revolution provided not only the hope of positive opportunities for friendship, but the real thing. Brian Martin has examined the relationships between soldiers within the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Armies, and argues that an emphasis on romantic military fraternity, along with meritocratic reforms which allowed men from differing backgrounds to march together and rise swiftly through the ranks, created a space where friendships and sometimes love could blossom unchecked. Whereas in the shadowy realm of political in-fighting, friendships were viewed with suspicion due to their potential for conspiracy, the military deliberately encouraged bonding between recruits. As a tactic to avoid desertion, groups of friends from the same town were encouraged to serve together, providing them with “familiar comforts” among the hardship of war.

The French Revolution’s effect on society was monumental. Its onset brought real hope for social and political change, using the language and imagery of friendship to signify this culturally. For soldiers, this may have become a reality, as the new, meritocratic army and struggles of war cemented bonds between men. But for the women of France, the Revolution did not bring the equality they hoped for, and their banishment from clubs and relegation to the domestic sphere likely removed opportunities to form friendships. For the Jacobins, friendship played a vital role, but it was also dangerous. By 1794, the impossibility of maintaining real friendships due to the inherent suspicion they garnered meant Camille Desmoulins was able to claim in the last letter he would ever write, that he died for “a few pleasantries” and his “friendship with Danton”. It is no surprise, then, that Linton describes these bonds as “fatal friendships”. They could hardly have become anything else.

The Haitian Revolution

By Finlay Cormack

The revolution which took place in the French colony of Saint Domingue between 1791 and 1804 was built upon the hope for freedom and equality. During the rebellions, enslaved people brought justice to the colony where injustice and cruelty had reigned supreme. They fought against European powers for equality and respect. Saint Domingue, prior to the revolution, consisted of 40,000 white colonists, with 30,000 *gens de couleur* – although this paled in comparison to the 500,000 enslaved African people and people of African origin. The racial tensions of the people eventually resulted in violence, with the French Revolution a backdrop for the uprisings. Historians have differing opinions on the causes of the revolution, but they agree that it was incredibly impactful. Former Haitian presidential spokesperson, Jean Claude Martineau called the revolt, "the most profound revolution realized by human beings".

Saint Domingue was one of the most important and profitable colonies in the Americas. The vast amount of wealth stemmed from slave-produced sugar cane. Sugar was integral to the French economy so much so that many 'liberal' revolutionaries during the French Revolution did not believe the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1789 should apply to enslaved people. While the French Revolution predominantly affected mainland France, Saint Domingue felt the aftershocks. Many *gens de couleur* hoped for equality, while the hundreds of thousands of enslaved people wanted liberty. The plantation owners were only concerned with their profits. In 1791, the *gens de couleur* of Saint Domingue petitioned the new French government for civil protections. This request outraged white low-level workers (*petit blancs*). The French government extended civil protections to those born to two free parents. However, the French Governor of Saint Domingue, Philibert François Rouxel de Blanchelande, refused to obey the national government and even considered the possibility of Saint Domingue's secession from mainland France. This later led to his execution for counter revolutionary actions and treason. The *petit blancs* threatened the *gens de couleur*, constantly attacking and harassing them. In the midst of these events, on the night of 22 August 1791, a thousand enslaved people attacked their slaveholders following a Vodou ceremony led by Dutty Boukman, known as Bois Caïman.

The plantation owners were aware of a possible revolt, however, as historian Jeremy Popkin has written, they were "smugly certain of their superiority". Many gens de couleur were in a difficult position, wavering between support for the revolution and maintenance of the status quo. The slave rebellions in the north were a shock, however, uprisings in the western province were more surprising, increasing the scope of the revolt. What was at first a small rebellion on a few plantations rapidly became a colony-wide revolt. One former enslaved person, who came to own enslaved people, was Toussaint L'Ouverture. He was someone who certainly identified with the rebels' plight. In the autumn of 1791, Toussaint joined the revolution.

His unique perspective and skillset made him a great leader, making an army out of people who were untrained and ill-equipped for the conflict. Toussaint's abilities were not relegated simply to being a military leader, and he often sought diplomatic solutions. However, after attempting and failing to reach a settlement, he realized peace was not an option for his army or the oppressors. With less resources at his disposal, Toussaint sought the help of the Spanish, who had their own colony called Hispaniola. The Spanish were looking for an opportunity to expand their control over the island and seize some profits from the French plantations. With Spanish resources, Toussaint and his top commanders became a truly threatening force to the French, capturing three cities in eight months. This action demolished European-held assumptions of black inferiority and illustrated that the hope of freedom and the willpower of those who were willing to fight for it could overthrow any oppressive regime.

At the start, the white response to the rebellions was disjointed. Their fear of the uprisings resulted in the deaths of enslaved people in cities, even though they had not rebelled. These actions alienated *gens de couleur* and ensured they would not give their support. This also showed many enslaved people who had not yet joined the uprising that rebelling against this injustice was necessary for their survival. The plantations owners knew they were exceedingly outnumbered, and that 40,000 people could not defeat the other ninety per cent of the population alone. White French colonists sought the assistance of the British – another colonial power in the region. While British assistance did temporarily push back the rebels, it eventually became an asset for the revolutionaries. The French Republic received a

delegation, who described the treasonous actions of the white people. The French government responded swiftly – leading to the total emancipation of enslaved people across the French colonies. With this news, Toussaint rejected the Spanish aid and joined the French republicans to push the foreign invaders out. Toussaint was appointed Brigadier General by the government and then to the position of Governor of Saint Domingue; no Black person had risen so high within French command. When the revolution ended, Black formerly enslaved people had achieved their goal: freedom.

However, Napoleon Bonaparte was about to take the reins of France and create new rules and systems. Napoleon declared that the era of freeing slaves was over. He was in favor of slavery for both racial and economic reasons. He wanted Saint Domingue to become a slave colony once again to boost the sugar plantations profits and, by extension, France's economy and world standing. He concluded that:

"The prospect of a black republic is equally disturbing to the Spanish, the English and the Americans ... All measures will be taken to starve Toussaint, rid us of these gilded negros."

It became evident that Napoleon intended to reinstall slavery. Toussaint, attempting to counter this, wrote a constitution for Saint Domingue decreeing that slavery would never return. However, encouragement for independence was not as simple as organizing the first rebellion. This was partially due to Toussaint's mismanagement of Saint Domingue: for instance, he put many of his fighters back into the fields to sustain Saint Domingue's economy and created the position of "governor for life" with complete authority to appoint his successor. Many believed that a fight against a united France would be much harder. The people lost faith in Toussaint and refused to follow his cries for independence. In 1802, undeterred by Toussaint, history's largest French expeditionary force ever, assembled in Saint Domingue. When explaining his position, Napoleon said it was based on "the need to block forever the march of the blacks in the world".

French forces arrived in December 1802 and after three months of fighting, Toussaint eventually surrendered due to a lack of support. He would not live to see the free republic he fought to create, dying of pneumonia in a French prison on 7 April 1803. Napoleon dreamt of a larger French empire, looking to take back the territory which previous administrations had lost, and Saint Domingue was to become the economic powerhouse, using its profits to fund his future wars. This, however, required the reintroduction of slavery, which, for the Saint Domingue people who had fought for their freedom once before, was not going to happen. Napoleon's plans were halted, kicking off Saint Domingue's fight for independence. A campaign of guerrilla warfare began against the French, effectively combating their superior equipment and training. The revolutionaries used the climate against the French, allowing diseases, like yellow fever, to kill the French soldiers. A French commander on the colony, Charles Victor Emmanuel Leclerc, Napoleon's brother-in-law, was killed by yellow fever. The French eventually abandoned the colony in 1803, with an estimated 50,000 casualties. On 1 January 1804, independence was declared and Saint Domingue was renamed Haiti.

The events of the Haitian revolution showed the world that, what started as a slave uprising, could lead to an independent Black republic. Formerly enslaved people fought against the colonial might of three of Europe's largest empires – France, Britain, and Spain – in order to realise the ideals of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité*. These ideals are still the motto of Haiti today. It is important to remember and respect what was fought for: the rejection of racial superiority. The Haitian revolution was built on hope and showed that when people believe in their right to freedom, they can achieve it.

Turning the Tide: Stirring Stories of the West Africa Squadron

By Fraser A. Barnes

By the turn of the nineteenth century, nearly 8.6 million enslaved people had been transported across the Atlantic Ocean. Slavery had already caused irreparable damage to entire societies and communities across the West and West Central African coast and inland regions, as well as committing millions within the African diaspora to centuries of enslavement and subsequent racial discrimination and segregation. Historians have concluded that the transatlantic slave trade was an integral part of the industrial and financial expansion of the European empires. European nations eventually began to see the abolition of the slave trade as a form of strategic policy to undermine fellow imperial projects. It was through the operations of the British Royal Navy's West Africa Squadron and diplomatic manoeuvres that most people today associate with the suppression of the slave trade, however, relatively unrecognised contributions from judicial developments and indigenous African resistance also deserve significant attention.

Through leading figures such as William Wilberforce, the British abolitionist movement began to gain parliamentary support when economic considerations, such as a wavering political consensus about the financial necessity of retaining slavery in the empire's sugar colonies, were combined with the more traditional religious and humanitarian arguments. However, the movement was mostly concerned with the prohibition of the slave trade, not slavery itself. Britain's reliance on slavery in her colonies would lead to the continued permittance of slavery in the empire until its abolition in 1833. Despite public opposition to the slave trade, imperial Britain remained a racialised and colonial-dependent society that was not ready to pursue emancipation at the cost of trade supremacy. Yet, the overwhelming vote for the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in February 1807 was a significant moment in history on the path to emancipation.

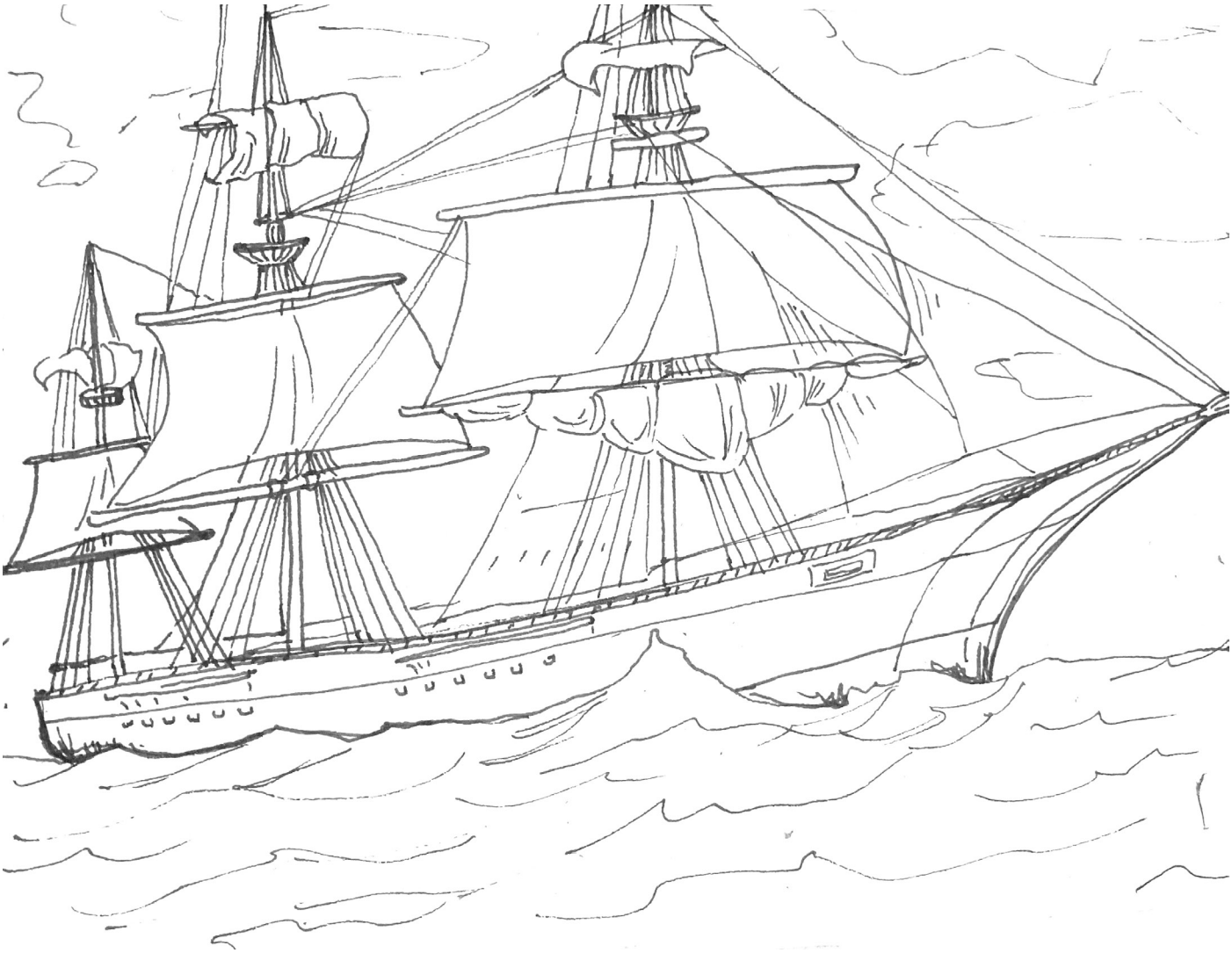
In February 1808, a year after the vote on the Act, the Royal Navy established the West Africa Squadron. Britain had soon realised that diplomacy was not coercive enough to prevent nations such as the United States and France from continuing to participate in the slave trade and damage Britain's own trading strength. Military coercion soon became a necessary option to give authority to abolition, especially since the trade vacuum left by British abolition had only intensified other nations' slave trading. Amid the depths of the Napoleonic Wars, the Royal Navy was already tasked with the considerable task of blockading predominantly French ports to prevent the collapse of British naval supremacy, which had been asserted since the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Given this existing preoccupation, the West Africa Squadron began life in the form of a frigate and a sloop, the HMS Solebay and HMS Derwent, respectively. This constituted a small squadron that had the immense task of suppressing a slave trade spread across approximately 5000 kilometres of West African coastline. Yet, the establishment of Sierra Leone as the naval and civic base for the Squadron's operations in 1819 allowed them to expand to the size of several frigates under the command of a Commodore. Yet these efforts only began to have a substantial impact after the tumultuous years of 1814 and 1815.

As the Napoleonic Wars concluded and Britain's victories gave it the upper hand in negotiations with slave-trading nations, diplomats such as Lord Castlereagh did not waste the opportunity to secure treaties that ensured their cessation of the trade. By 1815, nations such as France, Spain, the Netherlands, and Sweden had all agreed to Britain's stipulations. However, the unilateralism employed by the West African Squadron in its capture of foreign ships soon triggered a diplomatic crisis. Robert Thorpe, Chief Judge of the Sierra Leone Colony, interpreted the Act of 1807 as a near-universal prohibition of the slave trade, whereupon the Squadron would detain any ship of any nation. His vigorous policies soon came to a head in 1815, when the Foreign Secretary ordered the reduction of the Squadron's mandate for detainment, thus ending Thorpe's policy of unilateral interpretation. However, new studies, such as that undertaken by Tara Helfman, have shed new light on the unrecognised significance of Thorpe's judicial actions on abolition. Thorpe's humanitarianism and hatred of the slave trade was credited for the intensive efforts by the Squadron in its early years. His commitment to attempting to enforce a domestic statute on other nations' naval vessels exerted significant pressure upon those nations to engage Britain diplomatically and engage in multilateralism to end their respective slave trades. Thorpe's aggressive unilateralism combined with fervent abolitionism go unrecognised in the early years of the West Africa

Squadron.

Meanwhile, away from the political dealings of the government, another severely overlooked aspect of the Squadron's squandering of the slave trade was the contributions of the indigenous Kroomen. Originally heralding from the region of modern-day Liberia, Kroomen were a highly valued and highly respected people whose very identity was constructed by their cooperation with the West Africa Squadron.

"Distinction, respect, power, among his own countrymen, as soon as age permits it, are the objects of every Krooman." The words of Governor Thomas Ludlam of Sierra Leone, in 1825, demonstrate the esteem that the Kroomen held within the British colonial presence during the Squadron's activities. Officers allowed the Kroo to mess separately onboard and were subject to discipline by their leader – Kroos usually worked onboard ships in groups of ten to twenty led by a leader. Their unique status within the



Kroomen were known as extremely skilful boatmen and navigators whose local knowledge and expertise were of great help to the Royal Navy's operations in West Africa. Demographic studies of the West Africa Squadron have revealed that of the approximately 20 per cent of the Squadron's workforce who were non-European, 80 per cent of these were Kroomen, thus, in historian John Rankin's words "[dispelling] the notion that the British (and other Europeans) were the only active agents in the ending of the Atlantic slave trade."

Royal Navy was earnt by their role as local advisors to officers with local matters, such as knowledge of river depths and lengths as well as the locations of slave-trading tribes inland, as well as fighting alongside Royal Navy men in landing parties. Remarkably, the Kroomen did not usually suffer the racism and dehumanisation that most Africans experienced within the colony of Sierra Leone. The Kroomen's unique status and respect they held across the Royal Navy (they did not solely serve in the West Africa Squadron) preceded the scientific racial attitudes that became widespread in Britain during the nineteenth

century, resulting in Kroomen being largely exempt from the racial discrimination that enslaved and 'free' Africans suffered under British imperialism.

Notable for their stalwart resistance to Christian conversion by missionaries and their insistence on autonomy whilst in service of the Royal Navy, the Kroomen intentionally maintained their African identity during their half-century voluntary service. Their history was adorned with success: from sailing the HMS Wilberforce back to Plymouth after its European company had been nearly wiped out by disease in 1842, to having stories of their thrilling missions and heroics being featured in "Boy's Own" publications, Kroomen carved out a positive and appreciated identity that was an exception within imperial Britain's attitudes towards non-European colonial populations.

The history of the West Africa Squadron is, understandably, a complex one. Over the course of its operations from 1808 to 1860, the Squadron captured 1,600 ships and "freed" approximately 150,000 enslaved people; it has been regarded as one of the costliest humanitarian missions in history because of its immense task. Whilst certainly credited for combatting one of history's greatest atrocities, operations were also driven by imperialist desires that used the humanitarian act of abolition to mask the territorial and racist actions of other parts of the empire's activities. However, the West Africa Squadron still exhibited inspiring and encouraging, yet relatively underappreciated, facets during its history. The judicial activities of Robert Thorpe significantly influenced the development of international law's treatment and subsequent condemnation of the Atlantic slave trade and demonstrate how genuine abolitionism and humanitarianism still played an important role in enforcing positive action among the abolitionist, yet still racist, majority. Furthermore, the contributions of indigenous Kroomen in the Squadron's operations and the subsequent praise they earnt throughout the Royal Navy indicate the crucial role they played in ensuring the West African Squadron had a substantial impact on an abhorrent trade that would, ultimately, take decades to suppress. History is rarely a simple narrative presenting a simple answer; the West Africa Squadron's challenging, yet enthralling, history transcends simplicity yet still evokes hope and optimism. It demands the reader to not accept at face the value that the story accepted now is the story we should know. It is incorrect to adopt a Manichean narrative for history – where the supposed heroes were nothing but heroic – yet history is often more about the importance of the stories left behind than appreciating the ones that survived the journey to today.

Hope from the Depths: The Redemptive Project of Oscar Wilde

By Alden Hill

When Oscar Wilde arrived at Staten Island on 2 January 1882, as an already notorious aesthete set to give a lecture tour on his philosophy, he was not prepared to face the tidal wave of American journalists that greeted him the next morning. While he staved them off with some mild comments, a fellow passenger mentioned that on their crossing he had described the Atlantic Ocean as 'not so majestic as I expected'. Delighted to have a headline, the sea of reporters retreated to their respective newspapers, leaving Wilde with a valuable lesson: if he were to live in the public eye, he could either work to define himself, or let others do so for him.

Over the next decade, Wilde would define himself in a multitude of different ways, casting himself as a poet, a philosopher, and a playwright, among other identities. However, these roles would become increasingly unstable, turning his life into a continuous performance that crossed not only social but also legal boundaries. This duality reached its apex with the premiere of The Importance of Being Earnest in February 1895, when the show's rapturous reception was very nearly disrupted by an attempt by the increasingly belligerent father of Wilde's lover Lord Alfred Douglas, the Marquess of Queensberry, to storm the theatre and cause a scandal. A tip-off barred him from entry, but the knowledge of the near miss was enough to make Wilde decline to address the audience.

Wilde's attempt to reclaim control by suing Queensberry for libel (for a card reading 'for Oscar Wilde, posing as somdomite [sic]') triggered a sequence of events that would push this balancing act over the edge. The suit spectacularly backfired and Wilde went from accuser to accused, facing the government in perhaps the most notorious legal spectacle of the age. In it, Queensberry successfully presented himself as a concerned father looking only to defend his son, acting as 'the proper representative of Puritanism in its aggressive and more characteristic form'. The trials concluded with the maximum sentence of two years hard labour, Wilde's words of appeal being drowned out by the crowd as he was led away.

Unfortunately, the old prison ethos of 'hard labour, hard board, and hard fare' was dominant in 1895, with major incarceration reform still a few years off. In practice, this meant no social contact during mindless labour, and food and drink being kept at minimum levels. For the first year and a half of his sentence, Wilde was forced to focus on survival, restricting his power of self-advertisement to a clemency petition to the Home Secretary. In it, he pleaded for an early release, stating he was suffering from a form of 'sexual madness' and writing that 'at least in all his hopelessness he still clings to the hope that he will not have to pass directly from the common gaol to the common lunatic asylum.' His request was denied.

Thankfully, prison conditions were to change with the ascension of Major James O. Nelson to the position of governor at Reading Prison in July 1896. Nelson, whom Wilde later described as 'the most Christ-like man I ever met', ensured that he was available for conversation for a brief period every day, worked to give Wilde access to a greater number of books, and, most importantly, set up an agreement whereby he could begin writing again, albeit under close scrutiny. It was under this system that, in September 1896, Wilde began crafting the work that would come to be known as De Profundis, or 'from the depths'.

De Profundis is, in a formal sense, a letter addressed to Lord Alfred Douglas. It was written over the course of several months with access to a limited amount of 'loathsome' prison notepaper per day. Wilde's ability to refer back to what he had previously written was also highly restricted. These exceptional circumstances are reflected in the letter's 'changing, uncertain moods, its scorn and bitterness, its aspirations and its failure to realise those aspirations', as Wilde describes it. As a result, it has an ambivalent reputation in studies of his work, with many pointing to those same qualities; even his most influential biographer, Richard Ellmann, described it simply as 'a love letter'. However, read as a process of self-definition and redemption, the work shows itself to be much more complex.

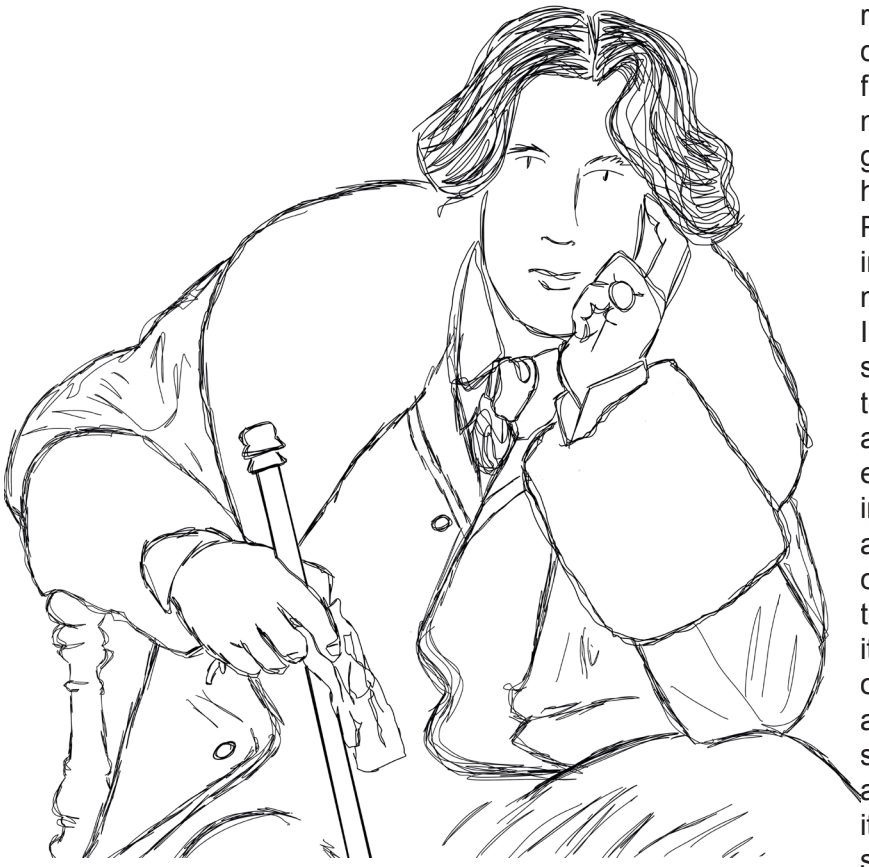
To be sure, a significant part of the letter's early pages reflect Wilde's feelings of despair and claustrophobia as he frames and re-frames his relationship with Douglas and its disastrous aftermath. However, as it progresses, one is struck by a sense of Wilde regaining confidence, returning to previous arguments with advanced justifications, adopting a higher rhetorical tone and capitalising upon concepts such as Love,

Sorrow, and Life. About midway through, he comes to the crucial realisation that, although the laws and system under which he was convicted were 'wrong and unjust', 'somehow, I have got to make both of these things just and right to me'. This statement marks a turning point, as he explicitly rejects the idea that prison is either all or none of who he is, and sets out to write an alternative, wholly self-defined narrative of his life.

While Wilde certainly intended for at least some of the letter to eventually be published, the narrative he builds within it is directed not just towards the public, or even towards Douglas, but also towards himself. Instead of lamenting the loss of his former life or giving into the idea that it was immoral, he firmly states that he does not regret it 'for a single moment'. He describes it as 'feasting with panthers', a life lived for Pleasure which found its opposite expression in Pain, but which was all the more beautiful for it. By recognising this duality, Wilde fully assimilates what before were two seemingly incongruous elements, declaring that his time in prison actually represents the start of a 'new life', and announcing that 'now for the first time since my imprisonment I have a real desire to live.'

His confidence in this project of re-framing is underscored by his characterisation of his sexuality, obliquely referring to his feelings as 'maladies for physicians to cure, if they should be cured.' Far from regretting his relationships with men or internalising any pathologisations of his sexuality, Wilde here solidifies it in his self-conception by characterising it, and his past life as a whole, as a positive expression of individualism. This defiance is also apparent in his attitude after prison; he continued his relationships with men, even living with Douglas in Naples for a period, and dismissed the rhetoric that he was forced to adopt in his clemency petition with the remark 'the fact that I am ... a pathological problem in the eyes of German scientists is only interesting to German scientists.'

Unfortunately, despite his confidence, Wilde would only live three years after his release, dying in November 1900 of an ear condition that had been exacerbated by neglect during his sentence. However, by this point a revival of his reputation was already underway; the first staging of his play Salomé took place in France in 1896, and even during his life there existed a cult of martyrdom around him in Britain and elsewhere. This process was only accelerated by the release of the first (heavily edited) edition of De Profundis in 1905, beginning an unceasing flow of publications focused as much on his life as on his work, ensuring that he has never faded from the public imagination.



With this fame comes a litany of reinterpretations, analyses, and dramatisations of his life. While this is far from surprising, given its extraordinary nature, it is important not to fall into easy generalisations, or to accept any one of his roles as the whole. To this end, De Profundis is a thoroughly instructive work, injecting complexity and hope into the moment in his life that needed it the most. Instead of being a betrayal of his former self, its narrativisation of Wilde's life is a testament to his continued individuality in a system of homogeneity, and hope in an environment designed to smother it. Its intense rhetoric, audacious comparisons, and disjointed structure are things to be celebrated, and the work is thus a central text in his oeuvre, not a black sheep. In it, he writes that 'I awoke the imagination of my century so that it created myth and legend around me; I summed up all systems in a phrase, and all existence in an epigram'. With the benefit of hindsight, it may be said that with this sentence he summed up his legacy.

Letters of Hope- the Light of Hope in the Darkness of War

By Sophie Whitehead

When we think of hope, grand, ideological hopes of the past often come to mind, such as the hope for a more egalitarian society in the French Revolution, or the hope for an end to the monarchy through the English Civil War. These hopes are often so revolutionary that when we measure them up against the reality of their subsequent outcomes, they can frequently be seen as failures. The French Revolution arguably failed in its replacement of one unjust system with another, the English Civil War was such a failure that the monarchy was reinstated just eleven years later. And so, when faced with the disconnect between what is hoped for and reality, histories of hope can often leave one feeling somewhat hopeless. Perhaps rather than looking for grand overarching hopes, if we instead began searching for individual hopeful narratives, we would find that (almost in the words of Hugh Grant in Love Actually,) "[hope] actually is all around." In order to push this idea to the extreme, it is perhaps necessary to search for hope within the seemingly most hopeless time - the Second World War. To ensure that I do not fall into the aforementioned trap of ideological hopelessness, I will not be looking at propaganda posters or great speeches. Instead, I will be searching for hope in the intimate pages of letters to find what Tricia Goyer has termed, "the great hope even amidst the sadness and tragedy of war".

As love letters are one of the most heavily archived form of war letter, understanding the ways in which hope manifested is vital to a broader understanding of hope within war-time letters and literature. In their 2003-2004 project, "A People's War", the BBC dedicated a vast section of their online archives to love letters. The love letter is a uniquely placed category in historical evidence. Indeed, as Peter Goodrich puts it, "the love letter belongs to an alternative public sphere", and this sphere allows for a great level of honesty and exploration of ideas. As Goodrich later notes, "the love letter creates the possibility and the space or freedom to choose." They provide a safe space to interrogate different ideas and to choose their own opinion. For this reason, love letters are particularly useful as evidence of the public's psyche, often giving a greater level of insight than a diary, as the letter form is meant to be understood by others. According to Goodrich, "love stories are often at the crux of ancient texts", and this is true also with regards to letter writing during the World Wars. The best examples of this, however, must be the somewhat niche and intensely hopeful genre of proposal letters, many of which have been donated to public records by family members. In 1944, Major Anthony Ryshworth-Hill proposed to his future wife, Valerie Erskine Howe, in a letter, asking her, "Valerie, shall we become engaged in a sort of distant way so that we are sort of linked together until we next meet? How would that suit you?" to which she replied, 'Anthony … Yes. Anthony, shall we?" Whilst this love letter would not win any prizes for greatest proposal, it does demonstrate hope, and reminds the reader that - even during a time of war - love, hope, and life continue. In Canada, Harry Ward Macdonald expressed the same hopes for the future as Major Anthony Ryshworth-Hill had done in England. However, Harry's letters exhibit greater eloquence. On 9 March 1944, Harry posed the question to Jaquelyn, "If you agreed and if I come out of this show alive … will you marry me?" Whilst the hopes of Harry and Anthony are strong, it would be wrong to suggest that they were not tainted by fear. It is these hopes that would allow those on the front line to push their fears aside - temporarily in pursuit of their futures.

It is widely understood that children are incredibly truthful, admittedly sometimes to a detrimental effect. The poet Oliver Wendell Holmes even went so far as to say that, "Pretty much all the honest truth telling there is in the world is done by children." It must also be noted that a great majority of the hope in the world is explored by and embodied in children. Children are wider society's hope for the future, but they also hope for the future themselves, as is evident from evacuated children's letters to their parents during the Second World War. In the same project that anthologised many of the love letters from the war, in the subcategory for evacuees, children demonstrate that even the war couldn't dampen their hopes and joys. In her letters to her mother Mary Adams, one child explains that, "I am very happy here where I am. We are on a farm and have ever such a lot of chickens, cows and calves." We, in the present day, assume that it must have been terrible for children to leave their parents, unsure about whether they would ever see them again. However, this totalising assumption arguably neglects the fact that for many life on a farm or in the countryside would have been an improvement and an adventure, at least for many children's environmental circumstances. Nowhere is the sense of

adventure more evident than in the letters of Jack Frisby. Writing to his mother and father, Jack explains, “Now listen, both of you. Look what I’ve got here. It’s a postcard. And it’s in code. Like the Secret Service. Only this is our own secret code.” As many child psychologists have discovered, children learn through play, and so the digestion of the atrocities of war is done through a more playful, laissez-faire approach in comparison to adults. Whilst children were developing their understanding of war through play, for many evacuees the focus upon war was not as frightening as it was for adults. It could sometimes be understood as a new arena for fun and adventure instead. As a result, hope was not necessarily at the forefront of the minds of evacuees. Instead, their playfulness functioned as a source of joy and hope for others.

One of the darkest aspects of the war was, of course, the Holocaust. However, analysis of letters and contemporary literature reveal that even in the darkest parts of the war, hope was able to permeate. As noted by Yad Vashem (The World Holocaust Remembrance Centre), Holocaust survivors are the “main medium for the story of the Holocaust”. However, a recent project from the Remembrance Centre, “Last Letters from the Holocaust: 1943” as well as literature including Anne Frank’s diaries, enable a more contemporary perspective of the brutality of the Holocaust. Even these letters and literature are littered with hope, no matter how small. In her diaries, Anne Frank notes that, “where there’s hope there is life,” This sense of hopefulness in such difficult circumstances is evident through all the Last Letters, serving as testament to the human perspective and ability to find hope in ‘hopeless’ situations. In each of the letters archived in the Yad Vashem online exhibition, hope is evident, though it is expressed in different ways. In his last letter to his daughter Berthe, Aron Liwerant writes, “Dear Berthe, I enclose two lottery tickets … I hope, my child that you will know how to behave as a free person, even though you are without your parents for now”. The hope from Aron Liwerant seeps through the pages, even though this hope is not for himself, but for his daughter. Hope for children is also evident through Johanna Rosenbaum’s last letter to her baby daughter, which states, “I am happy darling girl, that you are not with us at the moment and I only hope that you will be able to stay with your foster parents … until we return, with God’s help”. Tales of hope are dotted through the letters of Holocaust victims, even in their last letters. Moshe Ekhaizer tells his wife Miriam that: “I have not for one moment lost hope that I will be saved and return to you”, and Tuvia Grin writes to his sister telling her to “Be healthy and strong” and that “I live in hope that we will soon celebrate victory over the enemy of us all.” Even in the times where it seemed like all hope was lost, it was always there.

Sometimes the act of hoping is more important than the hope itself - and these letters prove that. We live in a world that may at many points appear hopeless. But as we have seen, hope can be found in the seemingly most hopeless places: from the trenches, to the temporary homes of evacuees, and - perhaps most extremely - to the Holocaust. Hope for many is never truly lost, however in situations such as these, we are required to look a little harder.

October, The Red Star of hope over the world

By Inge Erdal

Lenin walks around the world.
The sun sets like a scar.
Between the darkness and the dawn
There rises a red star.

From Langston Hughes, *Lenin walks around the world* (1938)

The event dubbed by its supporters as the Great October Socialist Revolution has, despite all of its enduring controversies, inspired millions across the globe. Far from being just a European phenomenon, Moscow became the epicentre of worldwide revolutionary hope, from labour struggles to a reimagining of everyday life to anti-colonial organising. Central in this imagining was the image of the red star, the second most recognised symbol of the international Communist movement that October inspired. Unlike the hammer and sickle, which symbolised the revolutionary unity of workers and farmers, the red star conveyed something more transcendental and aspirational: the guiding star promised a new world at the journey's end, visible from any corner of the earth. To both its success and detriment, the red star was manifested in the state of the United Soviet Socialist Republics.

Hopeful as it was, its devotees became increasingly alienated by the excesses of Stalinism. The so-called Social Imperialism of its successive interventions in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Afghanistan, and the ossifying bureaucracy that made the pretensions of democracy and social justice absurd. An interesting perspective on this journey can be gleaned from Western intellectuals who travelled to the land of the Red Star during its eighty-year existence, their distance increasing for every following generation, as the red faded slowly in the night sky. Beginning with the hopeful recollections of Walter Benjamin's stay in Moscow in the 1920s, the remorseful distance of Eric Hobsbawm in the 1940s, and finally across the Atlantic for the gratitude of Angela Davies in the 1970s amidst general critical distance.

The Western intellectuals' visits to the USSR in its infant years were so widespread it became something of a literary genre. Among these was the German Jewish Marxist philosopher Walter Benjamin's (1892-1940) *Moscow Diaries*, an account of his experiences in the USSR between December 1926 and January

1927. Benjamin's travels were instigated by his quest to reconnect with the target of his affection, the Latvian theatre director Asja Lacis, a quest that would end in resounding failure. It is hence not surprising that Benjamin's main observation in Moscow was that "Bolshevism has abolished private life", perceiving society as so politicised that it blocked out any room for the private. For the heartbroken traveller, this was no doubt a source of conciliation and optimism, that mundane sorrow like unrequited love would cease to exist in the new age. Like in love, his attempts at integrating into revolutionary society proved a bitter failure, like many immigrants he struggled against the alienation of not knowing the local language. However, even his solemn return to Berlin emphasised an enduring faith in the Communist project, writing in his diary that:

"For someone who has arrived in Moscow, Berlin is a dead city. The people on the street seem desperately isolated, each one at a great distance from the next, all alone in the midst of the broad stretch of the street."

The account of Walter Benjamin, therefore, illustrates the hope that was still held by Westerners, as the land of tomorrow where individual sorrows disintegrate into the new community. His testimony also highlights the link between hope and despair, where individual sorrow opens for collective hope, and the sense that hope is often also deeply melancholic.

A much dourer message can be gathered from Eric Hobsbawm's (1917-2012) visit in the winter of 1954 to 1955. He was among the historians which the Soviet Academy of Sciences had invited from the Communist Party of Great Britain's Historians Group, whose scholars would end up among the country's most prominent in the following decades. The historians found themselves in awe, especially at

the dramatic rise of industrial society from peasants a generation prior, but also alienated by their tightly scheduled visit. Hobsbawm recalled in his memoir that they were strung along from one official or cultural visit to the next. Especially striking was being hosted in the VIP lounge for a Leningrad ballet, with a still sweaty ballerina being brought before them for curtesy, an evident marker of the stratification that had re-emerged in the new society. Furthermore, seeing the dead body of Stalin, on display until 1961, aided the feeling of unease, Hobsbawm noted he seemed smaller than he was. Even the company of their counterparts proved alienating with Hobsbawm noting:

"Theirs were an inward-looking Soviet Conviction rather than an ecumenical one … what we thought about the October Revolution was not the same as what our guides from the Leningrad branch of the Academy of Sciences thought … It was an interesting but also dispiriting trip for foreign communist intellectuals, for we hardly met anyone there like ourselves."

He was not alone in this dispiritedness, most of his comrades left the party following the twin shock of Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin and the quashing of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956. The trail of October seemed to have been lost years ago, with an increasing number either rejecting it entirely or breaking away to rethink socialism. Unlike them, Hobsbawm remained in the CPGB out of sentimental attachment to the Revolution, though he ceased to do any political work, beyond what can be inferred from his scholarship. His boyhood zeal dissipated, he attained an intellectual distance, though this distance stimulated a keen interest in new approaches, prominently the Italian tradition of communism. Again, sorrow may lead back to hope.

As one would expect from the breakdown of communist ecumenism, newer generations responded to it in a far more dispassionate manner. While the charge of Soviet insularity is a largely accurate one, its leadership remained interested in supporting struggles for liberation abroad. This intersected in a novel way with Black Radicalism in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. One which had deeper roots, as far back as the 1930s, when a group of twenty two African American artists and intellectuals, including Langston Hughes and the more famous Paul Robeson, went to Moscow in 1932, to make a film about race that never materialised. For them, the Soviet Union offered another dimension of hope, in its official denunciation of all forms of racism. This opportunistic anti-racism was exported abroad perhaps most famously in the case of Angela Davis (1944-). A young Black academic and Communist radical, she had in 1970 been implicated in a California courthouse killing intended to free Black Panther Party members. The imprisonment made her the political prisoner extraordinaire in the early 1970s counterculture, embraced by the USSR as a symbol of American racial injustice. School children were instructed to write letters to her, expressing support for the noble cause, as one part of a wider publicity campaign that became renowned worldwide. Davis paid the debt in kind, visiting Moscow in 1972 to accept an honorary doctorate, and again in 1979 to accept the Lenin Peace Prize. As her critics both then and now have pointed out: she refused to speak out against the political prisoners taken after the Soviet intervention in 1968 of Czechoslovakia, despite her long-standing advocacy for prison abolition. Though remaining a member of the Communist Party USA until being expelled in 1991, she has remained distinctly silent about the USSR and Communism in general. Not wanting to engage in uncalled for speculation, her silence rather than public disavowal indicates a far more complicated relationship to the spirit of October than ex-Communists usually have.

Davis is something of an outlier in the wider Western left's approach to the Soviet Union in this period, seen better in the likes of Audre Lorde and Bernie Sanders. The spirit of October had faded, leaving a more pragmatic outlook on the other power, to be defended from excessive Western criticism but still criticised for its inadequacies and wrongdoings. Quite a different perspective from those that either lived in the era of revolution, like Benjamin, or those who had grown up in its living stirs, like Hobsbawm. They also approached it with a hope not turned melancholy, still seeing a manifestation of the red star. For even at its most base, the land of the Soviets proved that there was an alternative to Capitalist society.

Alas, beyond the millions who abandoned hope, rapid and dramatic, sullen and gradual, the demise of the Soviet Union has generated a wider global pessimism. As Enzo Traverso reminds us, "The ghosts haunting Europe today are not the revolutions of the future but the defeated revolutions of the past." Evident from the velvet revolutions and the Arab spring, there exists radical desire but no real model of leadership or coherent vision to replace the Leninist one. So, the spectre of the red star continues to haunt would-be revolutionaries the world over. Therefore, there are many more than just old Marxists who need time to mourn properly, there is after all much hope to be found at the end of melancholy.

The Struggle for Hope: Legacies of the Mau Mau Rebellion

By Amy Hendrie

In 2012, a case was presented to the British High Court in which four elderly Kenyan survivors of concentration camps during the Mau Mau rebellion sought to hold the British government responsible for the atrocities committed against them. It has been deemed the most savage of Britain's decolonisation wars; with casualties in the tens of thousands, and with cases of sexual crimes, beatings and torture littered throughout the Hanslope files. Britain, predictably, shied away from disclosing such crimes, and writings on the subject typically downplay the army's role in such activities. This history can certainly be seen as a hopeless and tragic one. However, I would like to highlight the small but significant victory which serves as a glimmer of hope for the four elderly survivors, whose bravery at standing up to the British government and seeking justice is inspiring, even if the need for such justice is abhorrent. Hope, on this small scale, did win out.

Beginning in 1952 and ending in 1960, the Mau Mau insurrection was partly inspired by a need to shatter the disproportionate European presence in Kenya's rural economy. As argued by Buijtenhuijs, Mau Mau was a 'revolt of the rural dispossessed'. It has even been suggested by Huw Bennett that British soldiers clearly saw the injustices within the colony and understood this to be the catalyst for the uprising. By 1960, rebel casualties amounted to between 20,000 and 30,000, and in 1955, at the peak of the war, more than 70,000 Kenyans were incarcerated in British detention camps, many without being officially charged beforehand. The counterinsurgency launched by the British resulted in atrocities being committed against those in detention camps. One of the four elderly claimants, Jane Mara, testified to sexual abuse. Aged 15, Jane was accused of being a Mau Mau sympathiser and was sent to such a camp, where she experienced the tragically common treatment of detainees. She was brutally beaten by inquisitors and raped with a heated glass bottle by four Kenyan guards, before witnessing the same treatment towards three other prisoners. To reiterate, this was no isolated incident. As highlighted by Julianne Weis, rape was a 'widespread and potent element of the counterinsurgency'. Indeed, the CSCCC papers recorded 56 separate sexual crimes between 1954 and 1959. A prominent political activist, Wambui Waiyaki Otieno, details in her memoirs her rape by a white policeman while in a detention camp; the assault resulted in a daughter. To add further evidence, a study by the University of Nairobi shows that 65.7 per cent of the 181 Mau Mau fighters who took part in the study had PTSD because of their treatment within the camps. It is therefore clear that this insurrection against colonial rule was beaten down by the British in the most brutal

and savage of ways. Hope for a peaceful end to British colonial rule in Kenya was dashed.

Frustratingly, decolonisation was not seen in the same light by the British. While the Mau Mau insurgency was famously violent, the British government painted decolonisation in a hopeful way, as evident in Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's 'Winds of Change' speech given in Cape Town, South Africa in 1960. In it he claimed that Britain's actions were performed 'in the belief that it is the only way to establish the future of the Commonwealth and of the Free World on sound foundations', and that Britain does 'take full and sole responsibility' for such actions. It does not, however, acknowledge the atrocities committed there. It ignores this dark history and instead seeks to justify Britain's very hands-on involvement in decolonisation. This is a typical example of Britain not publicly recognising the brutality it doled out, and it was firmly believed that Britain waged its decolonisation wars with more civility than other governments, highlighted by Bennett. The narrative of decolonisation, then, was presented as a hopeful one in which Britain aimed to carve out a free and just future for its former colonies. This narrative was not shared by the victims of rape and torture at British hands. This hope was false.

But this article is not about the hopelessness of the insurrection, rather it is about how four brave survivors demanded justice and won it. This was possible as new documents detailing the torture of prisoners within detention camps came to light. Harvard historian Caroline Elkins, author of Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya, discovered that many documents pertaining to these events were missing or still classified as confidential 50 years later, a breach of the Public Records Act. Furthermore, it was found that the British had destroyed documents before withdrawing from Kenya in 1963. Where there should have been 240,000 files in the archives, Elkins found only a few hundred. Britain had intentionally withheld evidence of their abhorrent behaviour in Kenya. It is no wonder that our four claimants took justice into their own hands; they would not have gotten it if left to the British, who would clearly rather sweep the atrocities they committed under the rug. Under legal pressure in 2010, the government acknowledged the hiding of incriminating files documenting their withdrawal from the empire. Known as the Hanslope Disclosure, the newly released documents proved the claims of the four brave Kenyans, and they won their case against the British government. The full and final settlement amounted to £19.9m, distributed to more than 5,000 elderly Kenyan survivors of torture during the Mau Mau uprising. Their bravery and hope won out, as they were compensated for their experiences, even if money can in no way erase the memories of such treatment.

Britain perpetuated hopelessness for Kenyan survivors of detention camps both during and after the conflict. Doling out such injustices as sexual abuse, beatings, torture -- and choosing to ignore these crimes to create a façade of a hopeful withdrawal from empire was despicable. The idea that Britain let go of its empire with more civility than other governments can no longer be sustained. Britain's behaviour was not uniquely aggressive, but their lack of acknowledgement of such a fact for fifty years highlights how Britain was perfectly happy to paint over the cracks and present itself as a heroic force. Britain offered little hope for those who had suffered in its camps during the Mau Mau rebellion, and that is why these four elderly Kenyans had to create it for themselves. Their success, David Anderson argues, marks a 'profound' rewriting of history. The hope and bravery of individuals created justice for thousands of other victims; hope, for these people, won out.

Subversion from the Subconscious: The Power of Dreaming under Totalitarian Regimes

By Jack Bennett

Why do dreams seem particularly suited to serve as evidence of living under the terror of totalitarianism? Historical hermeneutics of dreams, for the purposes of this article, will be defined as explanatory metaphors that comment on a person's existential situation and emotional concerns. This draws upon the work of Carl Jung, in that reporting personal dreams as fictions, the individual is at once the author, director, player, prompter, spectator, and critic of nocturnal narratives. These same narratives are shaped by experiences from life during the day. Recounting, interpreting, and questioning dream narratives connects the individual to the wider totalitarian society. Dreams serve to demonstrate that cultures are shaped by fantasies, emotions, and mentalities as well as by perspectives on the past and the future. Taking inspiration from the methodological approach developed by Reinhart Koselleck, the ways in which dreams serve as culture-specific and epoch-specific sources of a variety of hopes is at the forefront of emerging fields of cultural historical scholarship. Contextual analysis of dreams illuminates the startling intimacy between hope, terror, and fear. Dreams facilitate communication, allowing for the negotiation of political trauma. More recent scholarship in this regard, is useful too: Sharon Sliwinski argues dreams can "serve to reanimate a world that has been flattened by dark times". In drawing these historiographical and methodological approaches together, this article highlights the role of collective spiritual dreams and associated complexities within the indigenous communities of Guatemala and Chile under authoritarian regimes during the twentieth century.

The context of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia draw the great amount of scholarly attention when exploring dreams under totalitarian regimes. Charlotte Beradt's *Das Dritte Reich des Traums* (*The Third Reich of Dreams*) opens a window to daily life through autobiographical narratives, mainly in the form of diaries, and provides insight into the intimate lives of German and Jewish citizens under the Third Reich. She recounts, to varying degrees of success, the night imaginings of emotional and experiential responses to terror experienced in the everyday lives of citizens. Similarly, in the context of Stalinist Russia, scholars such as Irina Paperno have provided detailed discussion of reported dreams as texts – stories about historically specific experiences. In doing so, the ways in which the subjective emotion of hope can be historicised is highlighted. Following Beradt and Paperno, this study extends our understanding of the relationship between dreaming and terror into the contexts of Chile under the authoritarian regime of Pinochet and Guatemalan experiences of military dictatorship, counterinsurgency, and human rights abuses, between the 1950s and 1990s. Particular attention is given to truth commissions and the function of dreams amongst indigenous communities, revealing the ways in which indigenous populations attempted to construct communal identities and hopeful resistance.

The Panzós Massacre in Guatemala on 29 May 1978 parallels earlier forms of official reaction to Mayan protests, stretching back to Spanish colonialism. Panzós marked a turn in Guatemala's fifteen-year-old civil war. Before Panzós, government repression was directed mostly at urban, nonindigenous activists. Following the massacre, the government security forces increasingly targeted rural Mayan peasants, culminating in the scorched-earth campaign between 1981 and 1983. At the same time, the Mayans no longer looked to the central government to temper the exploitation of local planters, but increasingly confronted the government directly and challenged its legitimacy. With the campaign of genocidal terror gripping Guatemala during the latter decades of the twentieth century, the dreams of indigenous populations offered reported narratives imbued with hope beyond everyday experiences of terror.

Dreams composed a central pillar of Guatemalan indigenous community organisation and resilience. Spiritual leaders experienced and communicated metaphysical experiences from the unconscious, which in turn were politicised as sources of defensive motivation and agency against violent military dictatorial repression. The personal and the political become interwoven in the hopeful pursuit of self-determination, inspired by visions of utopian futures characterised by freedom and peace. By combining cyclical, mythical registers and linear, historical ones, the indigenous communities created spiral histories along which people and events repeat themselves and move through time. Notions of power based on dreams, visions, and spirits, provided a life force and traditional knowledge as opposed to political

ideologies that have become central to ethnic politics.

In Chile throughout the twentieth century, from the creation of Indigenous Frontiers to Popular Unity, and the authoritarian regime of Pinochet (1973-1990), dreams were shared and interpreted daily within the family unit among the indigenous Mapuche. As a space that cannot be invaded by the Chilean state, a space where battles still rage and are won, dreams provide a symbolic discourse of the Mapuche struggle against the dominant Chilean system. In the prioritisation of spiritual agency over political agency by Mapuche, the usual colonial dynamics of subordination are reversed. Dreams become a means of conveying indigenous agency, ethnic identity, and challenges towards oppressive regimes of totalising terror. Importantly, for many Mapuche people, the concept of reality as a source of experience encompasses settings such as pewma (dreams) and perimontun (premonition). For example, following the integration of the Federación into the Corporación Araucana in 1938, founder, Aburto Panguilef's writings became increasingly spiritual in nature, recording dreams and visions he had that were often related to the past, present, and future of the Mapuche people as part of, or distinct from, the Chilean state. In recording the dreams, Panguilef was participating in the construction of Mapuche sovereignty.

In the context of both Guatemala and Chile, experiences of authoritarianism created a historical consciousness made intelligible to indigenous people through the narration of dreams, which become a means of conveying native historical agency based on the transformative capacities of spiritual power. As dreams construed the spiritual agency of indigenous people as superior to the political agency of dominators, they are able to narratively obliterate dominant history, reverse colonial dynamics of subordination and mimicry, and create new worlds and histories.

In the wake of military dictatorship and violent counterinsurgency towards the Mayan population of Guatemala from 1954 into the 1990s, two truth commissions were established at the end of the twentieth century. The Recovery of Historical Memory project (REHMI) was sponsored by the Catholic Church's Human Rights Office and the subsequent La Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico (Commission for Historical Clarification, or CEH) was sponsored by the United Nations in accordance with the peace process that ended a thirty-six-year civil war in the country. Through these institutionalised pursuits of truth in "post-conflict" Guatemala, clear erasures and imbalances of power in the treatment of indigenous epistemologies associated with state violence and the metaphysical world of dreams emerged. For example, many Maya-Q'anjob'al survivors narrated memories of violence often underscored by omens, dreams, and messages from the natural or metaphysical world as central to their understandings of the violence. Narratives of these

dreams can be as significant in local historical memory as recording the concrete facts of events leading up to the massacre. However, such narratives are often omitted from truth commission reports.

Recording and incorporating personal sueños (dreams) as culturally specific methods of knowledge production within indigenous society re-emphasises the subjectivity of hechos (facts) in recounting experiences of violence and totalitarianism. To omit these dreams, omens, and intuitions of survivors because they are not perceived to be relevant to the events and processes of genocide is to privilege external, expert knowledge. These exclusions further disenfranchise victims who frequently come from structurally marginal communities, and who are now seeking new forms of inclusion in the post-conflict era. As such, these erasures undermine transitional justice objectives in unintended ways. As a result, critical and compassionate analyses of violence in Guatemala have been successful in facilitating the process by which victims speak truth to power. The individual testimonies give voice to collective experiences of suffering and death that were sanctioned by a repressive state. In turn, official recognition of these narrativised experiences works in service of reconciling the violent past and contributes to creating a more democratic future.

Dreams reflected and informed experiences of regimes of terror during the twentieth century, constructing hopeful responses within environments of fear. There remains a hope that, even in the darkest times, human beings can create meaning and resist abomination through their dreams. By challenging their traumatic history through the spiritual powers and morality of dreams, and by making the presence of visions and premonitions immanent within the community, indigenous peoples hoped to achieve equality and immortality. This new world of hope allowed the Mapuche of Chile as well as indigenous communities across Guatemala under dictatorship to move away from internal conflicts and factionalism to create a form of historical consciousness that promotes group solidarity and agency, and that has the potential for political mobilisation.

Robert Kennedy in the Commonwealth: Poverty and the Collective Memory of Hope in Eastern Kentucky

By Callum M. Case

On 9 and 10 September 2004, a group of citizens in Eastern Kentucky reenacted Senator Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 "poverty tour" of the region. The performers interacted with the community by recreating Kennedy's speeches, returning to sites and communities Kennedy visited, and conducting mock committee hearings. Organisers of the event hoped to rekindle political engagement among Eastern Kentuckians and to highlight "what Eastern Kentucky needs now is the same as when Kennedy visited: more jobs." More than a political exercise, however, the 2004 reenactment was a manifestation of Eastern Kentucky's collective memory of Robert F. Kennedy and his anti-poverty message.

Institutional Poverty in Eastern Kentucky

By 1968, poverty in Eastern Kentucky was nothing new; it was the cumulative consequence of a century of political and economic exploitation by the coal industry. The proliferation of railroads in the United States during the nineteenth century led to a sharp increase in demand for coal. In response, coal companies needed to acquire vast tracts of mineral-rich land. The Appalachian Mountains offered concentrated reserves of coal beneath a sparsely developed geography. Additionally, the lack of commercial or industrial development in the region meant that the population of the region provided a workforce in a decidedly non-competitive labor market.

One of the costs of acquiring land for mining was the property tax. To avoid these expenses, coal companies developed a legal instrument called the broad form deed. It allowed companies to purchase mineral rights from landowners without incurring the tax burden associated with the surface land. Broad form deeds opened the door to exponential growth in the mining industry in Eastern Kentucky, and a marked increase in the proportion of Eastern Kentuckians employed by coal mines. Many employed by coal mines during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries congregated into "coal towns" where miners were typically paid in "scrip", which was a currency printed by the company and tenderable only in company stores. These stores charged exorbitant prices and often left miners in debt to the company.

The introduction of strip mining to Eastern Kentucky after World War Two exacerbated exploitation by coal companies. Underground mining, which was the predominant practice prior to World War Two, involved little disturbance of the surface land; strip mining, on the other hand, entailed the removal of the surface land to expose coal deposits. This led to significant legal conflict between the coal companies, who possessed the mineral rights, and the owners of the surface land. The companies asserted that the broad form deed granted them the right to extract coal in whatever manner they saw fit, irrespective of the rights of the surface landowners. In the 1956 case of *Buchanan v. Watson*, the Kentucky Court of Appeals affirmed this argument and ruled that the rights of mineral owners superseded the rights of surface landowners.

The decision in *Buchanan v. Watson* was followed by the widespread adoption of strip-mining practices, which led to the destruction of an estimated 48,000 acres of farmland and forests by 1968. Since strip mining was a less labor-intensive practice than underground mining, a significant portion of the population became unemployed during this period. Coal mines managed to obtain vast swathes of Eastern Kentucky's private land, create dependence on mine employment, and extract billions of dollars

in natural resources all while paying very little or no taxes on the land or resources they consumed.

1968 and Robert F. Kennedy's "Poverty Tour"

Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 visit to Eastern Kentucky was part of a broader effort on the part of Kennedy to draw attention to poverty and the failure of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" to address economic inequality. According to John M. Glen, in "The War on Poverty–A Preliminary Report", many in Appalachia believed the "War on Poverty" had done little more than treat "the symptoms of the region's poverty" and had done little to "address its root causes". Kennedy affirmed this view repeatedly during his visit to Eastern Kentucky, stating during hearings for the Senate Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty that the conditions in the region were "unacceptable" and that "we've got to do away with welfare".

The "War on Poverty" was an amalgamation of programs which attempted to address systematic poverty. According to Glen, one of these programs, the Office of Economic Opportunity's Community Action Program, "was supposed to mobilize all available community resources to address local poverty." While intended to ensure federal intervention addressed the root of local poverty, the reality was "that Community Action Programs showed little interest in serving the poor" and were instead rife with corruption and infighting. The result was an inability to secure "participation in the antipoverty campaign."

Kennedy presented a markedly different approach to addressing poverty in Eastern Kentucky. During the second hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty, Kennedy stated that:

"the men of your hills who worked at great peril to themselves and their health...have been left without work and without hope by the automation of an industry which no longer needed them."

Kennedy's summation of the problem facing Eastern Kentuckians was apt, evidenced by the testimony of numerous witnesses which spoke in the hearing. A retired coal miner named Cy Hamilton testified that in 1960 his coal mine extracted "244 ton of coal a day ... with a hundred and forty-four men". He claimed that after automation, the mine extracted "325 ton of coal ... with 22 men".

The "poverty tour" of 1968 ultimately proved a perfect combination of audience and message. The issue of unemployment in Eastern Kentucky, coupled with a demonstrated failure of the welfare system to address the root cause of poverty, primed the region for Kennedy's message supporting work programs and sustainable economic development. The positivity of his initial reception in Eastern Kentucky, coupled with the sustained collective memory of his message and the hope it brought, is attributable to his understanding that employment was what Eastern Kentuckians wanted most.

A Collective Memory of Hope

The 2004 reenactment of Robert F. Kennedy's visit to Eastern Kentucky catalysed renewed reflection on the collective memory of Kennedy and his message. John Malpede, one of the organisers of the 2004 reenactment, commented that "recreating Mr. Kennedy's trip, which many remember fondly, seemed an ideal way to stimulate that kind of discussion". Numerous interviewees who witnessed the original event highlighted the parallels between the circumstances surrounding Kennedy's initial visit and the circumstances surrounding the 2004 recreation.

Mary Cox, one of the students who met Kennedy in the schoolhouse in Vortex, Kentucky, commented in 2004 that "some jobs can be found in Eastern Kentucky, but full-time employment remains scarce". Another resident who had met Kennedy in 1968 said that "to think about him caring enough to come to this little place ... it makes me want to cry." These recollections reflect the appeal of Kennedy's message. The fact that in formulating his message he drew from the experiences of those in poverty, and that his proposed reforms confirmed Eastern Kentuckians' understanding of institutional poverty in the region, is likely the reason Kennedy was so well received.

Kennedy's positive reception in Eastern Kentucky was not unanimous; during a neighborhood walking tour in Letcher County, Kentucky, a small group of miners conducted a silent protest where they "wore paper bags over their heads" with the word "ANGER" written on them. The protest was intended to highlight that Kennedy was conducting the walking tour with the same officials who had administered the Community Action Programs as a part of the "War on Poverty." The implication was that Kennedy's visit was little more than symbolic, and that his proposed solutions to the issue of poverty would prove just as susceptible to corruption as the Community Action Programs.

Conclusion

It is impossible to assess the efficacy of Kennedy's proposed reforms, as his assassination in June 1968 obscured his anti-poverty message in the national debate. But the 2004 reenactment of the 1968 "poverty tour" of Eastern Kentucky does reflect how central Kennedy's visit was to the political identity of the region. While 1968 was arguably the end of an era of progressivism in American politics, 1968 marked a turn toward reform in Appalachia. Advocacy culminated in the passage of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, and the adoption of a coal severance tax in Kentucky which sought to make up for the negligible property taxes paid by the mining industry.

Kennedy may not have had the opportunity to advance or enact legislation to address poverty in Eastern Kentucky, but he did instill hope and a drive for reform. His visit in 1968 lives on in the collective memory of Eastern Kentuckians as an emblem of optimism and progress, rather than an opportunity lost to an assassin's bullet. Idealizing the past can, at times, impede advancement, but sometimes a return to the past can serve as inspiration for further progress.

A New Hope for Particle Physics: Early CERN Achievements

By Kat Jivkova

In the post-war period of the 1950s, European physicists recognised the importance of developing a nuclear physics that was unique to Europe. The intergovernmental meeting of UNESCO, held in Paris in 1951, established a European Council for Nuclear Research (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire) from which the acronym CERN was born two months later. It was upon two initiatives that the council was founded: (1) to conduct research within the field of high-energy physics and (2) to bring the nations of Europe together. The first initiative was promoted by renowned physicists, including Pierre Auger and Werner Heisenberg, with the second encouraged by Swiss writer Denis de Rougemont, who hosted meetings of politicians at the Institute of European Culture concerning discussion for a future laboratory that would unite Europe. Beside Rougemont stands another founding figure, Rabi, an American physicist and a United States delegate to UNESCO. Rabi's request for his role in the founding of CERN to be limited to merely his declaration at the meeting highlights his understanding of the council as a newly established form of European identity: "With the adoption of this resolution, I bowed down, since this was to be a European affair." Thirty years later, Rabi's hopes for the success of CERN were surpassed as he praised the organisation in 1984 for its "combination of centuries and centuries of investigation and study and scholarship to show the power of human spirit." Thus, CERN was founded in the hopes that Europe could be connected through science after a period of devastating conflict.

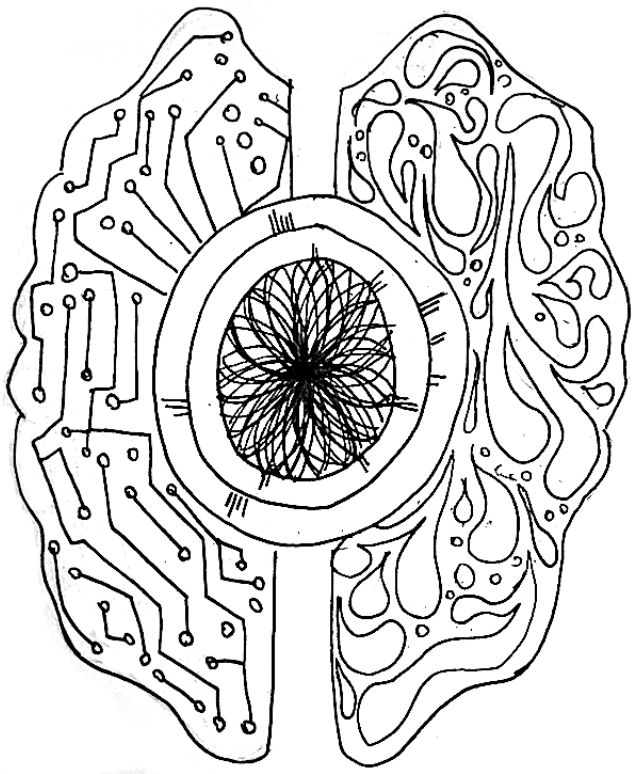
The achievements of CERN could not have been possible without a site for research. In 1952, at the third session of the provisional council, Geneva was selected. Its central location in Europe, and the neutrality of Switzerland in the war made Geneva an appropriate site for the building. Construction began in 1954, overseen by Geneva officials and members of CERN staff on the Meyrin site. The first accelerator of CERN, the Synchrocyclotron (SC), was built in 1957 to conduct experiments in nuclear physics, and to fill time until the much more powerful Proton Synchrotron (PS) would be established to carry out research in particle physics. This impressive research tool provided theoretical physicists with the first hopes of a more nuanced study of particle physics that would soon permeate Europe. It used muons and pions as part of its particle physics and nuclear structure programme, and demand increased after 1967 due to its affiliation with ISOLDE, a nuclear structure facility containing an isotope separator for the study of radioactive elements. As a result, there were almost 150 physicists working at the machine by 1969, who benefitted from a total of 14,000 hours of machine use. The demand for the SC even instigated the SCIP (SC Improvement Programme), which aimed to increase the repetition rate of its frequency modulator and the internal beam intensity, and to improve the efficiency of the primary beam extraction. Several factors began to weaken the positive management of the SC at the beginning of the 1970s, namely the budget of CERN levied by the construction of the Super Proton Synchrotron and its inefficient rotating condenser system that had replaced the tuning fork system. Although opposition from the ISOLDE users extended the lease of the SC following proposals for its closure by Director-Generals in 1978, it was shut down in 1990 and the ISOLDE was transferred to a new accelerator.

The particle physics aspect of the laboratory achieved greater success. By 1965, physicists strived to answer the important question that Dirac had asked: were matter and antimatter symmetric, and if so, did antinuclei exist? The PS, which briefly became the world's highest energy particle accelerator in 1959, offered a solution with a beam energy of 28 GeV (giga-electron volts). This particle accelerator was instrumental in the observation of the antideuteron, which consisted of an antiproton and an antineutron. The discovery of this antideuteron was recorded in the CERN paper "Experimental Observation of Antideuteron Production" and published in 1965 in a particle-physics journal, *Il nuovo cimento*. The role of PS soon diminished as new accelerators were built in the 1970s, and it became a "supply component" in CERN's accelerator complex, delivering protons to newer machines. Parallel to its achievements in the 1960s, physicists established the Intersecting Storage Rings (ISR) project, which differed greatly in design from standard proton accelerators. Instead of colliding a beam of accelerated protons with a stationary target, the ISR machine collided two beams of protons head-on with energies of up to 26 GeV. The ISR had an energy advantage as, if two particles with energy E1 and E2 collided head-on and both had the same energy, then their available energy would be 56 GeV in comparison to the 28 GeV given if a stationary target were to be used. This gave physicists the possibility to study much higher energy

interactions such as the transformation of particles, and they began to anticipate a drastic change in high energy particle physics.

The "change" was marked by the November Revolution of 1974 which rekindled hopes for the future of high energy physics that had prior to this been demoralised by a "shut down" of various projects. This transition into the "new physics" of the 1970s saw the discovery of the J/ψ particle, its double name arising from its simultaneous discovery in both the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) and the Brookhaven National Laboratory. This particle was accepted to be a manifestation of a new quark by 1976 and was produced by the ISR soon after. Therefore, the ISR machine was ground-breaking in the development of quarks, as well as the subatomic gluon particle which acts as a 'glue', binding quarks into particles known as hadrons – hadrons include protons and neutrons. These developments now contribute to the theory of the Standard Model of Particle Physics, concerned with the classification of elementary particles and their interactions. By the 1980s, it was clear that in order to fund newer projects, the ISR had to be closed down. Opinions on the future of the accelerator were split, with some physicists proposing the installation of superconducting magnets in order to improve its energy and possible associations with the Super Proton Synchrotron (SPS); however, this did not save the project. The last meeting of the ISR Committee was held on 27 January 1984 and the machine was sadly closed several months later.

Nonetheless, the excitement of a new accelerator, the Super Proton Synchrotron, offered the staff of CERN optimism that the complex could achieve ground-breaking discoveries in the future. In 1976, the first beam of protons circulated the accelerator at 400 GeV. In the same year, Rubbia, Cline, and McIntyre proposed the conversion of the SPS proton accelerator into a proton-antiproton collider which could produce W and Z bosons. This scheme was adopted two years later. The W boson was discovered in 1982 and the Z boson the following year, both of which are particles responsible for carrying the weak force, one of the four fundamental forces of nature. As a result of these discoveries, Rubbia was awarded a Nobel Prize for the instigation of the proton-antiproton collider, and the supervision of the UA1 experiment, crucial to the understanding of these collisions. Rubbia shared the Nobel Prize with Simon van der Meer, who invented the stochastic cooling technique, critical to the operation of the modified SPS. The SPS also accommodated the colliding of heavy-ions from 1986 to test the theory that quarks and gluons floated freely in a quark-gluon plasma after



the big bang. Physicists at CERN aimed to replicate these conditions by setting quarks free from their confinement in atoms by colliding the heavy ions into targets. Although no real proof arose from the first of these collisions, modified experiments using lead ions conducted in 1994 produced improved evidence of the plasma.

The earliest experiments of CERN provided physicists with compelling evidence in particle physics and created an impetus for physicists to uncover what the universe was made of. CERN experienced a demoralisation in the 1970s due to the organisation's failure to observe the J/ψ particle, however its reputation was soon redeemed with the discovery of the long sought-for W and Z bosons which provided the proof that European physics could compete with the best in the world. The most revolutionary accelerator of CERN today is the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), the world's largest particle accelerator consisting of a twenty seven kilometre ring of superconducting magnets which guide two high-energy particle beams travelling in ultrahigh vacuum tubes. The LHC played a vital role in the discovery of the Higgs boson, the associated particle of the Higgs field that develops the unified theory by giving mass to the W and Z bosons upon its interaction with them – this is known as the Brout-Englert-Higgs mechanism. Currently, the LHC is still on the hunt for a unified force. A way to describe all fundamental forces and the relationship between elementary particles within one framework is yet to be identified, but physicists are not known to give up hope.

"My little black dress does not mean yes": An Exploration of Reclaim the Night Marches, 1970s-2021.

By Mhairi Ferrier

Reclaim the Night (RTN) is a movement battling against rape culture and the prevalence of sexual assaults which are so persistent within our society. The marches attempt to claim back the night as a safe place and time in which women can exist. Even in 2021, we have seen how strongly individuals feel about this movement in response to the murder of Sarah Everard in March – the movement feels as important as ever in this current climate. There has been an outpouring of support for #ReclaimTheNight across social media as women grapple with what has happened and share their own stories. Recent data from UN Women states that over 70 per cent of women in the UK have experienced sexual harassment in public. Additionally, the number of victims who report it to the authorities is very low due to lack of trust that anything will be done, and awareness of possible victim-blaming. RTN began in the late 1970s and died away in the 1990s before the movement was revived in the 2000s, notably in 2004 by the London Feminist Network. As Finn Mackay has described, RTN is "traditionally a women-only night-time, an urban protest march against all forms of male violence against women." This article will trace the origins of these marches, with a particular emphasis on the cities of Edinburgh and Leeds and will compare these early marches to the movement we see now. It will question whether these movements are fundamentally the same or whether they target a different audience in 2021 than in the 1970s.

The idea for a movement such as this, focused on preventing sexual assault, was initially discussed in Brussels. The first organised, synchronised night-time march took place in West Germany throughout towns and cities on 30 April 1977. This was in response to the murder of a young woman in Berlin, a murder perpetrated by a man. The UK feminist magazine *Spare Rib* reported on these events in West Germany, and the British orbit of the Women's Liberation Movement began discussing taking similar action. In July 1977 at a conference in Edinburgh about Revolutionary Feminism, the idea of RTN marches were suggested by activist Sandra McNeill.

The first official RTN event would take place the following year with Rape Crisis Scotland reporting that the Edinburgh Women's Liberation Movement held a week of action, a "feminist defiance", starting with a night march on 31 October 1978. A spokesperson for this event said, "We will take over the Meadows tonight to assert our right to walk freely without harassment at anytime, anywhere…". The Meadows, a large parkland in Edinburgh close to the university's central campus, poses an interesting location when discussing the fundamental similarities and differences of the initial movement with its modern incarnation, as it remains a key march location. The Meadows is often characterised by locals as being unsafe to walk through alone at night and as recently as January 2021, Police Scotland released an appeal to locate a man who had inappropriately approached and attacked several women. Many people called for greater safety controls to reclaim this as a safe space for all; however, rather anecdotally many people stated, "that's the way it had always been". This distinct lack of effort to call out such behaviour, with many advocating for "just accepting it" clearly contributes to the prevailing attitudes surrounding who to blame in sexual assaults.

In Leeds, the origins of the movement were a targeted response to a specific event: the Yorkshire Ripper Murders. Between 1975 and 1980, serial killer Peter Sutcliffe, who the press would brand "The Yorkshire Ripper", murdered thirteen women and seriously assaulted a further seven. Across Yorkshire, genuine fear was felt by women and in Leeds, where many of these attacks took place, there was a demand to do something to make it safer for women at night. The organisers had two overarching aims: to fight rape, and highlight that all women in society have the right to walk unaccompanied at night without fear or worry. The reclaiming of this right is truly fundamental to the movement as a collective. In Liza Williams' powerful documentary series, the backwards attitudes held by the police which hampered the investigation are explored. Particularly relevant here is the message to women that they should stay at home and not go out at night. It was in this landscape that RTN came to Leeds, with the effect of this being explored further in Williams' documentary. However, in response, these marches have been met with charges of racism. In an article in Feminist Review in 1986, the example of RTN has been highlighted as a clear example of racism within the Women's Liberation Movement. These claims were not directly associated with a specific march, but appeared to be in response to the

Leeds march as they went through a 'black area' and made claims for further police presence. However, Mackay observes that the marches' only calls were those of the movement which were to 'reclaim the night' and put a stop to rape. The first marches in Leeds had two starting points which would meet in the middle – Hyde Park and Chapeltown, the latter being a multi-ethnic area with a strong working-class population as well as the location of many of the Sutcliffe murders. Al Garthwaite (one of the organisers) stated "We chose it because we lived there; we all lived there, and you organise where you live." Chapeltown was chosen because it had a direct link to the ongoing murders and it was a centre point to the fear felt across the city. Mackay argues that these charges against RTN appeared because it was a public aspect of the Liberation movement, however, they continue in that the Liberation Movement has "been justly critiqued for historic and ongoing racism and ethnocentrism".

The area of inclusivity shows a clear divergence in the modern marches which are mostly open to all, including men: a distinct difference from the 1970s marches. However, the marches are still often criticised for their exclusion of men, under-representation of women of colour, as well as the exclusion of transgender and non-binary people. The march organisers continually strive to make RTN as inclusive as possible and often organise them with the Students Association and Rape Crisis centres. These modern marches have also expanded beyond the urban cities, with marches being organised in smaller locations such as Fort William and Irvine. For example, Edinburgh's "Fight for the Night" march organised by the University's Student Association noted it was "trans-inclusive, sex worker inclusive and … This year we have changed to the route of the march to make it more accessible", although this march was cancelled due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several marches took place virtually in 2020, opening them up to even more people who may not normally be able to attend. It will be interesting to observe how this affects the future planning of the marches. As this article is written in March 2021, in response to the murder of Sarah Everard a vigil called 'Reclaim the Streets' is set to go ahead to mark what has happened and call for systemic change. This poignant event has been planned, socially distanced, during the current lockdown restrictions with several events going ahead in London (in Clapham near where Sarah lived) and Edinburgh as well as across the UK. For those unable to attend, there will doorstep vigils and in some places like Leeds, the vigil will be live-streamed. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it is unclear whether these events will be allowed to go ahead or will be dispersed on the day. However, it is clear how strongly thousands of women in this country want to take to the streets so their voices can be heard.

Using Edinburgh and Leeds as a lens, this article has provided an insight into the origins of the RTN movement, and in the case of Edinburgh, discussed The Meadows as a key location both in the 1970s and 2021. To provide an answer as to whether the modern movement is fundamentally different is complex. The accessibility and inclusivity are visibly different in the twenty-first century than it was in 1977, with most marches allowing all to join and ensuring this is a key concern of the organisers. On the other hand, the reasons behind the march are unchanged – RTN continues to fight against rape, sexual assault, and rape culture. Despite the presence of activists and marches since the 1970s, many women are still calling for systemic change to happen to keep women safe. At Manchester's 2014 march a placard read "My little black dress does not mean yes" which bears striking similarities to a placard from Cardiff 1979, "Whatever we wear, wherever we go, yes means yes and no means no." Our society has a way to go in its understanding of consent. The fight to 'Reclaim the Night', as highlighted by the recent deplorable murder of Sarah Everard, very much continues in the twenty-first century.

Approaching the Museum: Anti-colonial Practice and Narrative Power

By Sofia Parkinson Klimaschewski

"An object is charged with history, with the culture that produced it originally and, as such, it is a constructed object. Objects do speak, but they speak their own language. Like the wind speaks. Like birds speak."

– Issa Samb

In the eighteenth century, the modern museum emerged in association with the rise of the Enlightenment and the desire to create a comprehensive "encyclopaedia of artefacts" from around the globe. Emphasising the need for an empirical understanding of the universe, emerging typographies led to the rise of specialised collections dedicated to specific materials. These generally followed a linear scheme, which worked to accentuate a pre-supposed narrative of cultural progress. Overall, such a layout was akin to an era-appropriate scientific demonstration of proof and comfortably accommodated ideals of European superiority and exceptionalism, ultimately naturalising control at the ideological centre of 'the West'. Importantly, this general narrative continues to be reproduced in many twenty-first century museums by virtue of antiquated curatorial practice and display. Collections continued to expand as the British Empire grew. Ultimately, many of the objects displayed, and stored in the archives, had simply been claimed and violently taken, looted, from their original cultural custodians. The tabots of Maqdala – Christian plaques that represent the Ark of Covenant – for example, along with hundreds of other items, were seized from the royal Ethiopian treasury by British forces in 1868 after Emperor Tewodros II committed suicide following the battle of Maqdala. Many finds were auctioned off to cover the cost of the expedition, with the British Museum ultimately acquiring the tabots.

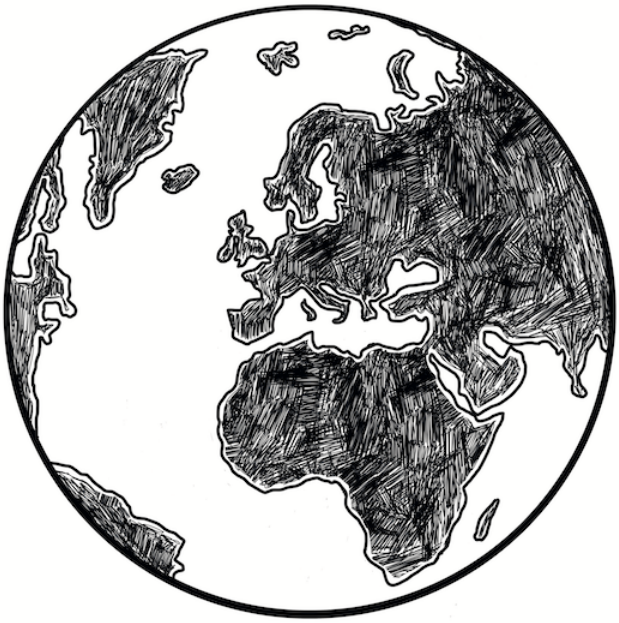
Even a superficial analysis of the visual vocabulary of the museum alludes to the deeply entrenched concept of 'the West' as an ideology. Although a fallacy, constructed through the amalgamation of several contradictory narratives which shift depending on the socio-political context, it still holds narrative power in relation to popular historical reception. Like any socio-political ideological construction, it is not sufficient to simply dismiss it as a falsehood – especially given its foundational role in enacting continuous narrative control after the age of Empire. Overall, the premise that there is such a thing as a cohesive Euro-American achievement is largely unfounded. More broadly, the notion of a common 'cultural inheritance' of all 'Western' people is incredibly difficult to clearly define.

The origin of the term 'the West' we are most familiar with today coincides with the imperialist era of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its history can be traced back to Oswald Spengler's book *The Decline of the West*, originally published in Germany in 1918, which presented the notion of world civilisations clearly divided along ethno-religious lines. The text is widely attributed as the source from which many Anglophone intellectuals took up the notion of a unified 'West', identifiable across historical periods. In his work, Spengler actively searches for the exceptionalism of an internally coherent 'West' by stating that:

"We men of Western culture are, with our historical sense, an exception and not a rule. World-history is our world picture and not all mankind's."

Consequentially, he provides the intellectual framework for the systematic exclusion of all seen as 'Other' – foundational to the abstraction of material culture into mere objects, devoid of social meaning and proclaimed as world riches. Stemming from its broader historical context, it is paramount to clarify that both a theoretical 'othering' and a literal exertion of necropolitical control are foundational to the ideology of 'the West'. At its core, it proves to be an ideological talking point taking the form of an oppositional 'us versus them' stance. In this case, most commonly used to differentiate the white from the non-white human subject. Arguably, the necropolitical stems from naturalised assumptions of superiority and control. Necropolitical action, in turn, cements underlying ideologies through conquest and narrative power. To unfurl the thick description of 'the West' and imperialism is to understand the legitimisation of cultural destruction by material extraction, especially through violent means.

The modern museum builds on this discourse by perpetuating an allusion of neutral custodianship of history, whilst inconspicuously erasing the voices of all who fall outside the 'Western' mechanisms of narrative control. Quoting Carol Duncan, "to control a museum means precisely to control the representation of a



community and its highest values and truths". How should one work to resist the authoritarian discourse of the modern ethnographic museum? Furthermore, if the museum has served as the implement of colonial violence, "a technology of war for the production of difference", is it even possible to revitalise such an institution? Even the central depiction of *ethnos* – the identification of a tribe or grand anthropological themes through examples of material culture – as the main methodological approach to analysis and curation must be critically approached. European and North American museums – founded on the basis of and operating within a 'Western' imperialist logic – must reckon with the violence that laid the foundation of their institutions.

The expansion of the ethno-colonial museum in the mid-nineteenth century coincided with the slow shift of European antiquarianism and treasure collection into culture-historical archaeology and the anthropological tradition of a social-Darwinist classification of peoples. It is also in the contemporary reframing of ethnographic museums as world-culture museums that the image of the 'West' as the bastion of all knowledge, creator of narrative, is reinforced. Despite the allusion of equality, absolute curatorial control is still enforced whilst simultaneously claiming legitimate 'ownership' of stolen objects. Achille Mbembe clarifies that necropolitical conditions can be made "through attacks upon the non-human environment as well as just the human body". European collection expeditions were systematic, working in tandem with other long-term strategies for exploitation and conquest. We can, therefore, approach the museum as a site of necropolitical practice where colonial violence is not only displayed, but actively reproduced.

As archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians, we must seek to redefine the museum. The curator and cultural historian Clémentine Deliss urges us to "leave behind the museum as emporium" and instead work towards demystifying the object, to "dissolve their aura of anachronism". An attempt must be made to deconstruct the monolith of 'Western' museum construction and re-introduce the individual in relation to the object. In doing so, nation-specific histories of plundering and colonial violence will be brought into focus after having been hidden for so long behind the veil of 'Western' knowledge production and the glorification of 'Western' imperialism. To redefine the museum is to correct classifications, rework notions of modernity, and uncover the germ of racism.

The overwhelming majority of objects held by museums are stored in their archives, some never touched, never catalogued. Through multi-generational ethnographic, archaeological, and curatorial practice, certain objects are granted clear provenance whilst others are completely obscured, reduced to lifeless materiality. Some objects are simply forgotten, others intentionally kept away. The tabots of Maqdala, for example, sit in a storeroom of the British Museum. They are not allowed to be seen by anyone, as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church – the rightful owners of the eleven wood and stone plaques – believe it is only appropriate for its priests to handle them. We must work from the bowels of the museum to "unfurl the dynamic superimposition" of contexts, just as one would in a modern archaeological excavation. Consequentially, the internal metabolism of the museum and its historically imposed colonial matrix can begin to be addressed. Simply put, anti-colonial practice begins in the active stratification of the archives.

Even when these objects are displayed, they are often absent of biography – a product of the wilful historical eradication by collectors, colonising forces, missionaries, and museum ethnographers of the original maker's name. The issue goes beyond a simple question of inscription, it is a problem that has been inbuilt in the popular, reductionist strategies of ethnographic display. Therefore, it becomes important to highlight the exoticised presentation of heterogenised material. The photographic treatment of 'tribal art' is the clearest example of this. Recounting her time as the director of the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt, Deliss describes:

"artifacts were choreographed within an atmosphere of engineered darkness enhanced by spotlights and evocative gritty colours, boosting what was now

missing from the object, and thereby producing its necessary commodification."

The idea of the 'Other' is continuously reinforced through the pervasive occlusion of critical and reflexive analysis. These are orphaned artefacts, devalued by their separation from context and imbued with the violent reverence of constructed authenticity.

The practice of remediation can, however, serve as a starting point for new knowledge production. This necessitates a curatorial methodology that explores multiplicity, shedding light on the underlying power structured and the logic of the 'Western' monolith determining narrative and its violent omissions. It can, for example, include the gathering of artefacts into new assemblages to highlight entrenched, now naturalised categories and identifiers. Changes in medium, experimentations with untraditional ways of describing, interpreting, and displaying objects further interfere in the normative 'Western' ideology of museums. Whilst mostly focusing on the reconstitution of non-institutional object biographies and violent obstruction of meaning, we must also place materials within today's context. This follows Michael Oppitz call for a dialogic mission wherein people, whose ancestors made the artefacts of interest, are invited to reconnect with the material and present their own interpretations.

Overall, this is a call to disrupt curatorial authority, to move beyond the generation of an object's 'historical legitimacy' in terms of a 'Western' canon of expertise and narrative control. The archaeologist and curator Dan Hicks elaborates that whilst being "actively diminished and decentred", curatorial expert knowledge of collections must be "invested in and opened to the world". Working from such a space will consist of capturing the multiple meanings which reveal themselves when objects are once again given life. Thus, institutions can begin to move away from a vision of a world imbued with falsely created hierarchies of worth. In this regard, new diasporic imaginaries can be produced by granting access to, and fostering the re-assessment of, colonial collections whilst they are still stored outside their country of origin.

Nevertheless, no amount of institutional self-consciousness or re-working will fully suffice; the museum's ideological core is still intact, the violence continuously reproduced, the demands for restitution unanswered, despite decades of countries asking for their objects back. Ethiopia has been requesting the permanent return of the Maqdala treasures, taken by outright force, for more than a century. In 2019, during a visit to the United Kingdom, the Ethiopian culture minister specified that these objects continue to form a "fundamental part of the existential fabric of Ethiopia and its people". People who are against restitution will often argue that the material in question is vital to further knowledge production and can only be kept safe in their current location, even if there are clear mechanisms in place which will continue to endure their safekeeping. Just as colonial powers sought to 'rescue native races', so too do modern museums seek to 'rescue material culture' from the perceived 'ineptitude' of once colonised countries. As museums begin to have conversations regarding possible restitution, the United Kingdom has generally refused to partake. The director of the British Museum, Hartwig Fischer, has maintained that "collections have to be preserved as a whole" and that British law forbids them to send valuable objects out of the country. Yet, the British Museum has done no activism or lobbying to try to change these regulations, have not expressed any desire to repatriate if these regulations were to be lifted. In regard to the Maqdala tabots, the British Museum's best offer has been to possibly consider a long-term loan. The objects seized form an important part of Ethiopia's national story and are generally recognised as one of the nation's most holy, historically relevant items. Yet, permanent restitution seems out of the question for its British custodians.

In general, museums remain prime protagonists and guardians of colonial and neo-colonial governance. Although they declare their doors open to visitors from the communities of origin, no access is granted to the archives. Individuals require a visa to be a witness to the material object, which, as Otobong Nkanga puts it, was once "formed and held by one's ancestors" – knowledge, once transferred and embodied, now held behind glass. From a standpoint of 'decolonial practice', becoming ever so popular in recent years, we generalise in grand terms the basis for action, reiterating the monolith of the 'Western' museum and consequentially obfuscating the individual histories within the archives. Personally, anti-colonial practice implies detailed necrological research to answer the questions of how, what, and from whom objects were taken and actively working to facilitating their return. We must recognise that every story is different, and every nation must be held accountable for the violence they have and continue to enact. By de-naturalising our knowledge systems, recognising the parasitic ideology of the 'West', and identifying the importance of the material to human culture and individual histories, we can hope to move toward an anti-colonial museum and a post-ethnographic entanglement of knowledge.

Establishing a Universal Legacy: An Examination of UNESCO's World Heritage Programme

By Jenn Gosselin

After the ravaging of European landscapes during the First and Second World Wars, the need to conserve and protect the cultural and natural heritage of global history came to the fore, and with it the need to restore hope and faith. However, it was not until the 1950s when the building of the Aswan High Dam put more heritage in danger that the need reached critical levels. With the dam potentially endangering aspects of ancient Egypt's cultural heritage, the scramble began to preserve ancient places like the temples of Philae and Abu Simbel. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) heeded the call and spearheaded a plan to save the precious Egyptian treasures. An unprecedented conservation project took off, involving physically moving the ancient temples to higher ground to preserve their grandeur. With this success, UNESCO discovered the merit and workability of casting their net on a wider scale. Thus, the World Heritage Committee, and a new sense of hope, were born.

Throughout the next couple of decades, UNESCO would work to preserve other cultural sites around the world. Yet, it was not until November 1972 that UNESCO called together the first World Heritage Convention, where a committee was formed to draft guidelines for adding heritage sites to a special list that would be afforded certain protections and dispensations. In 1978, twelve sites were inscribed on the inaugural World Heritage List. The list is updated every year at the World Heritage Convention, but sites must be nominated to be considered.

UNESCO, in 1972 and prior, had a daunting task to conquer: how does a site become a World Heritage Site? What types of categories should be considered? For the latter, the committee decided to recognise both cultural and natural sites, as well as sites that are a combination of the two. For example, Stonehenge and Avebury in England are important cultural sites on the World Heritage List, having been constructed by humans. These sites are different from Yellowstone National Park in the United States, which is a purely natural landscape.

To be considered for the UNESCO World Heritage List, the site must have a value that cannot be matched, plus meet at least one of the ten criteria the committee laid out. The criteria include such things as: the site shows humanity's creative genius, the site is a technological or architectural marvel, the site contains natural formations that are astoundingly beautiful, the site contains flora or fauna that are in danger of extinction, and the site exceptionally represents a civilisation that still exists or has disappeared. To be considered for the World Heritage List, the site must also have universal significance or value, so it must be a place that contributes to world history as a whole. It should be something that speaks to being human, and existing on this planet at any given age or location. Of course, the definition of 'universal value' will change from year to year, and person to person, but it is undeniable that 'universal value' can be justified rather easily. The rest of the nomination process appears straightforward, it does not seem like UNESCO intends to create a block to add sites to the list. However, to first be considered, the country must have signed the World Heritage Convention pledge, vowing they will protect its cultural and natural heritage.

After earning the World Heritage distinction, UNESCO's position takes on more of a passive quality rather than an active one. The designation does afford a site legal protection that can be enforced by UNESCO, but generally it seems like UNESCO's mission is more supportive of an auxiliary position. Indeed, this is reflected in their mission statement, which often utilises the word "encourage". Regardless, UNESCO vows to help countries develop management plans for their heritage sites, report on the state of their conservation, provide professional training to those maintaining the site, provide emergency assistance when needed, aid with marketing for the site, encourage the local population to take an active role in the site, and broker for international cooperation of conserving a site and help find funding. Additionally, UNESCO will assist with funding when possible, pulling from the World Heritage Fund, as well as other sources, including donations. At the heart of their stance, UNESCO is looking to the governments of countries to take an active role in their historical, cultural, and natural heritage by having a close hand with planning and maintenance of these sites.

Overall, the designation of a place as a World Heritage Site helps its longevity and perseverance. Not only will the distinction protect the cultural or natural site, but it will preserve it for generations to come. The

history of the world, and our shared experiences, is a step closer to our understanding of each other, and rejoicing in our diversity rather than holding to it and perpetuating conflict.

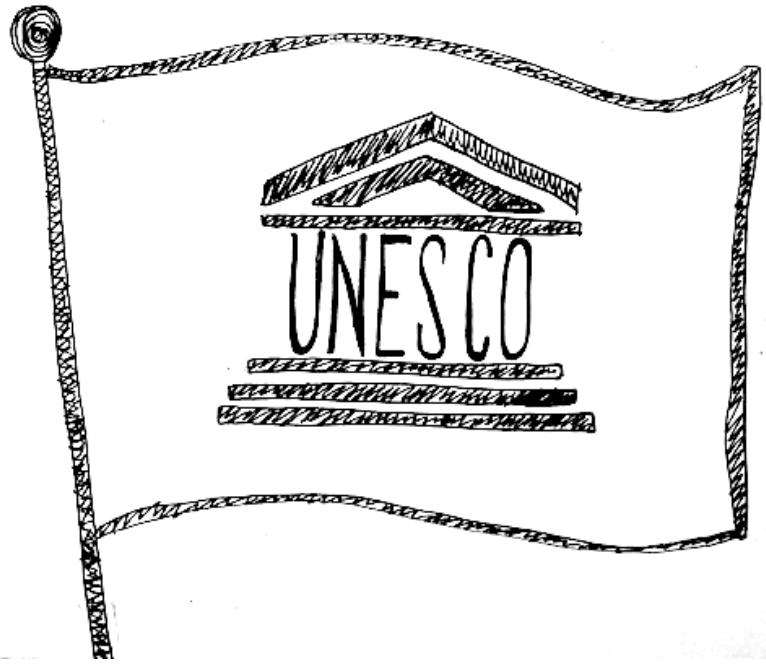
How does the narrative of a site change while being considered for World Heritage status and after it has been fully accepted? Each individual site undergoes a lengthy process of evaluation and the country putting the site up for nomination to the World Heritage Committee must create a detailed file on the site. The site is then examined, and an idealised form of the site's narrative is developed and taken into consideration. Once the site becomes a part of the World Heritage Programme, the narrative of the site can shift. Because it is entirely the country's responsibility to provide the maintenance of the site, a lot of money and labour is needed to preserve it. This could mean a reliance on tourism, as tourism is a global money-maker for localities.

With tourism, however, comes the potential for damage to the site, and perhaps even trivialising it. Tourism is a business, and marketing will go to great lengths to draw people to the site. Ultimately, there is potential for the fundamental importance of the site to be lost and instead turn towards capital. It should also be noted that it is not sustainable for some cultural and natural sites to even join the World Heritage list because of lack of funding and potential damage to the site itself. But what should be held on to here is the *potential* of it. UNESCO status is a step in the right direction and has proven to help maintain and preserve many sites around the world.

The archaeological site at Angkor Wat in Cambodia is a good case study in the use of World Heritage as a means of re-establishing a nation's identity on the world stage. Angkor Wat stands as a twelfth century religious site that eventually became a Buddhist temple. Its original purpose was to act as a mausoleum for a Cambodian king and was dedicated to the Hindu god, Vishnu. The archaeological site was discovered by Westerners during the colonial period in Indochina and was excavated and preserved by them. The architecture alone conveys much of the old culture of Cambodia, including figures of their cosmology such as the gods, demons, and other spirits. Angkor Wat's discovery and World Heritage status has brought thousands of tourists flocking to the ancient city every year and has become one of the most recognisable monuments of Southeast Asia. Recognition of this site on an international level means recognising Cambodia and respecting its developing national identity.

Furthermore, the ancient city of Axum (also spelt Aksum) is one of a handful of World Heritage sites in modern-day Ethiopia. The city of Axum was once home to the Axumite Empire, an early Christian empire from the fourth century onward. In much the same way as Cambodia, Ethiopia is trying to capitalise on its World Heritage site status to make a name for itself on the world stage, as well as to show the determination and drive of developing African countries recovering from colonialism. It is a point of pride, a way of showing Ethiopian exceptionalism, while also sharing that cultural heritage with the rest of the world.

It is very easy to miss the benefits of World Heritage status amongst the red tape of bureaucracy, but it is undeniable how integral this mission is for the world. In increasingly tense political climates, with the threat of violent conflict and environmental degradation, one of the few glimmers of hope we, as a global society, can look to is our shared past on this fantastic planet. As we become more and more interconnected, it is extremely important to foster an appreciation for the cultural and natural sites being preserved around the world, thanks in part to UNESCO's World Heritage Programme. As it says in the UNESCO Constitution: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." If this is not a hopeful sentiment, I am not sure what is.



Popular Memory and Powerful Futures: What Can Afrofuturism Do for History?

By Jess Womack

"Our mothers were pregnant African women thrown overboard while crossing the Atlantic Ocean on Slave ships … We built our home on the sea floor, unaware of the two-legged surface dwellers until their world came to destroy ours. With cannons, they searched for oil beneath our cities. Their greed and recklessness forced our uprising."

Clipping, *The Deep*

In a 1992 article, "Black to the Future", Mark Derry coined the term 'Afrofuturism' to describe science-fiction rooted in the Black experience, although this concept has existed for far longer. It exists both as a sub-genre of science fiction, and as an ethical philosophy that questions identity and affirms anti-colonial politics. Indeed, 'Afrofuturism' takes the form of music, art, literature, and film, and has a presence everywhere with a significant African diaspora, as well as on the continent itself. However, a particular strand of Afrofuturism speaks to the specific history and identity of African Americans. It enables alternative framings to contend with the legacies of slavery and oppression, as well as power and happiness. I argue that Afrofuturism is of significant value to historians, and that it encompasses both a hopeful past and future.

At a basic level, Afrofuturism can be employed as a cultural source like any other. Public history is a growing field, and science fiction generally has a lot to tell us about the time in which it was produced. What does it mean that *Black Panther* comics were first written in 1966, or that Ryan Coogler felt the need to emphasise themes of displacement and poverty in the 2018 film adaptation, for example? Talking about the film, Coogler describes the struggle that every Black parent faces in explaining difficult elements of history to their children, and the way that stories of a powerful African continent ruled by people that look like them can resonate. Here, the narrative is one of pan-Africanism and a single 'Africa'. This is not an attempt to deny the great variety of countries within Africa, but, in a context where relationships and memories of specific locations were erased by slavery the transatlantic slave trade, the idea of 'Africa' can act as a unifying, imagined ideal. It is also worth highlighting that *Black Panther* stories have been written by authors and artists of many different races throughout its history. However, I do not agree that

these are sufficient grounds to exclude it from the genre of Afrofuturism. The visual language employed by Coogler in particular, through architecture and costumes, enables an optical fusion of traditional and futuristic patterns. This ability of Afrofuturism to draw links between different points in time is a fundamental tenet of the genre, and one that is worth studying.

However, there are more complex ways in which historians can utilise Afrofuturism. Through its ability to connect different time periods, it can be used as a lens to contend with difficult histories. This is especially relevant to the legacies of slavery and racial oppression in the United States. At a time when historical attention has rightfully turned towards a more diverse range of experiences, we are presented with the need to balance elevating previously silenced voices with writing a history that accurately reflects the full extent of African American suffering. This characterisation of African American history as brutal has contemporary effects which can be seen in much popular media. The Black feminist commentator Bell Hooks has criticised the 2013 film *12 Years a Slave* for its brutality, for example. Steven Thrasher describes a similar narrative in which:

" ... in the past we were only slaves who do not rebel; that in the present, we are a passive people beaten by police who cannot fight back; and in the future, we simply do not exist."

Thus, by creating a space for alternative realities based around positive Black narratives, Afrofuturism transcends this narrative.

One key example of this is the sub-genre of Drexciya stories, named after the 1970s electro-music group who first explored the concept. The Drexciya are a fictional civilisation that live on the Atlantic seabed, descended from pregnant victims of the Middle Passage slave voyages who eventually use their superior technology to overthrow the dominant white order of the surface world. The late 2010s have seen a re-emergence of Drexciya media, including an album by hip-hop group Clipping and a novel by Solomon Rivers. From a legacy of trauma, emerges a narrative of power.

This is not to claim that fiction is the only response to difficult histories. In the so-called 'post-truth world', memory of historic oppression matters. And nor should Afrofuturistic stories supplant the incredible work being done to highlight histories of real African American resistance, success, and happiness. But what Afrofuturism provides is a mechanism to come to terms with this painful past in a way that suggests a more hopeful future. By making it easier to conceive of moments of hope and stories of triumph, it is that much easier for historians to find and tell them.

Additionally, Drexciya media also highlights the importance of Afrofuturism in bringing issues to the public consciousness, and infusing history with contemporary significance. The opening lyrics to Clippings' song The Deep, quoted in the opening paragraph, speak to both the historical significance of the middle passage violence, and contemporary concerns about environmental degradation. Furthermore, the re-emergence of Drexciya stories has raised interest in current efforts to create an Atlantic memorial for victims of slave voyages. The group *Diving With A Purpose*, which searches for the remains of slave ships, have cited Drexciya media as a cause of increased support for their work. Meanwhile, Duke University's *Recognising Migration Humanities Lab* has also linked memorialisation to Afrofuturism. Professor Charlotte Sussman writes that:

" ... poetry, music, art, and literature described the Atlantic seabed as a space with cultural significance. Finding ways to recognise this intangible cultural heritage is …. as important as shipwrecks and artefacts."

Afrofuturism is one aspect of that cultural recognition.

Finally, Afrofuturism can serve to deconstruct our assumptions about the dominant narratives of history. It does this by providing intersections between the present and the future, and by projecting historical and current trends onto imagined fictional spaces. This is a dominant theme in the work of author Ytasha Womack, for example. Her novel *Rayla 2212* is set in the far future and on a different planet. And yet, the novel's protagonist faces anxieties regarding identity, displacement, and what it means to be a person of African descent in her context, something which speaks to the experiences of the African Diaspora around the world. Furthermore, the novel questions the very logics of race by placing it into an imagined context where it is no longer taken for granted. In doing so, our current conceptions of race as something immutable are undermined and deconstructed, and the reader can begin to understand that they exist as the result of a specific historical processes of construction. Once we can conceive of that construction and deconstruction, better histories of that process can be written. In Afrofuturism, current issues and past events are taken to imagined extremes in order to be questioned, and ultimately understood.

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