Retrospect

The University
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History
Society Journal
Autumn 2011

Riot

Retrospect

AUTUMN 2011

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The History Society wants to ensure that history students get the best education possible at the University of Edinburgh. On the committee we have a dedicated Staff Student Liaison Officer who is there to represent you before the staff at official meetings. If you want to raise any issues you have with the department or have any suggestions on how to improve the department get in touch with the history society.

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To get involved in writing or production, contact Retrospect at: retrospect.historysociety@googlemail.com

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History Society President

FELICITY LOUGHLIN

WELCOME budding historians and history enthusiasts! This issue deals with the interesting topic of 'Riot' and exhibits an excellent and thought-provoking collection of articles. Retrospect is truly an asset to Edinburgh University, and the quality of this edition reflects the hard work and talent of its contributors and editors. Not only does Retrospect allow History Society members the opportunity to showcase their academic skills in historical study, but it also encourages the participation of students from a broad range of subject areas, reflecting upon the value of an interdisciplinary approach to history.

It gives me great pleasure to tell you about the fantastic events the History Society has organised this semester. Freshers' Week was a great success, boosting our membership to over 250 students! It's been great meeting so many new members and welcoming back old faces. So far we've been treated to an alternative walking tour of Edinburgh by our very own Dr Richard Rodger, enjoyed free trips to both Edinburgh and Stirling Castles and experienced drunken revelry on our pub crawls organised by our wonderful social secretaries. We have thrashed our lecturers in our staff vs. students pub quiz; relaxed in the Brass Monkey during our film night; danced the night away in our joint History, Classics and Archaeology societies' social and dressed to impress the EUSA judges in the Sports and Societies Fundraiser.

You're History F.C. has also leapt up like a phoenix from the flames with its numerous victories this season. Howay the lads! We're now relaxing in our post-essay jollity after the successful History Ball, whilst looking forward to some heated debate in the History of Ideas vs. History of Animals!

Finally, I'd like to say a huge thank you to the History Society and Retrospect committee for all their hard work and also to all our members for making this semester such a success.

Retrospect Editor

REBECCA MONKS

INEQUALITY, injustice and ignorance have all been blamed for this summer's riots. Months after the spell of civil unrest that shook the stability of the United Kingdom, as communities and businesses attempt to rebuild and move on, politicans and civilians alike are asking the same question. Why did this happen, and how can we prevent it from happening again?

This issue of Retrospect looks at the place of rioting in history, examining cases from across the globe in an attempt to explore and understand what it truly means to riot. The articles in this semester's issue provide examples of riots from ancient to modern times, taking seemingly seperate cases and unifying them under one broadly applied and often ambiguous theme.

From Sid Vicious' vividly colloquial description of anarchy in the UK to the violent images of rioters projected by news broadcasters world wide, our understanding of what it means to riot is as varied as it is occasionally distorted. Now that the concept of rioting has become directly relevant to our communities, it seemed fitting to explore this idea in a wider historical context, in order to fully understand what it means for the future.

Though the articles draw different conclusions and use examples from different time periods, one theme is abundantly clear throughout. The idea of rioting is certainly not a new one. It is not easily explained, resolved or characterised with any traits, and it cannot be attributed to one singular period of history. Rioting has been present in many different forms for many different reasons, and we are examining just a small collection from the past.

This issue of Retrospect is a product of hard work. Talented writers and dedicated section editors have made this one of our most interesting issues yet. Not only does it put controversial issues under the spotlight, but it generates a discussion on an issue which has been extremely relevant the country's political and economic state this year.

Society

Deborah Elizabeth Britland is proud to report that the History Society are fast becoming EUSA royalty

This semester History Society once again went to battle against other university clubs and societies. Who would be triumphant in their quest for prizes? Two competitions traditionally run through EUSA's Sports and Societies Fundraiser – largest attendance and best dressed, a fancy dress competition. The society attended in good numbers, taking the fancy dress competition very seriously, deciding to dress as Kings and Queens in an attempt to be crowned the winners.

Among a mass of sparkling tiaras and crowns, members dressed up as the Lion King, Kate Middleton and relevant playing cards. The society was even graced with the presence of her majesty the Queen herself, albeit in a rather disturbing Queen-face mask form.The night began with a few drinks across the road at Room at 34, before heading over to Potterrow, where we mingled with the 'opposition'.

Other societies had come up with a variety of interesting costume themes. From Pole Dancing society's firemen to the Speedo-clad swimming club, every society was easily identifiable from quite a distance! As with any good night at Potterrow, the drinks were flowing, and members of the society began to grace the dance floor with their presence. The Kings and Queens partied away into the early hours of the morning, showing other societies how the Baywatch slow run should be done.

> "The sports and society fundraiser was another successful night for History Society."

Following a great night of fun and frolics, the decision of who had won the first, second and third places were left in the hands of EUSA's society team's judging panel. Who would be the victors? The Tennis club, the Hare and Hound society? After a tense wait, the results were finally announced. First place had been won by the Kiss Appreciation Society. Second and third place were still up for grabs though. It was revealed that the History Society had come in joint second place with the Wind Band, who had dressed as their instruments.

Second place was a great achievement; the victory was even sweeter when accompanied by a cheque for two-hundred and fifty pounds! This money was used by the committee to help fund the History Society Winter Ball towards the end of the semester.

The sports and society fundraiser was yet again another successful night for History Society. On behalf of the committee I would like to say a huge thank you to all of the members of the society who turned up in all of their finery and made the nigth such a success - we could not have done it without you all!

EUSA

Let's Get Quizzical

The History Society pub quiz offered the teaching staff the opportunity to settle old scores , after suffering defeat at the hands of last year's competing undergraduates. The turnout was excellent, with those in attendance ranging from pre-honours to postgraduates , with a great show from the department of Social History.

As always, the team names set the precedent for the remainder of the evening, with a variety of inventive names, ranging from the hilariously historically themed 'Quizton Churchill' to 'Anonymous Marking is a Myth', an early attempt at psychological warfare from the staff camp.

Encouraged by the much coveted prizes of tea for two at Loopy Lorna's, alcohol and chocolate (along with the last-place prize of late 90's hits) the teams launched into the questions, featuring the controversial 'Daily Mail Round', in which teams debated whether seemingly impossible headlines were actually once published by the paper.

The quiz closed with the undergraduate winners, 'None of the Above', claiming the prizes, while the two bottom teams went head to head for hits of the 90's. A great night was had by all, and yet again the teaching staff failed to claim any of the prizes. Students 2, Staff 0.

Sileas Wood

History Society visit Stirling Castle

History Society recently ventured out of Edinburgh to visit Stirling Castle as part of our partnership with Historic Scotland.

Stirling Castle is one of Scotland's largest and most important castles and was the location for Mary Queen of Scots' coronation in 1543. Perched atop Castle Hill, there is a beautiful panoramic view of Stirling, between the cannons on the bastion, with a snowy mountain backdrop.

Even more impressive is the castle itself with James V's Palace, which has recently been restored. As a result of 10 years and a total spend of £12 million the palace known as one of the best-preserved Renaissance buildings in Great Britain. Lavish, colourful and elaborate, the chambers have been restored to their 1545 glory. It was interesting and fun to walk through with talkative actors, dressed up as past kings and queens, who were eager to tell us about their days in castle and refused to snap out of character!

We were even able to fully immerse ourselves into castle life, dressing up in (children's) Renaissance costumes and exploring the kitchens, very much alive with fake food and dummies hard at work, whipping up a banquet fit for former kings and queens of Scotland.

Our day trip to Stirling provided a much-needed escape from Edinburgh with an interesting educational twist. And the icing on the cake? Thanks to History Society and Historic Scotland we got to do it all for FREE!

Megan Clark

Stirling Castle Facts

The world's oldest football was found at Stirling Castle. It is over 540 years old.

The ghost of the Green Lady is said to haunt the halls of Stirling Castle to this day.

You're History!

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Iolo James is proud to report that You're History FC are climbing the league with style this season

So far this season the team have managed to remain unbeaten in 4 games, the only team having done so, and are on the verge of a historic first league title and promotion into the top tier of intra-mural football. The team opened their account with a hard fought 3-1 win against Feldsparta Prague with two late goals from TJ Alexander snatching the victory.

Next up were the Pipers in which the team emerged 4-2 victors. Perhaps most surprising about this was not the result but the fact that the name, Andrew 'Emile Heskey' Young's name appeared on the score sheet on two occasions following a barren three game run. A solid draw against Inter Edinburgh in week three maintained the unbeaten run, however it was the 2-0 victory against league favourites, Geography FC that propelled You're History FC to the summit of the table.

With two fixtures remaining this semester, the team only need one victory to clinch the title, an outstanding achievement for all those involved. A special mention also goes out to Will Conway, Iain Walker, Sean Gibson, Andrew Young and everybody else who has turned out to help the team, great commitment from all of you.

Retrospect Needs You!

Retrospect has recently applied to become a society.
We know, this is big news.
Pause for reaction, take a seat if you like.

We are expanding into a journal of History, Classics and Archaeology, and we are looking for new members to join us.

At the end of this semester, we we be looking to elect a committee to run the magazine next academic year (2012-13). The positions available will be President/Editor, Deputy Editor/Treasurer, Secretary, Academic Editor, Features Editor and Reviews Editor. If you are interested in joining us, either as an editor, a designer or as a writer, then please contact retrospect.historysociety@gmail.com. We always welcome new contributors. If you have any suggestions about how you think the society should operate, please feel free to e-mail us. We can add you to our mailing list, and keep you informed about upcoming meetings and events.

History in Pictures

We look at images from riots that have made the news around the world over the past few years

Top left: - a burnt-out van, left after the London riots of 2011
Middle left -protesters are sprayed by riot police at the Occupy Broadway site, New York
Bottom left - riot police are trained in Afghanistan
Top right - a masked rioter in Thesolonikki, Greece in 2009
Bottom right - Riot police in France

All images are courtesy of Creative Commons.

History in the news

13th-century Shipwreck found

The remains of a Mongolian ship, believed to be from the 13th century, have been discovered just off Takashima Island in Japan. Japanese researchers have recently announced that they have discovered part of Kublai Khan's invasion fleet Khan, the first ruler of the Chinese Yuan dynasty , is famous for his invasions against the Japanese.

The first naval attack that Khan launched was in 1274, the second in 1281. It is believed that around 4,400 ships were commanded overall, and more than 140,000 soldiers were aboard the vessels. Both naval campaigns launched under his dynasty were unsucessful. Now, almost eight centries later, the majority of the ship has been discovered. The ship is believed to be amongst the first from its era to have been found intact.

'Researchers already knew of the ships existence, as 4000 artefacts have already been discovered'

Researchers already knew of the ships existence, as 4000 artefacts from the vessel have already been previously discovered. It is believed that the shipwreck, 20 feet in length, occurred when the fleet came in to contact with extreme weather conditions, and until October 2011, the remains of the ship had never been discovered.

The discovery of the ship will allow researchers to learn more about the naval voyage that was so important to Kublai Khan's dynasty, and will be a significant step forward for historians wanting to learn more about Khan's leadership at the time.

Mayan Bodies Discovered in Mexico

The bodies of thirty three Mayan citizens have been discovered by The 'Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia' in Mexico. The remains, found amongst thousnads of objects, are believed to be around 1,450 years old.

The remains included five adults and one child, and were surrounded by a deliberately broken censer, which is believed to have been used as an offering at the time.

The excavation site in Mexico has been worked on since 1973, when archaeologists discovered five pre-Hispanic structures. Experts have been interested in the site ever since, believing that these strucutres, buried deep in Mexico's history, would allow them to learn more about the Mayan way of life.

The bodies were discovered alongside what appears to be bedrooms, worship centres and a drainage system. The structure appears to have a seperate area for the middle classes, and indicates that social organisation was central to the daily life of this unique community.

Now, these latest discoveries promise to reveal more about the mysterious Mayans, as archaeologists are continuing to excavate the site for more information about this forgotten historical community. With the remains still in tact, this new discovery has opened up a world of possibility for historians interested in learning more about this ancient way of life.

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UK unemployment worse than 1970s

In January 1972, UK unemployment rose to over one million for the first time since the 1930s. This year marks 40 years since those figures were announced, and Britain's economic picture is looking considerably bleaker.

The Employment Secretary at the time, Robert Carr, released a statement declaring, 'I am not alarmed, but I am very worried', a sentiment that is being echoed in 2012, as unemployment continues to be an issue plauging the House of Commons.

This announcement was marked by a series of political demonstrations, most notably in the House of Commons, when the official unemployment figure of 1,023,583 was released. The number of people registered as unemployed in Britain in 2012 is now recorded as 2.69 million, more than double the figure that caused so many demonstrations in the 1970s.

In the last four decades, the country has seen unemployment figures sky rocket, from the Thatcher years right through to the seemingly never ending recession that is troubling the current economy.

Perhaps if Carr was the Employment Secretary today, his worry would have turned to alarm. With unemployment figures expected to continue rising, we can only hope that 2012 sparks a positive change for the UK job market.

Anniversaries

- 47 years since the country said a fond farewell to Winston Churchill, who was buried after a state funeral.
- 21 years since the US congress voted in favour of war in Iraq
- 10 years since the Euro was introduced to fifteen countries in the European Union
- 41 years since the clash between Celtics and Rangers at the Ibrox Park Stadium in Glasgow that killed sixty six people
- 22 years since Indira Ghandi was voted back in to power after her 'emergency dictatorship' was rejected
- 50 years since an avalanche in Peru kills 2000 civilians
- 10 years since the UK was declared free from foot and mouth disease
- 39 years since Nixon orders a ceasefire in Vietnam
- 51 years since JFK was sworn in as President

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Features

Football Politics

Hamish Kinnear investigates how a football match can spark a war between two countries

In July 1969 the world's attention was focused on one of the most momentous events in history: The first Moon landing. The landing was watched live on television by a global audience of 600 million people and dominated the newspapers for weeks. This media attention meant that a decidedly stranger historical event was largely overlooked – a conventional war sparked by a football match.

Honduras and El Salvador had become engaged in a bitterly fought qualifying campaign for the 1970 World Cup. The first of these engagements took place in the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa. In a closely fought match Honduras emerged victorious with a score of 1-0 – a result that quickly precipitated riots and widespread clashes between Honduran and Salvadoran fans. Salvadoran anger, in particular, became frenzied after news emerged of an 18 year old girl named Amelia Bolanos who, in despair at the result of the match, had shot herself in the heart. The Salvadoran media grasped this story and stoked the flames of fury by naming her a "national martyr". In recognition of this, Ms. Bolanos was given a state funeral in which the Salvadoran president and football team followed her coffin in procession. Media hysteria was no less pronounced on the Honduran side, where anti-Salvadoran sentiment ran high.

It therefore came as no surprise when violence and rioting broke out once more when the Honduran team arrived in the Salvadoran capital of San Salvador for the second play-off match. The Honduran team was consistently harassed by Salvadoran supporters during its stay in the capital. The night before the game the Honduran players endured a sleepless night as their hotel was pelted by stones. Once the windows were smashed dead rats and rotten eggs were tossed in. The terrorised players lost the game 3-0 the next day. Despite the loss the Honduran coach Mario Griffin commented that the players were "awfully lucky" to have this result as they, understandably, "had their minds on getting out alive". The result and circumstances of the second match led to a second wave of anti-Salvadoran violence in Honduras where an unknown number of Salvadoran immigrants were brutalised or killed by Honduran mobs and thousands more fled the country.

The stage was thus set for the decider and final play-off in Mexico City. Thousands of fans travelled to Mexico to watch the match and a fresh wave of rioting and clashes between fans broke out before the match had even started. On neutral territory, the players felt less restricted by the chants and threats of a hostile home crowd so the match was closely fought. The tense match extended into extra time in which the Salvadorans eventually emerged victorious with a final score of 4-3. In the immediate aftermath of the match, rioting and fighting continued while Salvadorans resident in Honduras endured widespread "reprisals". As a result of the violence, both countries mutually dissolved diplomatic and economic relations the day after the final match.

'As a result of the violence, both countries mutally dissolved diplomatic and economic relations the day after the final match.'

Despite the repeated attempts of the Organisation of American States to ease tensions, on the 14th July El Salvador invaded Honduras. The Salvadoran army, which was considerably larger and better equipped than its Honduran opponent, made significant advances into Honduran territory. The Salvadoran air force, however, was knocked out early when a surprise attack by the Honduran air force –consisting of World War II era piston-fuelled mustangs- destroyed the fighter planes stationary in the airport. After four days each country's armies had run out of steam and come to a standstill. The OAS negotiated a ceasefire and, although El Salvador and Honduras did not conclude a peace treaty until a decade later, hostilities were brought to an end. The short and brutal war produced only losses for each side and claimed the lives of an estimated 2000 people - most of them civilians. It also created a huge refugee problem when Salvadorans resident on Honduran soil were forcibly expelled, leaving an estimated 100,000 homeless. Football riots had escalated to all-out conventional war.

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Although named the "football war" the short conflict between El Salvador was caused by a number of simmering tensions; the foremost of these were economic. The citizens of El Salvador, with a large population but a small land area, were forced by Malthusian pressures to emigrate to Honduras. Honduras, the country from which the term "banana republic" is derived, had an economy ill-equipped to deal with the hundreds of thousands of Salvadoran immigrants. The government utilised the Salvadoran immigrants as an effective scapegoat which the country's economic woes could be pinned on. The Salvadoran government, on the other hand, utilised mistreatment of Salvadorans in Honduras as a propaganda tool to distract its own citizens from internal problems. The series of qualifying matches served as the spark which ignited these long held grievances. In any case the victorious Salvadorans performed poorly at the 1970 world cup, losing all their matches in the group stage and failing to score a single goal.

In the case of this Football War, a game managed to spark riots that escalated into conventional war, but a game also has the power to bring peace. Numerous football matches were played between French, German and British soldiers during the "Christmas Truce" of the First World War and the opposing sides in the Nigerian-Biafran war of 1967-70 agreed to a four day ceasefire during the visit of Pele. For some, football unites; for others - it divides.

CREATIVE COMMONS

Social Protesting

Varvara Bashkirova considers how protesting has changed over the decades

Students have always been considered to be the rebellious ones. After all, it is perfectly reasonable: young and active, we have nothing to lose and a 'independent thinking development' listed in the aims of our courses. In the 1950s it was the Civil Rights Movements in the USA; in the 1960s, the Vietnam War; the 1990s saw a wave of colour revolutions. Each generation admires that their parents had the chance to change the world – and acknowledge that now it is our turn. Accommodating for cultural changes, it is important to look at our generation's options for protest and how best to achieve a real change.

The technological advance of recent years opened vast opportunities to the advocates of their rights. The role of social networks in the revolutions in North Africa and Middle East has been widely discussed in the media. Although it would be an exaggeration to say that the social media alone drove these revolts, it certainly made them much more effective in a number of ways. Firstly, it was crucial for organisation; let us look at Egypt, for example. The word about the January 25th protest spread fast and the organisers could not be tracked down, as no gatherings were required to set it up. More people knew about it; the popularity of the 'event' on Facebook and Twitter made it more likely for new protesters to join. After the general uprising began, it played a huge role in providing updates to both Egyptians and abroad. There was little possibility to keep the protesters updated; media did not provide accurate information, and the protesters were likely to be misled or threatened by the 'news' of failed protests. However, Twitter made it possible for them to get information in real time. The inspirational effect of this is also significant. Having a constant access to the proof that others are fighting for a common purpose, makes it very likely for others to join and fight with them. The spreading of news abroad had a huge impact on the USA policies.

There was no way the US government could defend Mubarak in media in order to maintain stability; the flow of the information through the social media was too powerful to overcome. The news was not made by the third parties anymore, but was coming from first-hand witnesses.

Social networking could not carry the rebellion by itself. The community of protesters might seem to exist in the virtual space only. Or, as it was put by the Breakthrough reporter, 'it can also spread a message of caution, delay, confusion or, I don't have time for all this politics, did you see what Lady Gaga is wearing?' However, once the minds of people were set to the common cause, social networks proved to have a crucial impact on the course of the recent uprisings.

While Facebook and Twitter are useful for spreading information and organising action, the active marches still appear in the core of any protest. One of the oldest ways of protesting is marches and sit-ins. They worked in the 1950s, and they will work today. There is nothing more convincing than real people coming out on the streets.

Last year's protests against Higher Education fees for Scottish students are a great example of how active protests can change policies of government: During the Scottish elections, there was not a single party advocating the introduction of fees. However, with such demonstrations there is always a danger of riots becoming their own cause. People do get overexcited; it is important to stay focused on the primary goal of the protest. Once it ceases to be peaceful, the violence and chaos can discredit the protesters. During the summer of 2011, this became the case, and the

London rioters did not get any support neither from the officials nor from the public. In a famous interview, one of the participants of the London riots said: 'You would not interview me if we did not riot'. This is probably true; however, publicity is not always a good – and effective – thing. In order to achieve real change, it is the minds of people that need to be conquered, not their mere attention.

Rioting through art may not sound radical enough: where is all the action, shouting, excitement? However lacking on the 'noisy' side, this type of action often proves to be surprisingly effective. It directly affects the people's minds, first drawing attention to an issue, then planting a doubt and finally inspiring action. Very significantly, it keeps the purpose of protests alive, not allowing it to get lost in the noise of violent debates. It is often easy to blame rioters: you simply have nothing to do; you are the ones who broke the peace; you are only good at criticising others. In these cases, art is what keeps the doubts away, reinforcing the right of protesters to be heard. George Orwell's literary work, for instance, became an eternal monument to the victims of the USSR regime. Today it continues to remind people of the unfairness and bloody consequences of tyranny; it prevents all those victims from being forgotten.

Hamada Ben Amour, widely known as El General, is a bright example. Rap music might not be your thing, but the role that El General's music played in the Tunisian rebellion should not be underestimated. His song 'Rais Lebled' united and inspired Tunisians and rebels of other countriesalike. Time magazine reported: 'At 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 15, as thousands of people gathered to protest against their ruler at… Bahrain, you could just about hear their anthem … It wasn't a verse from the Koran. It wasn't a traditional tune from the region. It was rap.'

There are numerous ways in which people can make their voice heard; some of them may be more effective, others – slightly less. However, it is much more important to actually find a cause worth fighting for, that can unite people and make them do remarkable things for its sake. If such a cause is found, the most appropriate means to fight for it often fall into place, because true passion proves to be much more crucial than finding the right strategy.

Crossing the Channel

Helen Hargreave seeks to shed some light on this summer's riots in comparing them to the French riots of 2005

In 2005 French youths took to the streets after police accidentally electrocuted and killed two boys in the Paris district Clichy-sous-Bois. This summer the riots crossed the channel; Britain bore witness to some of the worst rioting in a generation. The death of Mark Duggan provoked rioting in Tottenham which then spread throughout London, and across the country. The riots left in their wake not only burnt out shops and cars but also a hefty burden for the tax payer. The ferocity of such violence has led many to blame an uncontrolled gang culture, solicited through the utilization of social networking sites. For Britain and beyond, the riots have raised concerns about a seemingly barbaric reaction to the death of a London citizen at the hands of the police. The disaffection of Britain's youth seems to be so deeply rooted under the surface that the London riots appeared to many as out of the blue and without explanation.

It therefore becomes vital that the potential causes that lead this frustrated younger generation to revolt are addressed. On both sides of the channel police aggression triggered the riots, yet this unleashed underlying frustrations that had perhaps been brewing for a long time; frustrations directed at the government and the education system. In France, conclusions were quickly drawn, as the riots seemed to have been aggravated by racial tensions, which brought immigration and fairer housing to the forefront of national debate in France. Many immigrants to France are placed in substandard housing on the outskirts of cities, known as the 'banlieues'. There are few opportunities for those in these areas, which are prone to violence, aggravated by a lack of social infrastructure. They had thus become increasingly cut off from the rest of society, causing seeds of discontent to flourish. Coupled with police brutality these tense social conditions provide an explanation for the 2005 riots. Sarkozy's inflammatory remarks, referring to the rioters as "racailles", (meaning riff-raff or 'chavs') unsurprisingly fuelled the riots.

Yet the reason for the brutality of the riots in the UK is perhaps less clear cut. The areas in which the rioting took place did not all share the same problems, and social and geographical isolation as was the case in France. The source of the UK riots lies perhaps in the rioters' perception of their stifled opportunities. Hopelessness and disenchantment have been exacerbated by the economic crisis, leading many to vent their fury at a government, which they believe has abandoned the well being and economic security of the poorer sectors of society through cuts in public spending. The large presence of younger children in the riots has also led the education system in the UK to be called into question and concerns to be raised over an 'unraveling of family ties'. Figures released showed that 2/3 of those involved in the London riots had educational problems, more than half of those involved were under 20 and 1/3 had been excluded from school in the past year. The initial suggestion that the riots were the product of an uncontrolled gang culture has since been discarded as studies have shown that gangs, although present, did not play a pivotal role in the riots. Notably the riots did take place in more deprived areas with higher unemployment rates, suggesting economic hardship pushed many to take action. Yet while footage of widespread looting no doubt demonstrates the shameless opportunism of many rioters, it was essentially a derivative of the larger social problems which provoked the riots and not the cause.

Unlike in France in 2005 the use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to assemble large groups of rioters in very little time has been highlighted. Two youths recently lost an appeal against their controversial four-year prison sentence for orchestrating a riot on Facebook despite the absence of any violence. In a recent poll undertaken by Unisys security firm 70% of 973 adults voted in favour of a proposal to give the government power to suspend social networking sites during times of such unrest. Yet this proposal, although in theory appealing, is far too draconian in practice. The government must adapt to and embrace the growing virtual world if it wants to truly show itself to be in touch with all generations of society. Moreover such a measure would in reality do little to stop riots taking place. The 2005 riots in France, and others throughout history, prove that a severely disenchanted society will riot, even if they have not clicked 'attending' on Facebook.

The aftermath of the UK riots has created an awareness of a disenchanted generation. The government has clamped down on those involved, many of whom have received lengthy prison sentences. The government claims that such severe measures are necessary to fix Britain's 'broken society'. One must question this logic however and demand why, in a country with the wealth and diversity of Britain's, society has allowed a generation to develop which feels the only way to make itself heard is through violence. The clean-up operation following the riots if anything shows that the strength of community and sense of collective society is alive and well in the U.K. Michel Fize, a French sociologist, insists that despite government funded projects aimed at the 'banlieues' the same problems are still simmering in France. As for the U.K. we will have to wait and see if the 'government funded' prisons can heal the problems posed by this disenchanted generation. Judging by government re-offending figures, this does not seem likely.

FLIKR

Dividing Classes

Jon Vrushi explores the relationship between class divides and rioting in Britain from the eighteenth century up until the present

During the Hanoverian period in Britain subsistence riots turned into political riots for the first time. The proto-industrial economy saw the concentration of capital in the hands of a few and hungry mobs of peasants rose up in rebellion against this unjust inequality: rioting became an expression of class division.

In 1789, Benjamin Franklin, working as a printer in London in1769, recorded:"I have seen within a year riots in the country about corn; riots about elections; riots about workhouses; riots of colliers; riots of weavers; riots of coal heavers; riots of sawyers; riots of Wilkesites; riots of government chairmen; riots of smugglers, in which custom-house officers and excisemen have been murdered, the King's armed vessels and troops fired at."

The Comte de Cambris, French ambassador 1737-40, was 'amazed at the extent to which popular disturbances in Britain were not punished and law and order were flouted'. There was no police force to put down riots in Hanoverian Britain. The Government's only course of action was to impose draconian measures upon rioters. One of the greatest fears of the Government and the upper classes was the breaking down of order and civil society caused by uprisings of the lowest classes.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century fears grew as the rise of a dangerous class of urban workers posed a new threat. The report of the Royal Commission on the Establishment of a Constabulary Force, which was concerned with painting a picture of crime in England and Wales alarming enough to guarantee the adoption of its recommendation for a national police force, devoted 21 pages to setting out the dangers presented by trade union strikes and urban mobs.

In the early nineteenth century with the developments of the Industrial Revolution came the famous Luddite disturbances. With the establishment of the Constabulary it was easier to put down uprisings. Here started the active resistance of the state against its subjects. However, by now the notion of rioting was 'legalised' insofar as it was morally acceptable for the rioters to rise in insurrection in protection of their customary rights. Eric

J. Hobsbawm has coined the convenient phrase "collective bargaining by riots" for the extension of negotiation through disorder by workingmen during the nineteenth-century.

Class divisions grew even wider with the creation of a rich capitalist class; a fearless proletariat rose up against the new class of capitalists who were expanding their economic empires. Acknowledging these divisions and inspired by the Chartist movement, Benjamin Disraeli published Sybil, or The Two Nations in 1845, just a few years before the turbulent 1848 revolutions.

JOHNNY_AUTOMATIC

Inspired by his work a new faction was created within the Conservative party. This was the faction that backed the idea of One Nation Conservatism: those who are better-off have a paternalistic duty to help those who are worse-off. In theory this help is manifested in forms of charity, encouraging religious practices and so on. Its aim is to reconcile the different classes in society by a voluntary form of redistribution.The first half of the twentieth century was rather calm and agitation less common.

The extent to which we can attribute this to One Nation Conservatism is not clear. The idea of a cohesive Britain certainly did prevail during this period, most famously during Stanley Baldwin's premiership, who was a very keen supporter of One Nation Conservatism. Other factors that might have helped to promote national cohesion thus giving the lower classes a disincentive to rebel include most significantly the two World Wars. Solidarity was encouraged by the Government and national propaganda promoted a united Britain. The fans of "Downton Abbey" will not be surprised to read that the First World War created an environment of unprecedented social mobility.

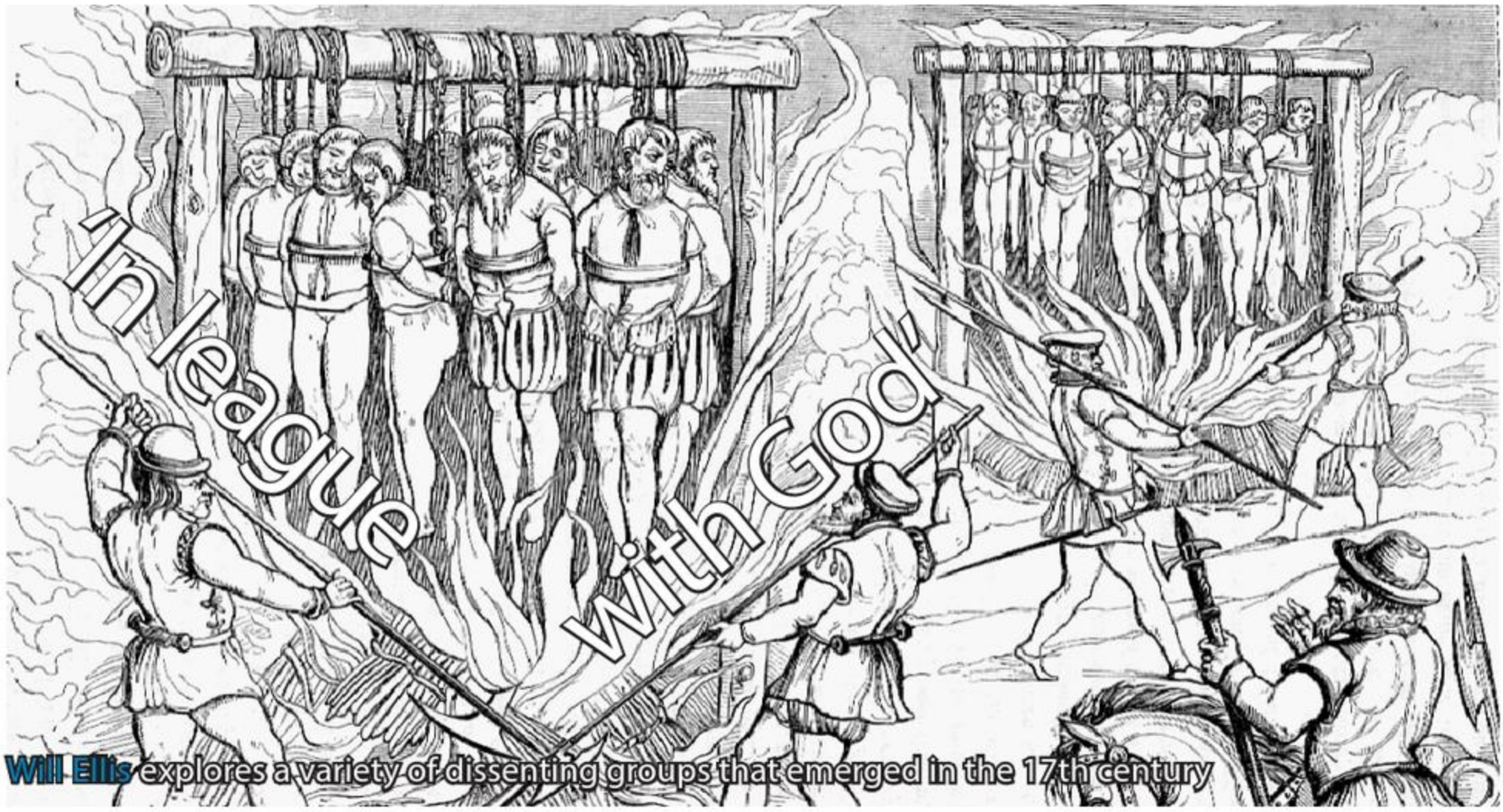
In the aftermath of World War II the Atlee Government created the National Health Service and National Insurance scheme. Britain was moving towards prosperity and a welfare state apparatus was being created. Hunger and subsistence was no longer quite so prevalent and the wars had broken down previous social barriers. In a rather enthusiastic remark, after winning the 1959 election, Harold Macmillan announced: "'The class war is over." Economic hardship arising in the sixties and seventies especially with unemployment hitting the a scary high of 1 million caused sporadic disturbances during Macmillan's and Heath's premierships but they were relatively minor next to the unrest that was to come in the following years.

The last decades of the twentieth century, especially the years 1979-1990, witnessed a turning point inaugurated by Margaret Thatcher's victory in the 1979 elections. She had a clear vision for the British economy and society that moved away from One Nation Conservatism. Later on this ideology was to be christened 'Thatcherism': every man for himself. 'Society is nothing more than the sum of its individuals', 'Get on your bike and find a job'; those were the new slogans of the Conservatives. It seems unsurprising that class divisions widened under Thatcher's Government.

This does not necessarily represent just a widening economic gap but an increase in animosity between the classes, as demonstrated by changes in the implications of certain words: 'posh 'and' working classes for example developed negative connotations. The economic policy pursued by Margaret Thatcher proved very unpopular, prompting a multitude of public riots and insurrections.

The year 1981 witnessed the horrendous Brixton Riots in April which spread across England later on in the summer of that year. Public unrest culminated in a 70,000-strong demonstration in London on 31 March 1990; the demonstration around Trafalgar Square deteriorated into the Poll Tax Riots, leaving 113 people injured and 340 under arrest. Her successor John Major, who had declared that it was his personal aim to fight class division in Britain, abolished the very controversial Community Charge tax as a response to growing disillusionment with Thatcherism.

With the Conservatives back in Number 10 it remains to be seen whether rioting and class divisions are merely a 'phase', a syptom of ideological change in governance, or a sign of wider fissures. As was the case in Hanoverian Britain, in the anti-capitalist uprisings of the nineteenth century and during Thatcher's premiership the frustrated lower classes can rise in insurrection against the dominant ruling classes. Yet as demonstrated by the huge costs faced following the 1981 riots, rioting spawns resentment. Ever-escalating conflict can arise all too quickly as a result of protests, with the lines drawn along class boundaries in a self-perpetuating cycle.



'In league with God'

Will Ellis explores a variety of dissenting groups that emerged in the 17th century

EXCLASSICS

The turbulent years of the English Civil War saw radical ideas flourish. Religion and politics were fundamentally linked and the lines between them blurred. Some dissenting religious groups were swollen with those frustrated by Charles I's eleven years of personal rule and hostility towards Calvinist theory. Others were made up of those who had never conformed, whose beliefs were strong and often unconventional.

The best-known of all of the dissenting groups of the mid-seventeenth century is, of course, the Puritan movement. Fundamentally anti-Catholic and suspicious of perceived similarities between the Church of England and the Catholic Church, leading Puritans came into conflict with Charles I throughout the 1640s. Splits in the movement that emerged with the abolition of the monarchy and the bishops in 1649 saw the movement weakened, although many Puritans' political power increased.

Other dissenting groups of the period that receive less attention than the Puritans ranged from the Anabaptists to the Socinians, and included many ideas and beliefs that were directly opposed to the organised Church of England.

The Adamites were an early sect that remembered the 'holy' nudity of Adam and Eve. An English Adamite group was allegedly active in the 1640s, practicing and preaching a doctrine based upon regaining innocence by liberating themselves from clothes and society's false modesty. Adamites are believed to have held the majority of their meetings behind closed door, rather than in public, but became shorthand for dissenters in establishment propaganda.

Closely related to the Adamites were the Ranters, a group that also embraced antinomianism, the belief that faith, rather than adherence to an arbitrary 'moral law', was the key to salvation. Ranters fully embraced the idea that the Holy Spirit dwelled within everyone and that only by giving agency to the Spirit alone could man see his actions as justifiable. Hence, freedom from the law was aligned with freedom from sin. Ranters also rejected the Bible, believing that the true Word of God lived within every man's share of the Spirit, rather than on the pages of a book. Ranters were reported by their critics as regularly challenging social order and societal norms by practicing wife-swapping, public lewdness and nudity and bawdy behaviour. It was often noted that Ranters mostly practiced out of taverns and smoking houses.

> 'It was often noted that Ranters mostly practiced out of taverns and smoking houses'

Slightly less extreme, though no less offensive to societal norms were the Quakers, who refused to remove their hats in the presence of their 'betters' and their use of informal terms of address. These acts of protest were the manifestation of a belief in, and a desire for, social equality. Such a desire was born out of the Quaker belief in every man's equality in the spirit of God. Quakerism spread like wildfire throughout the 1650s and large numbers began to leave England to start new 'enlightened' colonies in the Americas.

The Quakers who remained in England were prolific pamphleteers, demanding various political and social reforms such as annual parliaments and the abolition of the House of Lords. Quaker political demands were, however, nothing in comparison with the Diggers, whose message was simply: 'Work together; eat bread together'. Diggers saw politics and government as distractions from the perfect society. The harsh economic conditions of the late 1640s saw many Digger communes established upon common land or land seized from wealthy landowners throughout the centre of England. These egalitarian rural communities were established as places where the sick, the hungry and the destitute could come together to support each other.

Societal reforms such as those demanded by the Quakers and the Diggers were supported and advanced by the Fifth Monarchists, who believed that the execution of Charles I in 1649 heralded the second coming of Christ. This second coming would coincide with the Revelation-significant year 1666 that was fast approaching. Fifth Monarchists demanded the reformation of English society to prepare for the return of Christ. These dissenters believed that society was corrupt and unfit for the inevitable return of the fifth, or ultimate, monarch. Fifth Monarchists enjoyed substantial support amongst certain sections of society in the Interregnum, many holding positions close to Oliver Cromwell himself.

Following the restoration of Charles II in 1660 fifty Fifth Monarchists launched an attempt to take London in the name of 'King Jesus'. This attempt was, unsurprisingly, rather ineffectual and was met by increasing suppression of the Fifth Monarchists and other dissenting religious groups. The Great Fire of London in 1666 briefly rekindled the popularity of dissenting groups that heralded the end of the world and the Second Coming. Akin to the unfathomable and sudden fading of Harold Camping, such dissenting groups faded towards the end of the century.

Dissenters that were more moderate in their aims than the overthrow of society and who expected less than the return of Christ remained throughout society. Some of the more bizarre sects that have been discussed were no more than passing fads. Many of the messages that carried through occasional nudity and passive rebellion carried through the dissenting groups that still make up the patchwork of denominations that we see to this day. Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists and Quakers all preach social and spiritual equality whilst rejecting the varying strictures of the Catholic Church and the Church of England.

Those who rejected the religious norms of the seventeenth-century are often condemned to play a part in the Puritan stereotype, rather than given the attention that they deserve. Whilst the Ranters and the Adamites are interesting for their unconventional practices, their contemporaries with strong ideas on social justice and equality played a key role in shaping the non-conformist movements that proved very important in the development of Britain in the centuries that followed.

A Tragic Feud

Ellis Huddart explores how the Astor Place Riots began from the rivarly of two actors

"A bitter feud between two tragedians": Rarely has there been a more foppish explanation as to the origins of a riot; this account of events offered by Larry Stempell in "Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theatre" may conjure up images of two groups of dandies throwing powdered wigs at one another. Yet were it not for the on-going rivalry between prominent actors William Charles Macready and Edwin Forrest, a riot would not have occurred outside of Manhattan's Astor Place Opera House on the 10th of May 1849. And yet, with a death toll of 22 and a further 100 wounded, to claim that it was merely the personal dispute between two actors risks trivialising the deaths of 22 people by betraying both their memory and causes, with the implication that those who died did so solely out of a fanatic support for their favourite actor. Macready and Forrest were key to the outbreak of rioting, though their significance lay not in the fervent support they attracted through their personal dispute. This dispute had become representative to New Yorkers of wider conflicting social and cultural issues. So, under what circumstances did a dispute between two actors magnify and, ultimately, result in the New York state militia opening fire upon rioting unarmed civilians?

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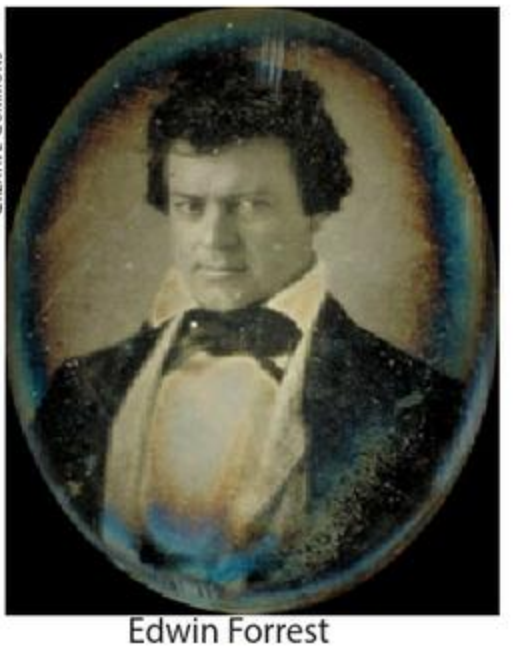
William Charles Macready

Firstly, it should be acknowledged that, other than both being specialist "tragedians," William Charles Macready and Edwin Forrest were to each other as Sylvester Stallone is to Colin Firth; very, very different. Indeed, had they no similarities, these men may never have crossed paths, but as was the practice of the time Macready, being the finest tragic actor in Britain, and Forrest, the finest in America, would each invade the others territory in order to prove their talents internationally and challenge the status of the local star tragedian. Such invasions, rather disappointingly, did not end in some form of organised 'act-off' round the back of a theatre, with the actors involved instead usually maintaining aloof yet polite relations for the duration of a tour. However, during Forrest's second tour of Britain (1845/46), in response to a series of harsh reviews he assumed, based on no evidence, Macready had used his influence to organise, a vengeful Forrest travelled to Edinburgh to, in tremendously theatrical form, hiss Macready's performance of Hamlet. Macready's reaction, "I do not think that such an action has its parallel in all theatrical history! The low minded ruffian!" was taken up by the British press, and Forrest left Britain widely condemned.

Forrest's retreat from a hostile Britain accentuated the actors' difference in nationality, making for a vitriolic reception for Macready when he toured an America marked by a growth in pro-American nativism. At a time when tensions between the ever-growing immigrant population and local nativists were running high, Macready's arrival in 1848 on the back of his alleged ill-treatment of the self-styled, great American actor Forrest invited confrontation. As the Macready/Forrest quarrel became intertwined with issues over immigration, Macready was projected as an agent of foreign rule, a threat to the rights Americans had won as a result of the revolution. On the morning of the riot, famous dime-novelist E. Z. C. Judson, a renowned nativist, beseeched New Yorkers to go to Astor Place, where Macready was due to perform in Macbeth, and make known their opposition to this foreign agent of subversion. Posters urged the public to "decide now whether English aristocrats!! and Foreign Rule! Shall triumph in this America's Metropolis." Such examples of nativist polemic demonstrates that the dispute had clearly gone beyond the intricacies of Shakespearean acting, and that the resulting Astor Place Riot was, in part, the expression of the fact that the Macready/Forrest rivalry had now become a vehicle for nativist discourse over fears of increasing immigration.



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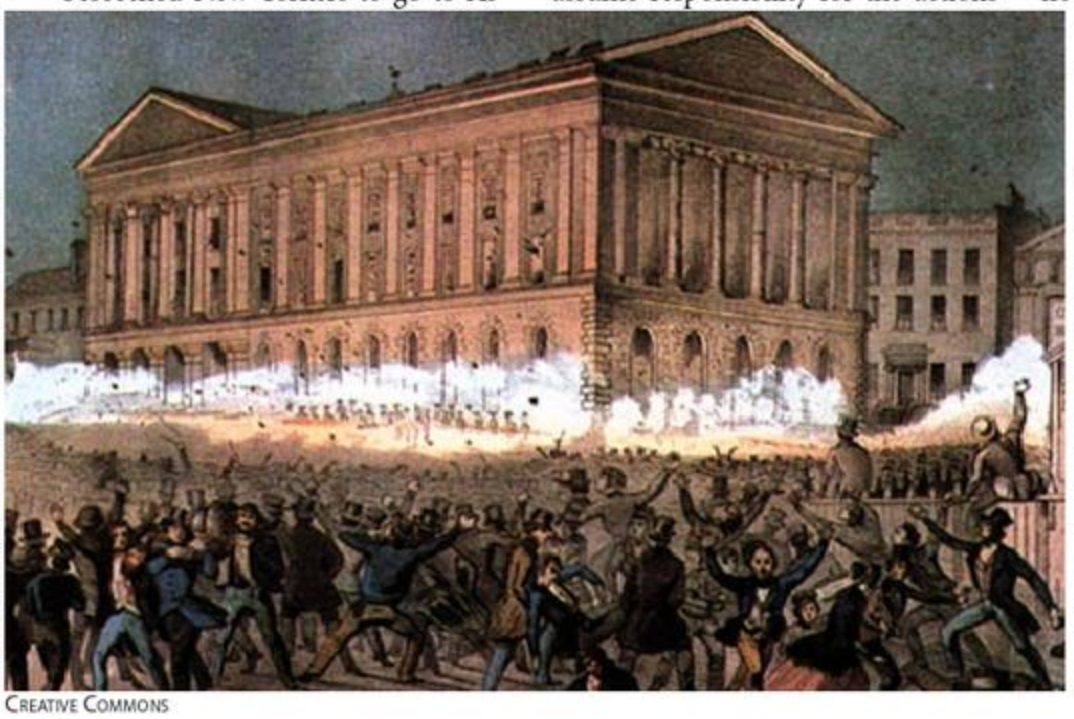
Edwin Forrest

Undoubtedly many in attendance when the riot broke out were fuelled by the chauvinist nationalism characteristic of nativist thought, however to describe the riot as being solely nativist in character would be misleading. The nature of Macready and Forrest's audiences differed markedly. Forrest was known to be a favourite of the working classes, often adopting roles (such as Spartacus) in which resistance to a higher authority were a hallmark, whereas Macready, through his intellectually subtle performances, became associated with a more high-brow audience. Through these associations, Forrest and Macready's rivalry assumed a class dimension. As a result, Macready was now, not only an agent of foreign rule, but an aristocrat made to assume responsibility for the actions of New York's elite.

This notion was perpetuated by the fact that he was performing at the Astor Place Opera House, something of a symbol of the rich New Yorker's attempts to "aristocratize the pit". In spite of the fact that the term "aristocratize the pit" sounds like the tagline to a House of Lords brand deodorant, it refers to the perception had by members of New York's working classes that the city's elite were attempting to make theatre an exclusively upper class cultural outlet. Consequentially, as Macready was scheduled to perform at Astor Place, a venue which had gained infamy amongst the working classes by imposing a strict dress code intended to limit lower class attendance, he stood out as a symbol of affluent attempts at cultural dominance. As a result, many members of New York's working class rallied their support behind Forrest. The riot, during which the state militia opened fire upon unarmed protesters, in light of its supposed class dimension begun to be described by the contemporary working class as an expression of class conflict; the militia having apparently opened fire "to revenge the aristocrats of this city against the working classes." When reporting on the riots, the Philadelphia Public Ledger drew broader conclusions from what they had witnessed during the riot claiming that it provided evidence that "there is now in our country, in New York City, what every good patriot has hitherto considered it his duty to deny – a high class and a low class."



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To suppose that a petty dispute between two men over acting was the root cause of the riot seems naïve. However their dispute inadvertently incited, and became intermingled with, nativist fears and class tensions, providing a theatrical setting for the clash of interests that had become synonymous with their dispute. Although less "A bitter feud between two tragedians," and more **a culmination of social and cultural strains upon New York society, the Astor Place Riot remains the only riot of its kind.**

Academi C Declaration of the Raj

Amber Guinness reflects on the causes of the imfamous Indian Uprising of 1857

The great Indian Uprising of 1857 was an insurgence unparalleled in size and bloodshed in South Asian history. Its causes were varied and numerous, and although the rebellion was not a homogenous movement held together by ideology, all were fighting due to the heavy grievances felt by the entire Indian population, as a result of the maladministration, greed and arrogance of their colonisers. The sub-continent had been subject to the rule of the East India Company for the better past of a century since its defeat of Mughal Emperor Shan Alam II in 1764 and the patience of the Indian people with their foreign rulers had long been waning. Changes that had occurred under the British had left aggrieved all sectors of society and, although many did not know against whom they were taking up arms, they nonetheless felt the weight of colonial rule. The widespread variety of the causes of the rebellion are illustrated by the fact that it translated from a mutiny to a full scale insurgence in which all- whether it be sepoys or civilians, Muslims or Hindus- were united in the common aim of restoring pre-colonial rule.

Mutiny and civil unrest under the British were certainly no new phenomena; armed opposition had been rife throughout India between 1860 and1880, representing the general discontent of the Indian populous with the way they were being governed. There was for instance much unrest from nomadic communities who had been consistently persecuted by the British. The nomadic revolt of the Shantals in 1855 resulted in the British killing 10,000 tribal people in order to restore peace. Banditry, which had been described as "endemic" in this period, was also a huge problem for the East India Company. The British felt threatened by what they saw as the criminal propensities of the nomadic tribes and so retaliated with brute force. The main perpetrators of this threat were the Thuggee bandits, who were prevalent in the years before 1857. The British portrayed them as a religiously inspired group of criminals when in fact it would be more accurate to describe their activities as a form of guerrilla warfare against the British, given that they almost exclusively targeted Company sepoys. The varied and numerous forms of opposition throughout the early nineteenth century suggest that the British administration was leaving much to be desired in the eyes of the Indian people.

> 'The Indian aristocracy played a large role in the uprising, having been humiliated by British reforms'

The sparks that set off the bloody events of 1857 are to be found in the grievances of the East India Company Indian soldiers or sepoys. Tension had been steadily increasing in the years leading up to the revolt, the divide between British officers and embittered sepoy soldiery becoming ever wider, culminating in the mutiny of the Bengal Army in May 1857 marking the start of the rebellion. Resentment among the Sepoys had been mounting since 1856with the instalment of the deeply unpopular General Service Enlistment Act. This demanded that the men state their readiness to serve overseas, it had previously been the right the right of the sepoy armies not to travel abroad, due to the inevitable polluting contact with foreigners which would lead to loss of caste.

They were also discontented at the loss of the additional allowance they had been awarded if they fought beyond the border of their own presidencies of Bengal, Bombay or Madras. The Governor General declared that the allowance was no longer valid as the Company now controlled two thirds of the subcontinent. At the time, British officials did not focus on these perfectly valid reasons for discontent among the ranks, preferring to blame the mutiny on the now notorious uproar over the cartridges of the new Enfield Rifled Musket. These cartridges, which the men had to bite before firing, were said to have been greased in cow and pig fat, a fact that obviously hit upon the religious sensibilities of both the Hindu and Muslim contingents of the sepoy army; cows being held sacred to those of Hindu faith and pigs polluting to those of Islam. Not only was this seen by the men as a gross infringement upon their religious practices but also represented a deeper-set mistrust of the British who were suspected wanting to convert the subcontinent to Christianity.

The uproar over the cartridges was however overplayed by the British, it provided them with a convenient scapegoat as they could put the mutiny down to religious hysteria rather than to their own maladministration. Moreover, the tensions over this issue were confined to the northern Bengal army, the Bombay and Madras ones not following suit, suggesting that it was not that great an outrage among the majority of the Company troops. This point is strengthened when reviewing the fact that all Sepoy misgivings about what the cartridges were greased with seemed to disappear completely once the mutiny began.

The situation swiftly degenerated into general insurgence and the difference between mutineers and civilian rebels became indiscernible. The East India Company had, through their consolidation of power, thoroughly alienated the subcontinent, having "violated all that was held sacred and dear by the people of India".

The Indian aristocracy played a large role in the Uprising, having been left feeling humiliated following British reforms. The Doctrine of Lapse was a particular cause for grievance among the bejewelled Maharaja's and Rani's of Northern India as it stated that the British could annex any principality in which no legitimate heir had been left or in which there was any dispute over succession. This effectively allowed the British to expand into new territories from which they could collect taxes and further their control over the subcontinent without their armies having to be tied up in any actual fighting.

The annexation of Awadh in 1856 under the doctrine was particularly shocking as the region had been a faithful ally to the Company. This policy naturally caused a deep-rooted resentment and mistrust of the British among the aristocracy as many had lost their lands or were terrified that they might. The Doctrine also strengthened the belief that the Company were denying Indian culture as it negated the traditional hereditary practice of adopting male heirs. This British interference in such long-standing practices was to cause them much trouble in the coming rebellion.

The Rani of Jhansi for instance, who became a rebel leader during the Uprising fought fiercely against the British. From March 1858 she rallied troops and fought until she was killed at the final battle of the Rebellion at Gwalior in June. She had originally been prepared to recognise British domination provided they recognised her adopted son as her successor.

The Rani of Jhansi is but one example of how the discourteous and humiliating treatment by the British of the aristocracy in northern India had, quite understandably, driven them to take up arms for pre-colonial orof the aristocracy in northern India had, quite understandably, driven them to take up arms for pre-colonial order.

Aside from the displaced aristocracy, British rule was deeply damaging for ordinary Indians and, although many were not aware of who was causing these detrimental social changes, many longed for how things had once been. Utilitarian influences upon the British administration and the idea of governing on the basis of what is best for the greatest number of people led to the Indians being still further burdened at the expense of their colonisers, particularly as, in reality this idea was only geared toward what was best for the British.

The main grievance of India's rural population was increased land tax, which had gone up by seventy per cent between 1819 and 1856. The inflexible means by which the British collected taxes were also unpopular and led to widespread rural displacement. Under the Mughals if someone fell into arrears, they might be threatened but in the end an agreement would be come to, while this was far less likely under the British given that a collector's advancement in their work was directly linked to the revenue they raised.

A European system of courts had been set up in which anyone who failed to pay their taxes would be tried and have their land taken away if they could not pay the outstanding amount. This inflexibility was seen as a bizarre and illegitimate way of doing things and unsurprisingly caused discontent and a desire for this foreign interference to be gone and for the restoration of the pre-colonial system.

There was also much urban dissatisfaction due to the British monopoly upon the economy. Skilled weavers could not compete with the inferior cloths from Britain that were sold at a fraction of the price. The Indian market was flooded with cheaper European goods meaning merchants across the board couldn't compete, causing widespread urban unemployment.

The perceived threat to Indian religions was a huge contributor to the causes of the 1857 uprising. The British were reforming and changing aspects of Indian culture, an example of this being the abolition of Suttee-widow burning. Such reforms were motivated by what was felt to be 'reason' on the part of the British but this interference was interpreted by Indian people as an attempt to undermine the religions of the subcontinent.

It has been pointed out by various historians that many rebels were fighting to protect their faith, one of their cries being "The rebellion began with religion". One such argument put forward by scholars of this period has been that the main motivation of the rebels, was to totally remove British presence so as to remove a huge contaminating force in India. They wished to uphold religious purity and with this intention to "wipe out all traces of Europeans and foreign rule".

The British were able eventually to quash the rebellion. Under the directives of Governor-General 'Clemency Canning', amnesty was granted to all those who gave themselves up, with this policy they were able to pacify a large proportion of the remaining rebel forces. The atrocities committed during the great Indian Uprising by both the British and Indians were numerous, and while the British might have come out victors they were forced very seriously to rethink the way that India had been being run and regulate the policies which had been the cause of so much resentment and discontent.

Once the order had been restored it was clear to the British Government that responsibility for India had to be taken and that a country cannot be efficiently governed by a commercial enterprise such as the East India Company. The Company's power over the subcontinent was dissolved and it sank from being one of the most profitable components of the British economy and powerful territorial coloniser to being £50 million in debt. This was mostly owed to the Crown for the deployment of British troops to restore order in the subcontinent. India came under the official rule of the British Crown in 1858 with the passing of the Government of India Act. Having learned from the errors that the Company had made, a more systematic approach was taken with regard to the organisation of Britain's new colony and a new more circumspect approach taken towards Indian traditions. There was now an awareness both in the India Office in London and among those British in the subcontinent of not disturbing the 'native' customs. As a result of this an era of reform was embarked upon with a wave of new legislation designed to placate the rural and urban classes and to appease and flatter the aristocracy.

The legacies left by the events of 1857 were varying. The myth of the Rebellion was to be a legacy of great importance as it would later fuel many Indian nationalist movements calling for independence. However, the first and perhaps most significant legacy of the Great Indian Uprising was the official instalment of British Raj in the sub-continent and the declaration of the Empire, from which India would not become independent until 1947.

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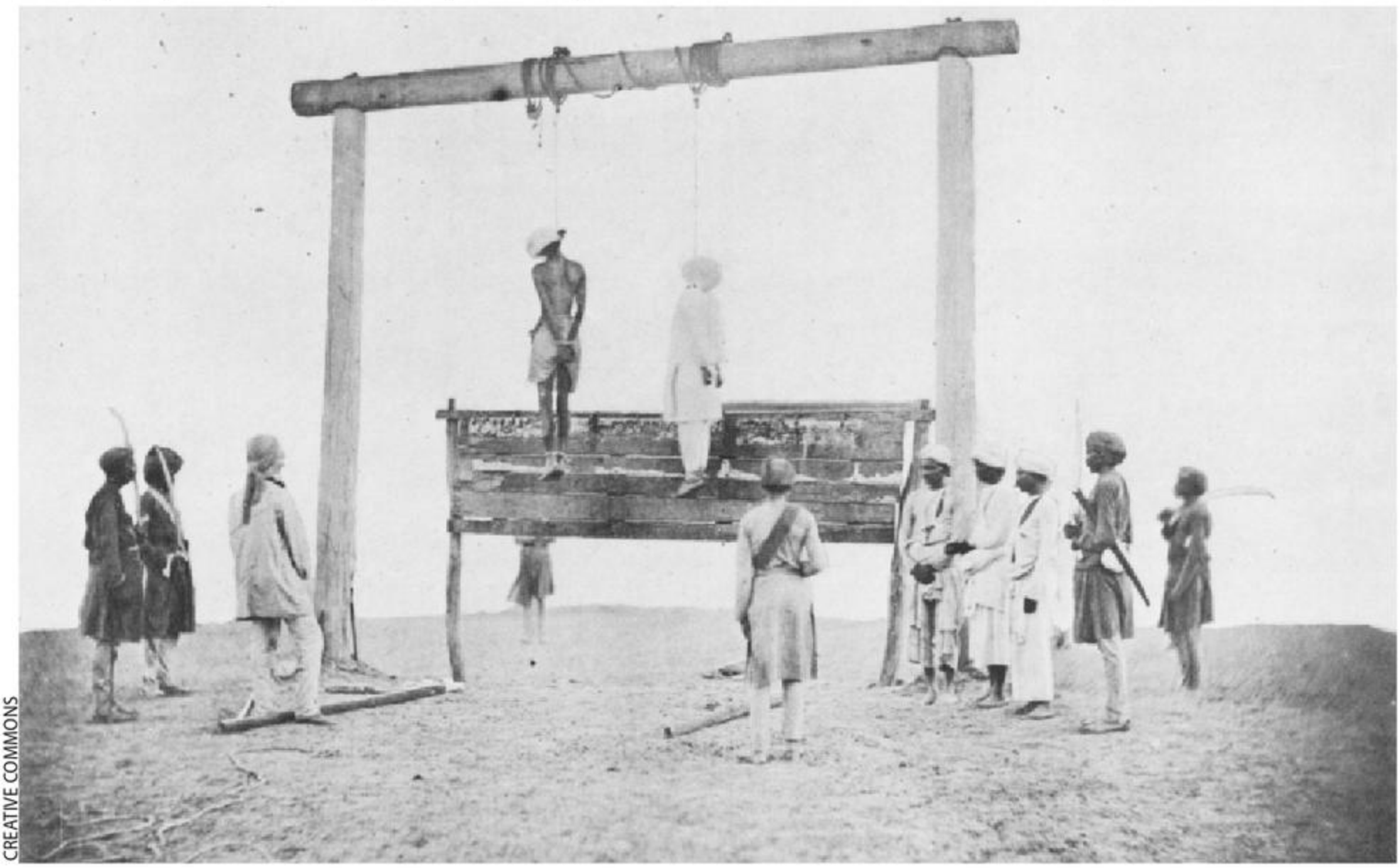

CREATIVE COMMONS

Fear is a concept implicit in riots. This can be read on two levels: the first, and most simple, is fear of the riots themselves; the second is a multi-faceted fear of political circumstances – both those that incite such widespread dissatisfaction and the imagined carnage that might follow if rioters achieved their aims. There are, then, questions to be asked about the extent to which these fears are justified. Are they imaginary or is there something tangible to be feared in riots?

On a basic, immediate level, certainly, but in a broader sense the fear is arguably created: by governments or institutions of civil control, perhaps, in the hope of dissuading riots. Before the student marches in London on November 9 this year, the government attempted to incite fear by threatening the use of rounds of rubber bullets and a huge police presence. A huge historical precedent exists for this. Nowhere is the idea of imagined fear more tangible than when examining British responses to the French Revolution of the 1790s.

The French example was seen – in loyalist circles – as a threat to Britain. This, however, was about more than the practical threat of invasion. The revolution represented that change was possible and that, should it happen, it could be violent, sudden, and blood-thirsty. Sources suggest that the government were, if not terrified, definitely on guard and keen to both promote loyalty and portray the potential rioters in a negative manner to dissuade people from joining their ranks.

They became exceptionally sensitive to treason. Thus in this period we see a suggestion from the government that the king should be venerated as a symbol of Britain: this is wonderfully and crudely illustrated in the prodigal young satirist Richard Newton's Treason!!! (1792). Here, a cheeky John Bull farts in the face of the king – the latter in a wig, the former both wig- and trouser-less (as Diana Donald points out in The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III, he is 'a sans-culotte in both the political and physical senses'). Prime Minister William Pitt shouts, somewhat hysterically, "That is Treason, Johnny", a reference to both the law that defined treason as 'to compass or imagine the death of our Lord the King' and the threat that the sans-culottes – implicitly French – specifically posed to British nationality.

From a slightly different perspective, prints also show the problems caused to Bull – for whom we should of course read the typical British man – by the French Revolution. On the surface these prints are critiques of the government's war policy, but we can also infer suggestions that British nationality is being compromised by events in France, whether because of economic reasons or new sedition laws – passed, arguably, in an attempt to keep Britain from rioting and revolting in the French manner. The former is illustrated by an unknown artist's Billys Hobby Horse or John Bull Loaded with Mischief (1795) which shows Pitt riding Bull and whipping him with war, tax, oppression and monopoly. Bull is still a threat despite Pitt being in charge here – we are given the impression that he is big and strong enough to throw Pitt off his back if, perhaps, he had some support. Lucky for the government, then, that Pitt is directing Bull away from the crowd at 'St Georgs Fields': a reference to the meeting of the radical London Corresponding Society on 29th June 1795.

'Visual motifs are often needed to create a sense of unity - whether in a positive or negative sense'

Who were these radicals that were such a threat, though? Visual motifs are often needed to create a sense of unity – whether in a positive or negative sense – and in this period, French sympathisers in Britain could be identified by their lack of wig (in France, they were closely linked to the old, and now rather dead, monarchy – so not wearing one was could represent a desire for self-preservation as well as visual articulation of political sentiments). This provided an obvious motif for satirists to add to their visual language. Thus, in Newton's Wigs all the rage, or a debate on the baldness of the times we see a debating club full of men and women who have removed their wigs (the sign on the wall informs us 'It is the sincere wish of the proprietors of this Institution, that Gentlemen and Ladies will be UNCOVERED on this important Occasion'). In the foreground, however, one man sits with his hair very much in place and his hands on his lap, showing that he was not wearing a wig in the first place.

CREATIVE COMMONS

Anna Feintuck explores British representations of radicalism and potential rioters in the 18th Century

In appearance, from facial features to his high-collared jacket and white neck tie, he closely resembles portraits of John Thelwall, the British writer and orator, whose style was typical for radicals of the time – as shown, for example, in similar portraits of. Horne Tooke and Thomas Hardy, who were prosecuted along with Thelwall in 1794 on charges of sedition. Here, radicals are shown as the minority – one man in a packed room – and as being slightly out of place: the crowd is fairly raucous, gesticulating and shouting, whereas he sits demurely. It is being suggested, perhaps, that debate is a relatively safe platform for views to be shared, even radical ones – there is no hint that a riot may break out. The debaters are confined and, bare-headed, they are perhaps exposed and vulnerable. But of course, it is the ideas being exchanged that are dangerous, not the immediate physical environment.

With there being a complex relationship between signifiers of French style, revolution and riots, and British fear, representations of contemporary politicians can be revealing of where it was felt the threat was coming from. Thus we see Charles James Fox - notorious for his sympathetic view on the French Revolution - dressed in what is a recognisably French style in a number of prints, for example Newton's Opening the Ambassador's Ball in Paris and Dent's French Ambassador executed by citizen [picture of a fox]. His pro-French feelings are clearly being ridiculed in these prints, yet he is portrayed more in the style of the French court than the ragged, dangerous sans-culottes that we see in James Gillray's Un petit Souper a la Parisienne: - or – a Family of Sans Cullotts refreshing after the fatigues of the day with whom the artists presumably wished to associate him.

It was the anarchy of the sans-culottes – shown in the latter print as almost inhuman in their violence – that the British government really feared, yet from the first two prints it would be easy to deduce that it would be enough to be merely associated with France, regardless of its government – the association being reinforced by Fox's grand wig – to be seen as being anti-British and thus dangerous.

The perceived threat of riots is finally made tangible in Newton's A Bugaboo!!! (1792). This print shows Pitt riding George III, who shouts about "Spies! . . . Dungeons! . . . Tortures!" and threatens that the storming of the Bastille may soon find its British equivalents in Spa Fields, Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester. Vic Gatrell suggested in his 2006 work, City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London, that this print is a comment on Pitt's exploitation of British fears about French anarchy in order to keep potential sedition under control. In addition to this, it seems clear that this print also implies that the monarchy is just a symbol of Britain to be used as a tool for proclaiming the government's messages. Viewed in conjunction with James Gillray's Promis'd horrors of the French invasion, or Forcible reasons for negotiating a regicide peace (1796), the picture becomes clearer.

Promis'd Horrors is a comment, again, on the government's fear-mongering about the potential of a French invasion: the ultimate threat. Fox, wigless and scruffy, flays Pitt, who is tied to a pole with a Cap of Liberty prominently displayed upon it. Interestingly, Pitt has managed to keep his wig on despite losing his shirt. Grotesque French troops march down the streets amidst a scene of complete carnage: heads are, quite literally, rolling. The first deduction we can make is that Fox and his ilk, stylistically so closely linked with the French, did pose a real threat to the government – who ultimately clearly feared carnage on the streets, whether through French invasion or British rioting. It is also interesting to question whether this reinforced existing ties between British radicals and their French counterparts, or did as the government hoped and frightened people into supporting the loyalist cause.

Of course, it is important to note the fact that the government largely let graphic satirists do their work unprosecuted. In a period where many radicals faced court trials for writing seditious works, this suggests that a popular – and acceptable – attitude was being portrayed.

To conclude, then, it is clear that riots are surrounded by fear mongering. This can be multi-faceted and powerful – as illustrated here by the work of graphic satirists – or laughably simple, as in the case of our current government's message, which could be read as "riot and we will hurt you." Whether fear actually has any impact on people's actions is debateable: those that really want to riot tend to do so anyway. Their reasons and eventual effects may vary enormously, but a desire to resist attempts to frighten them away from self-expression is

Politics in the Punjab

Thomas Monaghan explores the relationship between national policy and Sikh communal violence

The Punjab region of northwest India is a frontier state with a long history of invasion, conflict and martial heroics. It also happens to be the homeland of one of India's most distinctive religious groups, the Sikhs. Upon the partition of British India in 1947, the Punjab witnessed unprecedented mass migration and human suffering. Presented with a choice between India and Pakistan, the Sikhs invested their future in the professedly secular India.

However, from the late 1970's moderate demands for regional autonomy transformed into a secessionist Sikh militancy, the violence of which shook the stability of the Indian state. The reasons for this violence were at the time attributed to communal antagonism by Sikh extremists. In fact, this disguises the real issue of centre-state relations in modern India. Communalism simply inflamed the tensions produced by years of centralisation, economic and social upheavals and political machinations in the Punjab.

On the one hand, Sikh communalism is an obvious explanation of political violence in the early 1980's. The militancy centred on the charismatic figure of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who entered Punjabi politics in the late 1970's as an extremist spokesperson. He demanded an independent Sikh state of Khalistan, but his appeal also arose from his anti-heretical stance towards a new religious sect, the Nirankari, which tied in with his exhortations to purify Sikhism. His followers, mostly students and unemployed young men, directed vicious attacks against policeman and minorities.

This includes a notorious incident in 1983 when an interstate bus was held up and its Hindu passengers taken out and murdered. Bhindranwale had a radicalising effect on mainstream Sikh politics, sending the traditional Akali Dal party further away from cooperating with the Congress-controlled centre and charging the political atmosphere with fanatical, communalist rhetoric. Sikh fundamentalism also prompted a Hindu communal backlash in the formation of the 'Hindu Protection League'. Police repression was translated by Sikhs into minority persecution directed from a Hindu centre.

The army's storming of the Amritsar Golden Temple, Sikhism's holiest sanctuary, in 1984 was avenged with the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards. This then sparked communal riots across cities in India, especially in Delhi. The perpetrators were mostly Hindu mobs (with the complicity of the Congress government), their unequivocal target was the Sikh community, and they left behind at least three thousand victims. It is easy to view these events as a spiraling of communal tensions between religious communities.

However, the communal argument leaves too many unanswered questions and its flaws suggest that a deeper analysis of the situation is required. For a start, the evidence suggests that Bhindranwale was a political creation introduced into Punjabi politics from outside, rather than arising naturally from a communally charged background. Investigations have made apparent that Congress party politicians supported Bhindranwale and used him as a tool to undermine Congress' electoral rival, the Akali Dal party, and justify oppressive security policies against the Sikh community. Furthermore, at their inception Sikh demands were not communally based. The demands for a reconfigured Punjabi state in the 1950's were based on linguistic, not communal arguments. The famous Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973 framed Punjabi politics for the next decade. It demanded greater autonomy from the centre, but was never an explicitly communal statement.

Drawing on a tradition of harmony with other religious groups, especially Hindus, Sikhs included them in original proposals as equal citizens of a Punjabi-speaking community. It is also worth suggesting that the terrible sacrifices of Partition reinforced the Sikhs' investment in India's secular vision.

The Punjab had already witnessed the worst consequences of communalism in the creation of Pakistan. Its people were not inclined to repeat the experience. All this strong evidence suggests there are deeper arguments behind the political violence. Communalism is not merely an insufficient explanation, but possibly also a deceit. By the 1980's, there was intense animosity between Punjabi Sikhs and the government in Delhi. This had grown on account of the

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government's misguided stance towards the region, characterised by a mixture of neglect for Punjabi demands, overbearing centralization, and resource exploitation. This stance is most clearly manifest in the political bearing of Indira Gandhi, her Congress (I) party and the implications of Indian agriculture's 'Green Revolution'.

Despite the strategic and economic importance of the Punjab region, the centre curiously neglected the inchoate agitation of Punjabis for state reconfiguration. Neglected, these demands were able to maintain support and lay foundations for future conflict. The government passed over the Punjab in its linguistic reconfiguration of state boundaries in 1956 because it offensively considered the Punjabi language, despite its distinct Gurmukhi script, too similar to Hindi. When a Punjabi state was finally forged in 1966 as a reward for Sikh involvement in the recent war with Pakistan, it was based anachronistically on a 1961 Census which emphasised communal identity. It also excluded the city of Chandigarh, an important hub for the region. The central government had not only neglected Punjabi demands but had erroneously redefined those demands as communally based when in fact they were based on linguistic identity.

The agricultural policies in the Punjab played a significant role in creating distrust with the central government. In both its implementation and consequences the Green Revolution caused upheaval in the Punjab and created conditions ripe for anti-government mobilisation. The policy epitomises the dynamic of a nation-state, wedded to an idea of technocratic modernisation, carelessly imposing a national plan onto one of its regions. Hailed as a 'miracle', the Green Revolution was a worldwide modernisation of agriculture driven by new seed varieties and intensive chemical usage. In India it swept most visibly through the Punjab, turning the region into a proverbial breadbasket for the country's cities. However, as the scientist Vandana Shiva has pointed out, its consequences for the region were hardly short of catastrophic. Punjabi farmers had centuries of successful agricultural expertise based on crop diversity and careful management of their particular ecosystem. The Revolution recklessly replaced this with monoculture and new seeds enhanced by scientists in North America. These were input-intensive, which put strain on water resources, eroded the soil with chemicals and put farmers under financial pressure. Not only did this add to centre-state tensions but it also created a discontent underclass which could be mobilised, especially by communal arguments.

The Punjab, its name literally meaning 'five rivers', had already had to deal with water disputes when the new agricultural changes raised the stakes. These changes also required the government to complete 'megaprojects' such as dams and irrigation works. Power over resources and farming practice, looked after by Punjabi farmers for centuries, was suddenly wrenched towards the central government. Worse still for the farmers, the mismanaged projects seemed to exploit the Punjab's resources in favour of cities in other parts of India. Oversupply caused prices to decrease and profit margins to suffer. When the disruptive cultural effects of modernisation are added in, to many Punjabis the Green Revolution was a threat to their way of life, prosperity and their autonomous traditions.

> 'Bhindranwale had a radicalising effect on mainstream Sikh politics, sending the traditional Akali Dal party further away from cooperating with the Congress-controlled centre'

Secondly, only rich farmers could afford the necessary inputs of chemicals and fertiliser. This accentuated a rich-poor class divide. It forced smaller farmers to join the growing number of unemployed in the cities. Here they could be mobilised by students, equally frustrated with the government's reluctance to develop industry and therefore employment in the region. This group provided a loyal supply of militants for the extremist movement.

Punjabi fears of the further centralisation of power were confirmed after Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister in 1966. An overbearing figure in Indian politics for almost two decades, Mrs. Gandhi's style of governing was authoritarian, personalist, and increasingly paranoid. She dismissed the rather moderate Anandpur Sahib Resolution for greater Punjab autonomy as unacceptably secessionist, which just encouraged Punjabis to try more radical means to get their demands heard. Largely on account of her influence, by the time of her return to power in 1980 Indian politics had become corrupt, opportunistic, and mistrusted. Harsh repression was her characteristic response to Sikh agitation. The stories of police brutality endured by even moderate members of the Sikh community are shocking. By the 1980's Sikhs and the central government were openly at war, and Indira personified the autocratic federal state.

However, even by the late 1970's, the trust necessary for harmony between India's distinctive regions and central government was dangerously weak in the Punjab. It was this context into which communalism was injected, and the culpability for this dangerous action lies with unprincipled Congress and Akali political machinations. As has already been suggested above, Bhindranwale was a tool in Congress' unacknowledged policy of fomenting communalism in the Punjab. The purpose of this was to split support for the Akali Dal party, but also possibly to divert attention from the socio-economic and federalist origins of the region's problems. The intransigent structural grievances could only be solved if the centre gave up some of its power. Rather than this, it tried to cover up the issues by defining them as communal. This policy was dangerous, unpredictable, and would lead to an escalation of violence. However, as long as it diverted attention from the real problems of the Indian state it was useful for the Congress politicians. The Akali Dal, for their own part, went along with this deceit and refused, or perhaps was unable due to internal divisions, to bring the argument back to reasonable grounds. Supporting this argument, it is being increasingly accepted in India today that the mobs which roamed through Delhi seeking and murdering Sikhs were permitted, even supported and prepared by certain elements of the Congress party. Given the state of Indian politics at this time, this is perhaps not as surprising as it should be.

In its appeal to religious identity, communalism had the power to unify Sikhs against an overbearing Hindu 'other'. Once this simple dichotomy had been constructed, the aggravations caused by decades of complex political, economic and social processes could be distilled into one coherent narrative. This narrative could then appeal to Sikh martial tradition to legitimise, for moderates, the actions of extremists. Secondly, it meant that continued police repression had the effect of reinforcing support for the Sikh militancy. Therefore, once communal arguments were established, they came to dominate debate and quickly escalated the situation. The Sikhs believed they were at war, that they were fighting an existential threat against their identity, and that this war fitted in with the long, distinguished tradition of Sikh martial glory.

In her contemporary interviews with Sikh militants, the anthropologist Cynthia Mahmood offers a glimpse into the mindset which turns to religious violence. Invariably, it seems to arise when strong identification within a religious group combines with a sense of injustice. In the case of Sikh militancy, the savagery of the violence was only matched by the Hindu mob's reaction after Indira Gandhi's assassination. It is difficult for us to understand the mentality of the Hindu mob or Sikh assassin. An exclusively communal explanation is convenient but neglects the underlying pressures, built up over decades of upheaval, of which the violence was an expression.

Despite an accord signed by the new Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1985, Sikh militancy continued into the early 1990's as it was often backed by elements of the community's considerable foreign diaspora. After exhaustive police repression and political compromise, the situation in the Punjab today is peaceful. India's Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, is himself a Sikh. This is testament to the durability of India's democracy. However, the Punjab episode disturbingly reveals the very undemocratic processes involved in sustaining this democracy.

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voked a greater response than there would have been otherwise." The rioting finally stopped around 3:30 in the morning. The next night a similar riot occurred when police attempted to stop people from gathering at the inn.

> 'Before Stonewall gay rights was a movement. After Stonewall it was a revolution'

Three major differences from previous police raids led to the riots the night of June 28th. The crowd at Stonewall was from a younger generation than those that advocated blending in with "normal" society. They were just another symptom of the greater conflict between older values and new within the society of 1960s America. Indeed, many were inspired by the antiwar protests against the conflict in Vietnam.

Young people had demonstrated great leadership across the country; from the first major protest in Time square 1964 to the 1968 boycott of classes by over a million students. The African-American civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King had also shown what an oppressed minority could do when they gathered together. The young people at the Stonewall Inn fought for their last home. The young gay culture had been driven into Greenwich Village from the rest of New York.

In the 1960's the village was poor, full of immigrants, and organized crime. The mafia bars were the only place to accept the ostracized transvestite culture and flagrant gay behavior of the young people. The mafia who ran bars like the Stonewall Inn only cared about profits. Homosexuals were usually safe there because of the payoffs the mob made to the police. With this last bastion of safety under attack the homosexuals felt they had nothing to lose, a feeling in humans usually followed by lashing out.

They were angry at being driven to bars run by criminals. Morty Manford, a young rioter summed up his feelings: "For me there was a slight lancing of the festering wound of anger that had been building for so long over this kind of unfair harassment and prejudice…Because of the system of official discrimination on the part of state liquor authorities and the corruption of the local police authorities, these [the Mob run bars] were the only kind of bars that were permitted to serve a gay clientele."

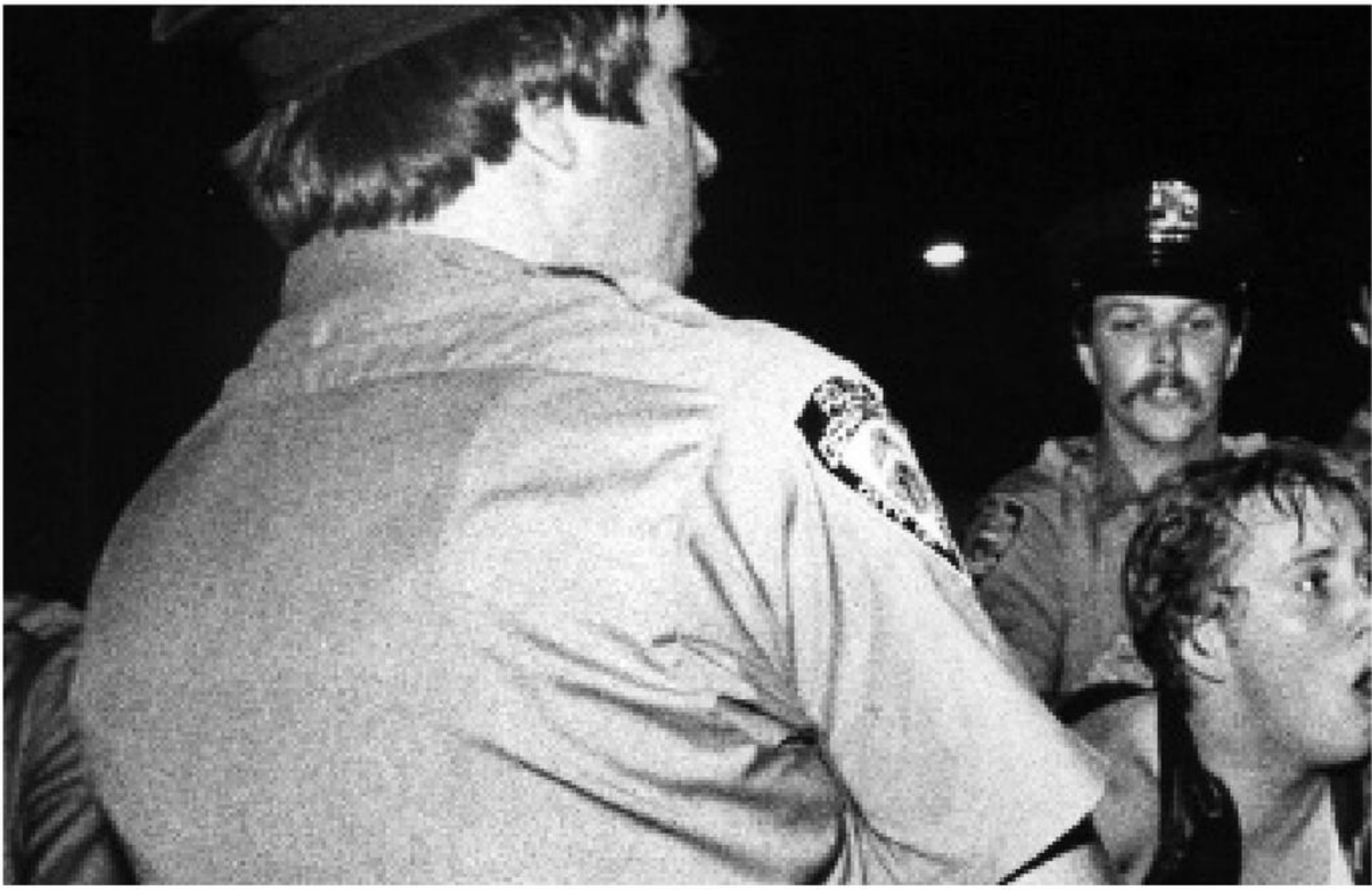
Furthermore the lower class immigrant nature of Greenwich Village had already lead to fights between poor immigrants trying to build a new neighborhood, and the rich hippies, druggies, and homosexuals fleeing the judgmental gaze of society.

Stonewall caused long term changes in the gay rights movement. The riots were a symptom of a rising confidence amongst homosexuals that they deserved a place seen by and part of wider society, not one hidden away from view. The acceptance of transvestites into the gay rights movement was the most important change after Stonewall. Again this was just a small part of a larger movement away from caring what society at large thought. A broadsheet distributed in New York a few months later read: "Do you think homosexuals are revolting? You bet your sweet ass we are."

Stonewall as an event can be seen as merely another step in the developing idea of protest, moving at a quicker pace than ever before in 1960s America. Even now this process continues in the Occupy Wall Street movement. As a symbol, though, Stonewall claimed a special place in the gay rights movement's history. Now people say the movement for equal rights began at Stonewall. The riots were the first fight in the gay rights movements to be marked with a memorial and yearly parades which adds to its status. A younger more militant movement was born: one that is still struggling to win equality for those that stood up against the majority.

Are Homosexuals Rev
You Bet Your Swe

Edward Meyers recounts the Stonewall Riots of1969 and the continuing significance of that fateful night



The mob ripped a parking meter out of the ground as a battering ram against the bar door. Bricks crashed through boarded up windows as 600 oppressed people attacked the ten representatives of the police force who had persecuted them for years. Unprepared for the homosexuals, who had acquiesced to previous raids with a bovine acceptance, this demonstration caught police by surprise. The mob swept away previous notions of how homosexuals should seek redress as they surged towards their oppressors.

The flood gates of frustration opened and allowed a more vibrant homosexual movement to be born in the United States. The Stonewall riots in the early morning of June 28, 1969 were a turning point in the gay rights movement. The old guard who tried to present homosexuality as something that could be kept out of the public eye lost control of the movement. The transvestite cause came to be seen as a part of the gay rights movement. A larger media portrayal spread the message of gay liberation across the United States. Before Stonewall gay rights was a movement, after Stonewall it was a revolution.

The gay rights movement before Stonewall focused on conformity with American society. The two largest groups in the earlier movement, the Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), both sought to convince the public that homosexuality could exist without disturbing society's conscious. By 1961, the two groups combined membership was less than 400. Early demonstrations by the movement in the 1960's consisted of less than 50 people, and sometimes as few as ten. Police picked people up in gay bars by arresting them for solicitation and lewd behavior.

One man was arrested after reaching for cigarettes stored in his shoe: the arresting officer accused him of groping the man next to him at the bar. Major newspapers would print the names of people arrested for "gay" behavior, supporting the gay rights movement, or being transvestites each morning on the front page. The lives of people who appeared on the lists of homosexuals were ruined; they would lose their job, their friends, their flat, and their family.

Hal Call was a legal advisor to the Mattachine Society and he described the early goals of the homosexual movement. "We knew that if we were going to get along in society, we were going to have to stay in step with the existing and predominant mores and customs of our society and not stand out as sore thumbs too much because we didn't have the strength of tissue paper to defend ourselves." The Mattachine Society and DOB lacked the numbers to make an impression because of a culture of fear and disgust which made most homosexuals hide their homosexuality.

They distanced themselves from the transvestites because they were noticeable, and in this time a woman wearing pants was grounds for arrest, so transvestites clashed with the organizations' efforts to hide among society. This strategy favored the older wealthier members of the homosexual community who could indulge their tastes in private and would cause tension with the younger generation.

The Stonewall riots were a radical departure from the earlier actions of the gay rights movement. The cops entered the bar expecting to just calmly arrest all the homosexuals who had made the Stonewall inn their place. As they sorted out the transvestites, bouncers, and bar tenders from the normal clients people began to refuse to show I.D.

The frustrated cops decided to take everyone but they had to wait for the vehicles to transport the prisoners which were late. The crowd began to throw coins, and then burning trashcans through the windows of the inn. The Tactical Police Force (TPF) attempted to rescue the besieged cops inside the inn. One witness credited the TPF with stirring up the crowd. "Who knows whether the violence would have escalated in the way that it did if the TPF had not come in?...Chasing after people and hitting them with their billy clubs, I think, pro-

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Fishmongers' Sons and Radical Lawyers

Colin Tribble reveals the often overlooked Neapolitan uprising against Spanish Habsburg rule

One of the less studied but intriguing riots of the early modern period is that of Masaniello in Naples in 1647. It is an incredible story often characterized as a tragedy of the people, and indeed the entire event seems to play out like a drama: the principle character Masaniello is first crowned Generalissimo del Popolo, and then only nine days later, killed and dragged through the streets by the very same mob who had crowned him. Most historical work on this rebellion deal primarily with two figures: Masaniello, a poor fishmonger's son from Naples, and the radical lawyer Genoino.

The accounts chart Masaniello's rise and fall, seeing him as a leader of the people quickly corrupted by his position of power. Genoino provides a political direction to the riot, and in most narratives he is seen as a puppet master. What exactly were the roles of these two figures in bringing about civil unrest? Was there a deeper causality involved that escaped contemporary commentators? Those are the questions that this article seeks to answer.

Naples in the seventeenth century had a massive population by early modern standards –over 300,000 – and had been under Castilian rule for about a century. Under this system the Neapolitan Signoria, along with a well-established mercantile class, enjoyed a virtual monopoly on the government. This entente between the viceroy and the baronage of Naples excluded the popolo minuto and a growing middle class of artisans and lawyers.

The political apparatus in Naples gave almost absolute authority to the Barons in so far as out of the five members of the chief governing council, four of them were from the aristocracy whilst only the fifth came from the Seggio del popolo (people's assembly). Furthermore four members constituted a quorum, and thus the fifth was not needed for binding decisions. Essentially 300,000 people in Naples were deprived of political representation.

The baronial elite of Naples used this position to their advantage. By extracting heavy taxes from the rural peasantry, and indulging in, or turning a blind eye to grain speculation the barons had entirely alienated their vassals. The third estate had no traditional recourse to justice through the royal government because the Spanish Crown was largely unwilling to interfere if it resulted in the loss of a cooperative baronial class.

Embroiled in the Thirty Years War, the Spanish Crown was solely interested in extracting as much tax revenue as they could from their dominions. This especially became a priority as the human and capital resources of Castile dried up and the flow of precious metals from the Americas began to slow at the very moment that the Spanish needed to maximize their military efforts. By the mid-seventeenth century the situation had deteriorated. The harsh conditions imposed on the peasants had created an atmosphere rampant with bandits and vagabonds. Daily, poor folk arrived in the city of Naples, hoping to find work or food, and increasing the already overcrowded population of the city.

These then can be seen as the preconditions of the riot. It is useful to separate them from the triggers, a more specific sequence of events that led up to the unrest itself. This sequence inevitably involves Masaniello, the identified leader of the riot. Before delving into Masaniello's story though, it is important to look at the other most prominent figure: Genoino. Genoino's direct connection to Masaniello prior to the riot cannot be corroborated by the historical record, yet nearly every contemporary witness was convinced of his involvement. A discussion of him is important because it further highlights the division caused by the baronial hegemony. In understanding the causality of the riot, I argue that Genoino should be seen as evidence of the preconditions rather than

as the trigger.

Giulio Genoino was a middle class lawyer born in 1567 in the small town of Cave de' Terrini, northwest of Salerno. He graduated from the University of Naples with a degree in law where he was subsequently offered a place in the Collegio dei Dottori. From this position he was able to level complaints against the inequalities in Naples, and thus Genoino quickly developed a reputation as a progressive champion of the people.

It was this reputation that in 1619 drew him to the attention Don Pedro Telléz-Giron, Duke of Osuna and Viceroy of Naples from 1616-1620. His policy was to divide and rule, and thus he needed a strong voice to act against the hegemony of barons. As a representative on the supreme council, Genoino could act as a bulwark against the oppressiveness of the other members. When the Duke of Osuna was recalled in 1620, Genoino as well departed for Madrid, planning to voice his grievances directly to the Crown.

Genoino's ideas had already caused some level of hostility in Naples, so much so that when he departed in 1620 he went disguised as a sailor. His campaign of lobbying in Spain only further raised the ire of the baronage. His house was seized and his possessions were sold at auction, and eventually he was arrested in Madrid and shipped back to Naples. Upon arriving he was sentenced to life imprisonment in Morocco. The Neapolitan elite had been incensed by Genoino's seditious writings, but the Castilian Crown would be more forgiving. After almost two decades of imprisonment, Genoino was able to leverage his release. Upon receiving a payment of four-thousand ducats Philip IV released Genoino who immediately returned to Italy. He was eventually able to return to the Collegio which he did in 1638.

The lawyers incarceration had not, however, made him reconsider his politics. If anything Genoino had become more radical in his approach. The situation in Naples had worsened in his absence too. There were new taxes on goods and the carta ballota (stamp duty paper) had been introduced. In this environment what could Genoino do but publish more tracts against the inequalities of government? For his pains he was again imprisoned.

From October, 1639 through April, 1640 Genoino remained locked up and it was during this prison term that he most likely met Marco Vitale, a friend of Masaniello's. Ostensibly this was the connection between Masaniello, the man who came to be the leader of the people during the 1647 riot, and Genoino, the lawyer who gave shape and voice to the concerns of the rebelling people.

Many contemporaries and historians have been convinced by this view, seeing Genoino as a clandestine radical forced to resort to violence in order to achieve the change he so ardently desires, and at the same time seeing Masaniello as his puppet. This analysis functions nicely, but the historical record is not so clear cut. While many contemporaries were convinced of Genoino's role in orchestrating the rebellion, others make no mention of him concentrating solely on Masaniello. If Genoino did not encourage the outbreak of the riot, he certainly began pulling the strings once the unrest got underway. Yet it is plausible that Genoino really did use various contacts, including his old cell-mate Marco Vitale, to bring about the initial riot on 7th July, 1647. Whatever the truth, Genoino's story highlights the oppressiveness of the baronial hegemony.

The summer of 1647 was hot, and tensions were certainly rising. The new viceroy, the Duke of Arcos, had arrived with orders to raise revenues of 1,000,000 ducats for Spain's war effort. To meet these demands the duke had raised taxes on several goods, the most significant of which was fruit. The new fruit tax, ten carlini per quintal, or one ducat for every hundred kilograms of fruit, was particularly harsh on the popolo. All across the Hapsburg domains there was a concerted effort to raise revenue, and that spring in Palermo the people had risen demanding the abolition of certain taxes. On the 6th June, with festival season fast approaching, the tax and excise office in the Piazza del Mercato had been burned to the ground, an act common in medieval and early-modern protest. The tension in Naples was very high indeed.

Life for Masaniello had not been going well either. Earlier that year his wife had been fined while trying to smuggle a sack of flour into the city, and furthermore his brothers-in-law were involved in the fruit trade in Naples as low level suppliers. It is easy to imagine how Masaniello's kin network would have been strained by these harsh taxes. He may or may not have been in contact with Genoino, devising a way to strike back at the authorities. In any case, Masaniello was appointed to recruit street urchins and rehearse for the mock battle in the upcoming feast of Our Lady of Carmel on 16th July.

'As the town guard arrived to quiet the disturbance, Masaniello and his band of urchins began to throw figs at them.'

Masaniello exploited this position to the fullest. On 30th June it was reported that the urchins were roaming about the market voicing opposition to the fruit tax. On 6th July as the Sunday market opened two of Masaniello's brother-in-laws refused to pay the excise on their shipment of fruit. An altercation between the authorities and the brother-in-laws quickly ensued which resulted in a stand of fruit being knocked over, its contents spilling out into the piazza. Whether this was intentional or not, other merchants quickly began to follow suit.

As the town guard arrived to quiet the disturbance, Masaniello and his band of urchins began to throw figs at them. When the guards responded with batons, Masaniello and his crew began hurling rocks. They were joined by many other merchants and denizens of the Mercato, and the guard was forced to retreat from the piazza. Perhaps seeing this as his opportunity Masaniello mounted one of the overturned carts in the piazza and began to address the crowd.

He claimed responsibility for the burning of the tax office on 6th June. He voiced opposition to the harsh taxation, and cried out "long live the King of Spain and down with the bad government!" It was the same call issued at Palermo a few months earlier, and it clearly outlined the fact that the people were revolting against the harsh taxation of the local government rather than the actual person of the monarch. He called for the civic guard to be summoned, and in due course it was.

This was a defense mechanism used by many Italian city-states that predated the Middle Ages. It involved ringing church bells in the various districts of the city to call the citizens out with whatever weapons they could muster. As the bells rang and the crowd grew, Masaniello urged them to sack the vice-regal palace. The manner of the sacking was eminently symbolic. The goods from the viceroy's palace were either given to the poor or burned. Some accounts report a mob of 50,000, and although this seems unlikely, it indicates the impression that bystanders had of the crowd as it marched through Naples. The Duke of Arcos was forced to flee to the safety of Castel Nouvo, leaving his home to be systematically destroyed by the people.

What happened next, whilst captivating, is not the concern of this article. Considering the string of events and set of conditions that prefigured the riot, it is possible to identify several key elements of causality. The high level of taxation imposed by the Hapsburgs throughout their lands in the mid-seventeenth century was an important factor, but it does not explain alone the outbreak of riot. What escaped contemporary commentators was the huge disconnection between a disenfranchised group in Naples and the highest level of political authority back in Spain.

This Neapolitan group consisted of the poor folk, but also of the growing early-modern middle class. Throughout the seventeenth century this group had been growing, and nothing had been done to integrate it into the greater political system in anyway whatsoever. While in other places in Europe integration happened slowly, in southern Italy it was entirely stagnant. This then can be seen as the deeper causality of the riot, and the two characters of Genoino and Masaniello represent the lower and middle classes interests respectively. In the pseudo-colonial political structure of southern Italy, their only means of expression was to riot.

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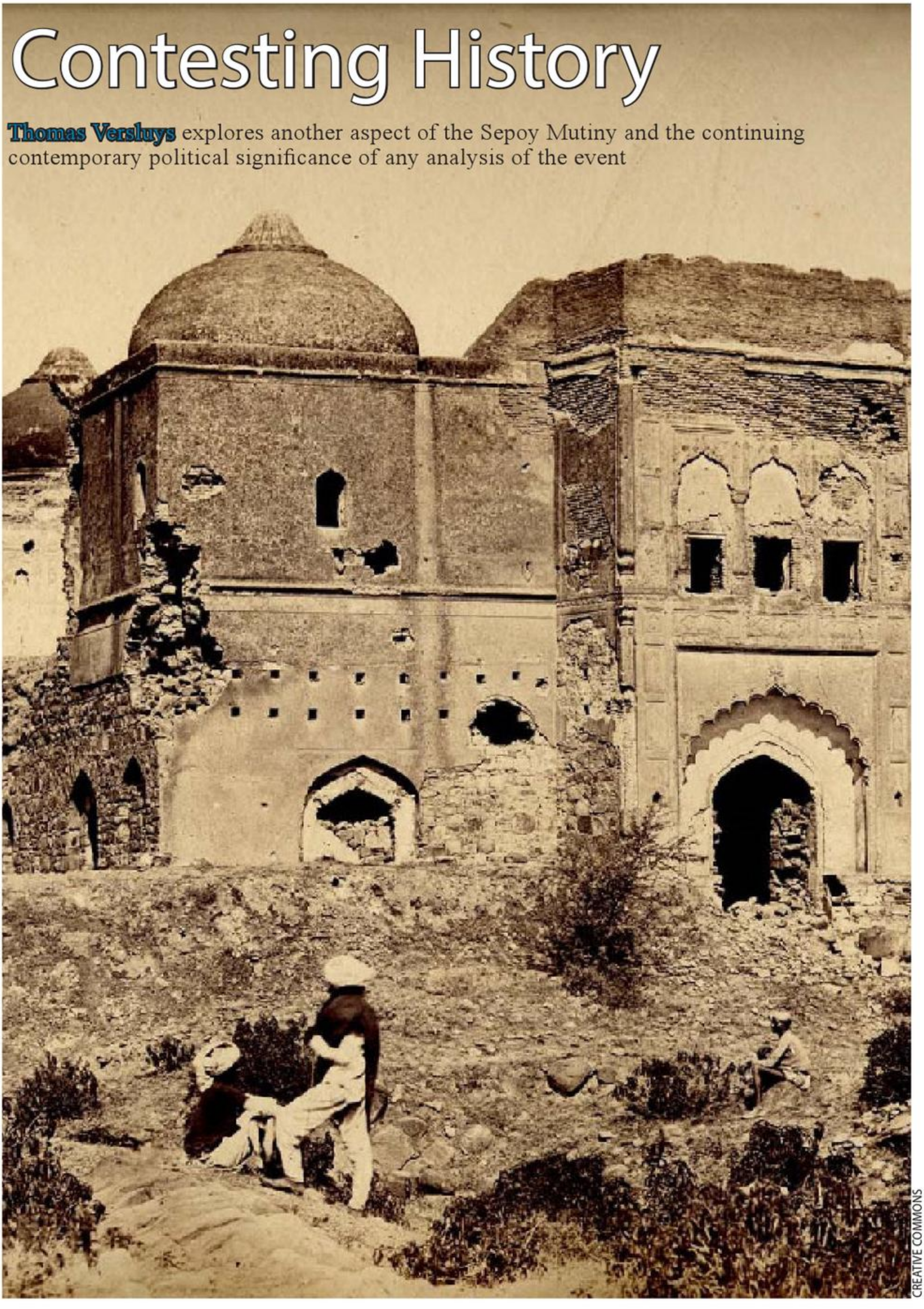
Contesting History

Thomas Versluys explores another aspect of the Sepoy Mutiny and the continuing contemporary political significance of any analysis of the event



CREATIVE COMMONS

In a nation fragmented perhaps more than any other by social, economic and religious divides, the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, an event characterised primarily by unity, represented a momentous break from India's past. Concentrated in the north and the centre of the Indian subcontinent, but also manifestly evident elsewhere, peoples of varying rank, occupation and caste abandoned cultural convention and merged in defiance of a common enemy – Great Britain – or, more specifically, the British East India Company. So contested is the nature of the incident that even its name has aroused bitter disagreement.

Those arguing that the uprising represented a united drive for independence have chosen to label it as a 'rebellion', whereas others point out the fractured nature of the resistance and, as such, prefer the term 'mutiny'; however, both terms will be used interchangeably throughout this article. This paper will seek to address the causes of the uprising, and in doing so will delve into one of the most fought-over issues that arises out of the historiography.

First, however, a brief outline and chronology of the Mutiny and the various uprisings of which it consisted is needed.

In the town Meerut, on the 10 May 1857, sepoys under the British East India Company's infantry and cavalry divisions rebelled, attacking the settlement and inflicting casualties on the town's civilian population and its military garrison. From Meerut the rebels travelled to Delhi, the seat of the Mughal Emperor, where they requested the support and leadership of the head of the Indian nobility there, Bahadur Shah.

In Delhi, as in Meerut, there was violent bloodshed. Notably, the rebels succeeded in killing a number of European officers and in salvaging munitions from the local arsenal; salvaging was all that could be done since the officers in charge, had attempted to destroy the city's stock of arms with explosives upon realising that any relief force dispatched would not arrive in time. After Delhi, the situation rapidly deteriorated, with insurrection emerging throughout northern and central India. The regions of Jaunpur, Lucknow, the Punjab and Cawnpore were badly affected.

The latter, Cawnpore, gained alarming notoriety as the location of the brutal massacre of over a thousand retreating Europeans, half of which were women and children. The massacre at Cawnpore was especially ruthless since it was carried out in spite of assurances from the local leader, Nana Sahib, that if the entrenched garrison at Cawnpore capitulated they would be granted free passage to the British controlled territory of Allahabad.

Following surrender, however, the retreating troupe was ambushed on the banks of a river at the order of Nana Sahib, who was waiting for them with boats, ostensibly to escort them to safety. Those who escaped the hail of musket fire delivered by the sepoys were either set ablaze in their boats, cut to pieces by Indian cavalry at the water's edge, or imprisoned. None survived.

Despite the initial inroads made by the rebels however, by the end of 1857 the vitality of the insurrectionary movement was severely depleted, with Lucknow being retaken in March 1858. The Mutiny was put to an end with the signing of a peace treaty in July of the same year. In the aftermath the major rebel leaders absconded to escape punishment and the remainder of the known perpetrators were caught and executed. Under no circumstances was clemency on the mind of the avenging British.

'Shortly before the outbreak of the riot and revolt, a new type of ammunition for the Lee-Enfield rifle, the standard issue weapon for British Forces in India, was issued.'

A good deal of insight into the causes of the Mutiny can be gained by examining the context in which the uprisings occurred. A number of detailed case studies, focusing on particular regions that were affected, offer us a more detailed glance into the dynamics of the rebellion.

Particular attention will be directed at the region of Madhya Pradesh in central India, which offers a reasonable cross-section of the whole sub-continent. Conflict between the forces of the British East India Company and those of local chiefs had been endemic in Madhya Pradesh since the early 19th century, and unsuccessful attempts at something vaguely resembling the Mutiny of 1857 had occurred in 1818-26 and 1842-3. In Madhya Pradesh rebellion appears to have primarily been a visceral reaction to both economic and political exploitation.

The attempts of the British authorities to promote centralisation and the spread of capitalist economic methods were highly pronounced. Indeed in 1852 the entire territory was brought under the control of the Government of the North Western Provinces, which rapidly deconstructed the existing economic and political systems.

The local notables, who were tantamount to town governors and were widely considered by the British to be relics of a backwards system, were targeted by the East India Company since it was believed that they brought inefficiency. As a result, it was the priority of the British authorities to remove them from power. Spurious or unsupported accusations were commonly directed at local leaders, such as Raja Bikramjit, who, in 1853, was criticised for supposedly using his influence for 'bad purposes'. These allegations were to be the first of many. Several years after 1853, several notables were stripped of their power and, even as early as 1849, laws were enacted that limited the rights of inheritance granted to the progeny of local leaders.

Madhya Pradesh, of course, suffered under greater and more overarching burdens than political encroachment. During the 1850s the system of taxation and the conditions applied to repayment were made progressively more punitive. It is notable that from the beginning of the East India Company's occupation, extremely high levels of taxation were levied on local landowners.

Some estimates suggest that by 1850 land revenue, which was a tax that depended on land ownership, was levied at between 30 and 50 percent. The prohibitive restrictions applied to the taxation system, which included that payments had to be made on a quarterly basis, resulted in an exponential increase in the number of landowners in debt as the period went on.

The quarterly demands were particularly restrictive since they required that taxes had to be paid before the crop was harvested, which could not be achieved without a significant surplus. The accumulation of any such surplus was made extremely unlikely since the decades prior to the 1850s had seen several agricultural crises throughout the region. In 1856, laws were passed demanding the 'immediate' repayment of creditors and, unsurprisingly, a period of property seizure and abandonment took hold of the region, which rapidly came to be characterised by coercion and abuse by tax collectors and local authorities.

David Baker estimates that in the period 1834-63 over 25% of property in the region changed hands as a result of indebtedness. The protracted period over which this transferal of ownership took place implies that economic hardship at the hands of the British East India Company was scarcely a new phenomenon in the 1850s.

Needless to say, the economic and political structure of Madhya Pradesh changed rapidly in the period leading up to rebellion. Those formerly in charge saw their rights stripped from them at the hands of a foreign intruder. Traditional landowners were evicted and replaced by a new breed of person – the capital-hungry opportunist. The uprooting of traditional values and established cultural codes discussed above was not unique to Madhya Pradesh. Rather it was a ubiquitous change. Right across the subcontinent discontent, poverty and cultural desecration were fermenting, and the revolutionary spirit necessary for rebellion was being kindled.

While underlying tensions had been brewing for many decades, it cannot be said that these would have spawned a rebellion without the impetus of a dramatic catalyst. This appeared in the most unlikely of places, since it was not a profound and deliberate intrusion upon Indian culture which sparked the religious discontent which the Mutiny of 1857 is now famous for, but careless choice of munitions. Shortly before the outbreak of riot and revolt, a new type of ammunition for the Lee-Enfield rifle, the standard issue weapon for British forces in India, was issued. The cartridges that were employed, much to the dismay of the native contingent of the army, were greased at one end with pig fat and beef tallow, and in order to load the cartridge it was required that the greased end be bitten-off. This, of course, was a flagrant violation of both Muslim and Hindu law,

and was met with outrage and protest within the Company's ranks.

The relevance of this seemingly minor infringement on the sensibilities of native troops is illustrated by the fact that on the 10 May 1857, it was a mass protest in Meerut that led to the outbreak of hostilities. J.A.B Palmer and John Kaye, two notable historians on the subject, claim that this must be viewed a principal agent in bringing about the Munity in 1857.

The issue of rifle cartridges was accompanied by a variety of other religiously orientated grievances, such as the prohibition of ritual suicide, which also undoubtedly created discontent. Despite the claims of a number of historians that complaints related to religion were merely catalytic in bringing about rebellion, they certainly cannot be excluded as important factors in the debate.

A number of other issues, associated with Madhya Pradesh and numerous other regions, have also been brought to light by historians in the pursuit of an explanation for the Mutiny of 1857. From a cultural standpoint, it is argued that the interference of a foreign power was lamented by Indians. It is further claimed that because conscription into the armies of the East India Company required that Indians fought against their kinsmen, disenchantment with Company rule was brewing from the outset of occupation.

'The reactionary and brutal conflict of 1857 displays the features of a riot, a rebellion and a mutiny and as a result ought to have a multifarious explanation'

This is unconvincing since even prior to Company settlement India was split between many factions in a number of violent political conflicts. Another claim is that the cruelty and barbarous treatment of natives by British soldiers and the British legal system acted as player in the 1857 rebellion. This case is advanced, along with the argument along economic lines, by the likes of Karl Marx.

Indeed it was the case that during the political sessions of 1586 and 1587 a report was brought before Commons to discuss the issues of mistreatment and corruption in the subcontinent; however, although it is conceivable that this represented a grievance, there is no compelling evidence suggesting that abuse was endemic in India or elsewhere.

The reactionary and brutal conflict of 1857 displays the features of a riot, a rebellion, and a mutiny, and as a result ought to have a multifarious explanation.

Certainly the economic upheaval of not just decades, but generations, bred anger and resentment among the native population, which would explain the considerable participation of landowners in the Mutiny. Cultural and religious erosions can account for general discontent, but are quite necessary in explaining the antipathy of turn-coat Company regiments.

It could be said, perhaps, that underlying tensions were exacerbated by a lingering fear of maltreatment and domination by a foreign occupier. Each explanation is satisfactory to a degree, and most, if not all, are necessary to provide a complete account of the motives behind the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857.

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CREATIVE COMMONS

Review

Post-it Peace

CREATIVE COMMONS

Lydia Willgress examines the role of peace walls in the aftermath of the London riots.

To most people, a post-it note is what you use when you need to make a list; synonymous with work and necessity, the majority would not consider this desk accessory as art. However, after the riots that spread through parts of England in early August 2011, members of the public sought to find a small relief in what they could amongst the chaos. Post-it notes became a way of expressing emotion and anxiety about the proceeding events, covering 'peace walls' or 'walls of love' from Manchester to London.

Hours after some buildings were ransacked and set ablaze in Peckham, post stick notes covered the broken windows and dilapidated buildings. Messages ranged from imperative pleads, such as 'stop burning my city' and 'stop the violence', to using the notes as a medium to express anxiety. Some of the more distressing notes read 'don't kill my daughter' and 'why won't you stop?' The fact that many of the messages were imperatives added power to the project, as the walls acted as a catalyst for the many voices of one community.

This sense of community was heightened through the anonymity of the 'walls of love.' Instead of separating voices as one might expect, the anonymous quality made sure that no individual felt their message was inadequate or irrelevant. Being able to post what you pleased regardless of whether you were especially literate or artistic enabled a wide audience to express their emotions. It is especially significant that the 'walls' were not predominantly used to express political messages: the community seemed not to care for blame but instead purely wanted their city back.

> 'The fact that many of the messages were imperatives added power to the project, as the walls acted as a catalyst for the many voices of the community'

The 'walls of love' juxtaposed everything the rioters stood for. Riots were organised via social media, kept up with online, destroyed areas regardless of cost and implication and caused an umbrella of anxiety to fall over the nation. The beauty of using post-it notes was that they did not merely offer a emotional and charming message, but were also clever, recyclable, non-destructive and sentimental: the exact paradox to the riots.

The differing colours of the post-it notes created an aesthetically pleasing image in a time of darkness and despair. The range of colours and the fact that the post-it notes were handwritten added an especially personal touch and illustrated explicitly that no matter how many differing values there are in one area, people can be brought together. 'Walls of love' could not be sensationalised like the riots through the media: they represented real people in a time of real need.

It is unsurprising that 'walls of love' spread throughout Britain, as they offered a chance for the individual to have their say in what became an uprising that affected most of the nation. In a time where the public sector and industry were being threatened, art provided a form in which everyone, regardless of biography, history or beliefs, could simply put what they wanted out there. Post-it notes still belong on the desk, but they recently provided a small smile in an apprehensive time.

A selection of messages from a Peckham peace wall:

'I love my home'

'We could make this a beautiful place to live'

'Learn to love each other, even in our diversities'

'There is no love in war'

'This is our community. Why are we destroying our own backyard?'

CREATIVE COMMONS

Lauren Knowles finds out which books we should not be reading.

The banned books exhibition at the National Library of Scotland is pretty much exactly what it sounds like, it's an exhibition of books which have been banned somewhere in the world, at some time or another for fear of what their supposedly dangerous content could lead to (a breakdown of social order, a disintegration of public morality or just plain old general anarchy for example).

From Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* to Orwell's *Animal Farm* to Madonna's *Erotica* the exhibition showcases its wares thematically, looking at the censorship of political, religious, violent and sexual content among others. What is particularly interesting about it however is the way in which it engages the audience in a debate about the continued role of censorship in the twenty first century.

In the UK today we pride ourselves on our freedom of speech, our right to express our thoughts, however controversial, without fear and yet as Banned books illustrates well, censorship remains ever present, no less potent a weapon than it has been in the past. We may no longer bat an eyelid that Holden 'god damn's his way through Steinbeck's *Catcher in the Rye* nor that Lady Chatterley gets a little too friendly with the gardener but we apparently do express concern at the use of the term 'nigger' in *Huckleberry Finn* and what it could mean for society in this age of political correctness.

> 'Whether it is an idea, or the censorship of it, that poses the greater threat to social order'.

We do worry about the use of gollywog images in Victorian and Edwardian children's literature and their undermining our drive for an egalitarian society and it would seem plenty of people today really do fear the impact homosexual cartoon penguins will have on their children's state of mind. In a society that tends to think no subject remains taboo Banned books is a good reminder that we still quite obviously fear the power of the written word and go to great lengths to control it.

Although the exhibition in necessarily very text heavy the inclusion of audio-visual elements and a chance to handle some books keeps it from feeling too repetitive and the 'mug shot' wall of censored authors is a light-hearted take on what can be a very heavy subject. A few presentation issues aside (very low level lighting may add to the mood of the exhibition but it doesn't do much for the eyesight) this exhibition is a fascinating introduction into the world of literary censorship through the centuries and of course an introduction is all it is designed to be.

The exhibition is not intended to provide a judgement on the validity of literary censorship but rather to encourage us to engage with this literature with an open and informed mind. The curators can present us with the facts but it is up to us to now go away, to read these texts for ourselves and make up our own minds about whether or not *American Psycho* is likely to inspire a generation of consumerist sociopaths, whether Harry Potter really promotes dark magic and crucially whether it is an idea, or the censorship of it, that poses the greater threat to social order.

Red State

It was with great trepidation that I watched *Red State* because of its brutal violence and bloody horror content. *Red State* portrays a riot of the mind, caught between religiosity and political and sexual bigotry. Conflicts of the mind invariably spill into physical conflicts and in the film these are between friends, family and the law.

Red State centres on the Five Points Church, a family church with radical agendas concerning sexuality. In the twenty-first century, these issues are predominantly no longer considered as transgressive and consequently it may be due to our more liberal attitude that the prejudices of the Five Points Church make such shocking footage. A protest against homosexuals at a murdered gay teenager's funeral, is just an example of the deplorable actions of the Five Points Church, driven by Pastor Abin Cooper (Michael Parks). Which Travis (Michael Angarano) and his friends become subject to when they are kidnapped by Abin, lured in, a victim of their sexual appetites.

Red State is full of shocking contradictions. Abin Cooper preaches about the importance of Christianity whilst a captured homosexual man is suffocated with cling film, and then shot in the head for his sexual orientation. Abin's actions are watched by all members of the community, including children, commenting on the effect that extremism can have on all members of society.

Red State is also concerned with the human flight or fight instinct, as the teenagers each individually forget their friendship and fight for their own individual survival instead. There is an interesting conflict between the shocking actions of the church and the reaction of the teenagers; the audience is left to decide whether or not we agree with the teenager's loss of unity.

I would not necessarily watch *Red State* again as at times scenes are hard to witness, however it raises some interesting questions about right and wrong and the place of religion in modern society. If you like realism mixed with radicalism then I recommend seeing it.

Katrina Morven Chalmers

The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975

CREATIVE COMMONS

New footage of the Black Power Movement makes compelling viewing discovers **Grace Sims**

The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975 is a film composed of documentary style footage shot by Swedish filmmakers and journalists who travelled to America during the revolutionary Black Power Movement in the hope to 'understand and portray America'. This ambitious endeavor was seemingly forgotten about until recently, when the footage was retrieved from the archive collections of a Swedish TV channel. Since then this footage has been compiled into a lively, compelling and remarkably poignant film.

The interaction between the film and the narration of individuals reflecting on the period creates an interwoven effect of 'then and now': we are at once offered perspectives that span the period from the time of filming and to the present day, so that a contemporary audience almost feels a part of this history themselves.

> 'Hope and cynicism, laughter and tragedy, unity amongst certain social groups and the violent segregation of others are all present in the film'

Stokley Carmichael, president of the SNCC, features predominantly in the opening scenes of the film. Whilst the footage of Carmichael demonstrates his passionate and intelligent ideas and his powerfully charged rhetoric, it also captures his wit, his laughter, his incessant smoking and his ability to engage with all of those around him. This film seeks not only to depict the social history of the time; it seeks to portray the personalities of those individuals at the forefront of the movement, inducing a potent sense of honesty and authenticity to the film and envisaging this period as it really was to those living through it.

Angela Davis is another significant personality who features both in the film and as a narrator speaking in 2010 about her eighteen-month incarceration for a crime she was entirely innocent of. Speaking to a journalist at the time, she is asked if she believes in violence: her response is defensive, angry, deeply saddened and hugely powerful as she describes the violence subjected to black people since the first black slave 'was kidnapped from the shores of Africa'. This film is worth seeing for her monologue alone: sitting with a burning cigarette, wearing a bright orange prison overall and sporting an impressively large afro, Angela Davis herself proves one of the most striking and inspirational figures in the film.

The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975 is put together in such a way that it highlights the stark contrasts and paradoxes that characterise this period of violence and racial turbulence. Hope and cynicism, laughter and tragedy, unity amongst certain social groups and the violent segregation of others are all present in the film. This method at times evokes shocking images: immediately after seeing a young singer performing in a recording studio, we are taken to the scene of a newborn baby, addicted to heroin as a consequence of his mother's drug abuse.

This shift in focus moves our attention from the radically driven individuals leading the Black Panther movement, to the larger collective of black societies struggling at the hands of oppression, the connotations being that the impact of America's institutionalized racism was by no means resolved after the dissolution of the Black Power Movement. As the film comes to an end, the image of a young child walking into the distance notions towards the hope that later generations can come closer to racial unity.

> '[the film] is put together in such a way that it highlights the stark contrasts and paradoxes that characterise this period of violence and racial turbulence'

[Directed by Göran Olsson. Starring Angela Davis & Stokely Carmichael]

The police perspective

Charles McGranaghan uncovers the police's take on the riots of 2011

CREATIVE COMMONS

Created by the West Midlands branch of the Police Federation to give a voice to the police after the summer's riots, the book documents the experiences of police officers as they faced angry mobs throughout the West Midlands.

Filled with testimonies of police officers directly involved in the chaos that erupted on the streets of England, the book highlights the undoubted courage of police officers as they battled to restore order and protect persons and property from the predations of rioters and looters. Their vivid tales of police bravery, often in the face of overwhelming odds, will undoubtedly strike a chord with a general public in England still smarting from the sight of angry mobs burning shops and businesses, homes and municipal buildings.

> 'A snapshot of police frustration during a time of change.'

These testimonies also illustrate the fears and frustrations of police officers at tackling such widespread social disorder at a time when the UK Government pushes ahead with plans to restructure the police service, driving through cuts to police numbers and changing officer pay and conditions. The barely restrained anger of police officers towards the government policy of seeking efficiencies during a period of austerity is a constant vein running through this book Whilst the book does provide some useful insight into the minds of officers, both during the riots, and in a wider context relating to institutional change policies being promoted by the UK Government, it also raises as many questions about the book itself. A criticism of the book is that whilst providing the public with a police perspective on the riots, it does so with a heavily politicised edge that neglects many of the claimed causal factors to the event. Yet whilst the tone of the book is highly political and is clearly aimed at the UK Government (as well as the general public) one has to also question the objectivity of the exercise which is for 'the police to have their say on the riots' .These stories of police courage and anger at political interference in the 'best police in the world' offers a strong rebuke to the government. Readers will also note that the riots were sparked by the killing of a citizen by armed police; the resultant demonstrations by community activists and locals in Tottenham and the outbreak of social disorder during said demonstrations. They will also note the controversies over the resultant IPCC inquiry which has so far shown the original reports to be inconsistent with the evidence it has collated.

For present and future historians this book may be of use in giving a snapshot of police frustration during a time of change. It may even provide some useful information on the riots and the actors involved the political and institutional responses and various other factors at play. I recommend the book for these reasons, although I feel that in order to gain a truly balanced historical perspective on the riots, one will have to address all the actors (and causal factors) involved in the outbreak of disorder on the streets of England in the summer of 2011.

You can view excerpts from the text here: *http://www.birminghampost.net/news*

It's not difficult to see why actor Paddy Considine's writing and directorial debut, *Tyrannosaur,* swept the boards at this year's Sundance film awards. Behind the bleak and grim façade of this gritty independent film lie unbelievably profound performances given by a stellar cast led by Peter Mullan, critically acclaimed actor of films such as *My Name is Joe* and *Trainspotting* to name a few; and star of the small screen Olivia Colman, known most famously of course for *Peep Show.*

Unsurprisingly rated by many as the this year's number one must see British film, *Tyrannosaur* tells the story of Joseph (Mullan), a widower plagued by alcoholism and violence who is hopelessly stuck on a path towards inevitable self destruction. However his life takes an unexpected turn when it crosses the path of charity shop worker Hannah (Colman), a respectable and seemingly happy middle-class woman who offers him solace and kindness, and who becomes somewhat of a guardian angel to this lost soul. However behind her smile lies a murky and disturbing secret in her domestic life, through which Joseph emerges as an unlikely saviour.

What ensues is a plot that certainly does not hold back on brutality, something of which the film is wrought in. Yet the film also provides many tender and touching moments as we see the two lead characters develop mutual respect, understanding and maybe even love for each other. And trust me, these few moments, whether they be a simple loving glance or smile, are like rays of warming sunlight after the sheer violence and horror which roots the film deeply in the British miserablism genre.

Peter Mullan has already proved his ability to portray the destructive alcoholic in 1998's *My Name is Joe.* However he takes this performance to another level in *Tyrannosaur*, and plays tormented Joseph with unbelievable conviction as he relays one man's anguish in the search for redemption, resulting in an immensely hard-hitting performance. However, it is Olivia Colman's superb portrayal of the harrowing trauma and fragility of a woman suffering in silence whilst trying to maintain an outward sense of optimism and kindness that steals the film. It is this depiction of the unseen and unheard victim that renders the film so devastatingly heart-breaking, as she conveys Hannah's fear and psychological destruction due to her abusive and possessive husband, disturbingly played by Eddie Marsan, of Hollywood fame. This is a film that definitely puts into practice the theory that actions speak louder than words.

The bleak setting of the film, in a Leeds council estate, serves to reflect and enhance the overarching feeling of hopelessness and desolation as we see somewhere that offers no optimism at all for the characters. Furthermore, the film's muted and drab colour palette adds to the sense of austerity that drives the film deep into the British miserablism genre.

Tyrannosaur will undoubtedly leave you feeling emotionally exhausted and battered, but the outstandingly heart-wrenching performances given in this film make the suffering worthwhile. A truly thought provoking and insightful piece of British cinema. Unmissable.

Tyrannosaur

Peter Mullan portrays destructive alcoholic well writes Simon Thornton

FLICKR

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