



**HiPo: The Langara Student  
Journal of History and  
Political Science**





# HiPo

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*Cover image: Monument of the Discoveries (Padrão dos Descobrimentos), Lisbon, Portugal, inaugurated 9 Aug, 1960; Photo by Paul Bill on Unsplash*

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## A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

It is with great pride and joy that we deliver the seventh edition of *HiPo: The Langara Student Journal of History and Political Science*. Once again, Langara students' talents are presented at their very best at the chance to publish their work professionally and be involved from its writing to its editing, formatting, and academic publishing. These papers span two thousand years of history, from Ancient Greece to Napoleon and the American Civil War, dealing in first-hand accounts and drawing on existing research to craft unique arguments about topics both well-known and obscure.

Having received numerous tremendous submissions, it was wonderful to be able to see the students' brilliance, even those who did not make it to final publication. We would like to thank Sean Maschmann, Dr. Jennifer Knapp, Dr. Jessica Hemming, Erin Robb, and Dr. Niall Christie for their guidance and support in the creation of this edition, and the brilliant team of editors that made it all possible.

ERIN REGAN DAWSON AND BIANCA NICOLE PIEZAS

## A LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

It is that time of year again when I get to engage in one of my favourite tasks as department chair, writing a letter of congratulations to everyone involved in the production of *HiPo*. In this, the seventh volume of the journal, the student editors have assembled an impressive range of papers covering a broad temporal and thematic range. On behalf of myself and the department I would like to congratulate them on this excellent volume and express my heartfelt thanks for all their diligent efforts. My thanks and congratulations also go to the student contributors who have bravely shared their work in the public sphere. Thank you very much also to the faculty advisors, especially Sean Maschmann, for so ably guiding the editing team through the process. The college administration has also continued to support the department's production of this journal, and for this we remain grateful.

NIALL CHRISTIE, PHD  
Department Chair  
History, Latin, and Political Science



# SOUL-SEARCHING ATHENS: THE EFFECTS OF THE PERSIAN AND PELOPONNESIAN WARS IN PEDERASTY

GABRIEL MAMEDE

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*This paper explores the cultural evolution and perception of male homosexuality, with a focus on pederasty, within the context of Classical Athens. By exploring significant historical events, such as the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War, I contend that both conflicts played a crucial role in reshaping societal attitudes towards pederasty. This paper explores the reasons behind the exclusion of individuals involved in pederasty from political participation through an analysis of primary sources and legal documents, including instances of Medizing during the Persian Wars and the enactment of laws such as graphe hetaireseos and dokimasia ton rhetoron. While shedding light on the complex interplays between cultural dynamics and external tensions, this paper offers valuable insights into the historical forces that shaped attitudes towards male homosexuality in Classical Athens and its broader sphere of influence. In addition, it underscores the importance of understanding historical context in analyzing cultural phenomena and societal norms.*

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The legacy of Classical Greece stands true to its reputation of political turmoil and societal changes as the fifth and fourth centuries BCE saw dramatic changes in the social and political fabric of the Greek *poleis*. The period witnessed the rise and consolidation of democracy, the flourishing of philosophical inquiry, and intense conflicts between city-states and foreign states. These changes impacted Greek culture profoundly, including the popular perception of homosexual acts within the Athenian sphere of influence. Within the dynamics of pederasty, the mentorship relationship between a young adolescent and an older man, there is a unique intertwining of eroticism and pedagogical ideals evident in the descriptions and praise of such relationships in Greek lyric poetry. The external conflicts with Persia and Sparta in the Classical Period catalyzed internal tensions within Athenian society, particularly in the approach to same-sex erotic relationships and the pedagogical tradition of pederasty. Amidst the newly enacted laws and identity

search, Athenian society took same-sex erotic relationships as the antithesis of Athenian values while striving to preserve the strict pedagogical nature aspect of pederasty in some cases.

Differing perspectives of sexuality from ancient to modern times underscore the need to explore terms associated with non-heterosexual relationships found throughout Ancient Greek texts. The Greek word *aphrodisia* is the closest cognate to the English term *sexuality*; however, there are significant distinctions between the two.<sup>1</sup> Ancient Greek society understood *aphrodisia* as the sexual acts, pleasures, and rituals between any two individuals. The Ancient Greeks viewed sexual acts more pragmatically, focusing on the actions rather than the individuals' identities.<sup>2</sup> This distinction is crucial for understanding how pederasty was perceived not merely as a sexual preference but as a socially and educationally motivated practice. Therefore, while this paper explores the term *homosexuality*, it also refers to homosexual acts and their various manifestations in ancient societies.

In Ancient Greece, the most common form of homosexual relationship was pederasty, which involved a bond between an older male (*erastes*) and a younger man or adolescent (*eromenos*). This structured relationship encompassed not only amorous or sexual aspects but also mentorship, in which the *erastes* played a guiding role in the younger's personal development. Linked closely to *paidea*, the pedagogical process of cultivating values and knowledge in Greek youth, pederasty was present in various aspects of Greek societies, including the military, gymnastics, and academia. Notably, Plutarch and Xenophon associated pederasty with the Spartan *agoge*,<sup>3</sup> a system which reflected the Spartan institutionalization of compulsory education, seeking to foster loyalty to Sparta, military righteousness, and kinship among male citizens.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in Athens, pederasty resonated prominently among the elite members of society, with plenty of evidence linking it to cultural events, such as the Symposium and wrestling schools.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, various forms of art throughout the Aegean Sea<sup>6</sup>, especially the Archaic Period, depicted pederastic dynamics, highlighting its cultural significance and acceptance within Greek society.

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<sup>1</sup>K. J. Dover, "Classical Greek Attitudes to Sexual Behaviour." *Arethusa* 6, no.1 (1973): 59.

<sup>2</sup>Ruth Mazo Karras, "Active/Passive, Acts/Passions: Greek and Roman Sexualities." *The American Historical Review* 105, no.4 (October 2000): 1250-65. This is a great overview of the wide-discussion early scholarship has done on asymmetry and the active-passive dichotomy.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Cartledge, *Spartan Reflections* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 93. Note that both Plutarch and Xenophon were Athenian authors not contemporary to the topic, which highlights the relatively limited Spartan sources available.

<sup>4</sup>Cartledge, *Spartan Reflections*, 97.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas K. Hubbard. *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook of Basic Documents* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2003), 9.



Consider Theognis of Megara (Θέογνις ὁ Μεγαρεύς), a sixth-century BCE lyric poet who wrote lyric poems praising pederastic relationships. In Theognis's work, he expresses his love for his *eromenos* while assuming the role of a mentor:

Boy, my passion's master, listen. I [will] tell no tale  
That [is] unpersuasive or unpleasant to your heart.  
Just try to grasp my words with your mind.<sup>6</sup>

The short verses attributed to Theognis help exemplify the complex duality presented in pederastic interactions during the archaic period: *pedagogical* and *erotic*, which combines elements of mentorship and sexuality.<sup>7</sup> Although the acceptance of pederasty was widespread during the archaic period, the changing political landscape of Athens caused changes in the cultural implications around such interactions.

In contrast to other Greek poleis, the Athenian political stage included the broad participation of its free adult male population. Laws were enacted by the public assembly voted by thousands of citizens.<sup>8</sup> This democratic system not only improved legislative decision-making but also provided invaluable insights into public opinion of Athenian society. As citizen participation and political engagement increased in Athens, so did concerns over the character of those individuals participating in civic affairs.<sup>9</sup> The loyalty of Athenian citizens emerged as a crucial political theme in the context of the Persian Wars and the tensions leading up to the Peloponnesian War, catalyzing the formation of a distinct Athenian identity. In this period, Athens sought to embody democratic principles, intellectual pursuits, and the rejection of Persian hubris and Spartan corruption.

The Athenians and other Greek city-states often criticized the Persians, who were outsiders to their culture. The term '*medism*' was popularized to express disapproval of Persian culture and political influence in Greece during the Persian Wars between 499 and 449 BCE, as evident in Aeschylus' play *The Persians*. Furthermore, Herodotus analyzed the sexual behaviour of the Persians in his work "Histories," suggesting that Persian women were sexually promiscuous and men were effeminate and unmanly.<sup>10</sup> Herodotus' observations mirror the gender and sexual standards of the Classical period, suggesting a widespread sentiment of

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<sup>6</sup>Theognis. "1235-38." ed. Thomas K. Hubbard. *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook of Basic Documents*. Berkeley: University of California Press 2003, 40.

<sup>7</sup>Andrew Lear, "The Pederastic Elegies and the Authorship of the Theognidea." *The Classical Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (December 2011): 392-3.

<sup>8</sup>Adriaan Lanni, "The Expressive Effect of the Athenian Prostitution Laws," *Classical Antiquity* 29, no. 1 (April 2010): 48. <https://doi.org/10.1525/ca.2010.29.1.45>

<sup>9</sup>Lanni, "Athenian Prostitution Laws," 55.

<sup>10</sup>Richard Wenghofer, "Sexual Promiscuity of Non-Greeks in Herodotus' 'Histories'." *The Classical World* 107, no. 4 (2014): 515-534.

cultural distinctions rooted in sexuality. In this atmosphere of cultural delineation, despite the shared Greek heritage and alliance against the Persian threat, the Spartans were not immune to Athenian war narratives that scrutinized their sexual practices. This scrutiny was pronounced, as pederasty was heavily present in the *agoge* and the Spartan military but eventually became increasingly discouraged in Athens following the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta. This climate of cultural segmentation highlights the complexities of Greek views towards external and internal cultural behaviours.

Within the rapidly changing Athenian democratic backstage, the introduction of the laws *graphe hetaireseos* and *edokimasia ton rhetoron* represent a significant shift in the intersection of private morality and public life, particularly about pederasty. *Graphe hetaireseos* prohibited engaging in *hetairisis*,<sup>11</sup> a term deliberately left vague but generally interpreted to mean the exchange of sexual favours for material gain.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, *edokimasia ton rhetoron*, which scrutinized the private lives of public speakers, could be evoked by any citizen to determine the moral credibility of individuals, including whether they had participated in pederastic relationships. Applying these laws served as a pretext in political conflicts rather than genuine concerns over the moral fitness of politicians; however, it illustrates how external tensions translated to complex dynamics between personal morality, political rivalry, and public expectations in Athens.

Aeschines (Αἰσχίνης), considered one of the greatest orators of Attica, helps to illustrate the debate over the application of both *graphe hetaireseos* and *dokimasia ton rhetoron*.<sup>13</sup> In a series of judicial disputes during the late 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE between Aeschines and Demosthenes, a speech by Aeschines against Timarchus:

But if ignoring these wild men, Cedonides and Autoclide and Thersander, into whose houses he has been taken to live, I remind you of the facts and demonstrate that he has earned his living with his body not only at the home of Misgolas but also in the house of another and then another and that he went from this one to yet another, then it will be [apparent] that he has not only been a kept lover but (and by Dionysus!—I don't think I can evade the issue all day) has... actually prostituted [himself].<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>The Greek word *hetairisis* is related to the more commonly used *hetaira* (ἑταίρα), meaning companion, but often associated with prostitution. I will not delve into the semantics of the word as the use-case is more important than its root meaning.

<sup>12</sup>Lanni, "Athenian Prostitution Laws," 55. *Hetairisis* is distinct from *porneia*, which was a prostitute.

<sup>13</sup>R. M. Smith, "A New Look at the Canon of the Ten Attic Orators." *Mnemosyne* 48, no. 4 (February 1995): 77-78.

<sup>14</sup>Aeschines, *Against Timarchus*, ed. Michael Gagarin, *Speeches From Athenian Law*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011, 204. EBSCO.

In this passage, Aeschines accuses Timarchus of being the *eromenos* of several men, which was inappropriate for an adult citizen. More critically, he accuses Timarchus of engaging in these relationships for financial gain. It is interesting to note that Aeschines does not offer any proof of the accusation of prostitution, and he is not able to find testimonials. Aeschines relies solely on Timarchus's reputation of having been with other Athenian men and the widespread perception that the gifts offered to *eromenoi* by the *erastai* within pederastic courtship would entail a form of payment for sexual service; hence, prostitution. As Aeschines also said in his speech: "For the man who has willfully sold his own body would, he thought, casually sell out the interests of the city."<sup>15</sup> The legal dispute between Aeschines and Timarchus provides a stark example of how Athenian society began to critically examine pederasty, as this case demonstrates the tangible effects of societal and legal changes on individual lives, reflecting the broader transformation in Athenian attitudes towards pederasty during this period.

The conflicts occurring within the Aegean Sea during the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE profoundly influenced Athenian politics, culture, and customs. Facing adversaries such as the Persians and later the Spartans, Attica was compelled to redefine its understanding of personal relationships within the public sphere, leading to significant legal reforms. In essence, the evolution of Athenian society's views on pederasty, as influenced by external conflicts, underscored a dynamic interplay between historical events and cultural norms. It is crucial to note that no single direct cause for this shift can be established, partially due to the complexity of the issue and the limitation of available records. However, evidence from the Athenian post-war suggests that citizens involved in pederasty faced political repercussions under two notable laws: *graphe hetaireseos* and *dokimasia ton rhetoron*. The historical record also indicates that these laws redefined the perception of pederasty, associating it with prostitution and altering its cultural significance. In the aftermath of these conflicts, the redefined cultural context surrounding pederasty not only reshaped personal relationships but also had profound implications in Athenian society, including politics, morality, and the essence of citizenship.

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<sup>15</sup>Aeschines, *Against Timarchus*, 197.

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# AN ENEMY FROM ONE'S OWN HUBRIS: THE DECLINE OF SPARTA

GAVIN GREWAL

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*This paper examines the causes for the decline of Sparta, emphasizing the critical factors leading to their downfall: the shrinking Spartiate population, their pivotal role in military operations, Sparta's paranoid cruelty towards the helots, the increasing presence of helots and perioikoi in the Spartan army, and the political exclusion of the perioikoi. My paper argues that the exclusion of certain people from participation in the Spartan state led to the destruction of Sparta as a military power in the fourth century BCE. My research for this paper is significant as I strived to connect Sparta's internal societal issues with aspects of its foreign policy. My major findings were the helots' revolutionary awakening and the perioikoi's alienation. As a result of refusing to allow their society to adapt to changes in the political climate in the Spartan state and Greece as a whole, Sparta was destroyed by issues and enemies made from their own hubris.*

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Many in the West have idolized Sparta for its strength and valor; however, they often place less emphasis on its decline. The archaic ways which led to their downfall receive minimal attention. This paper discusses several key factors contributing to the decline of Sparta: The military dependence on the shrinking Spartiate population, the reasoning behind Sparta's paranoid cruelty towards the helots, the growing incorporation of the helots into the Spartan army, the increased reliance on *perioikoi* troops, and the denial of political rights to the *perioikoi*. This paper argues that the exclusion of peoples from the Spartan State led to the destruction of Sparta as a military power in the fourth century BCE.

Sparta's dominance was largely attributed to its elite citizen soldiers, known as Spartiates, who underwent rigorous training in the *agoge* system. The Spartan population had been declining long before the Peloponnesian War, but their army was still numerous enough to win the conflict against Athens.<sup>1</sup> Quickly afterwards,

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<sup>1</sup>G. L. Cawkwell, "The Decline of Sparta," *The Classical Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1983): 385-386.

the population decline dramatically worsened. In 479 BCE, when the Spartans were masters of the Peloponnesian League, Herodotus claimed Sparta fielded an army of 5,000 Spartiates at the Battle of Plataea.<sup>2</sup> By the start of King Agesilaos's reign in 400 BCE, Sparta's number had already dropped to an army of 3,000 Spartiates, and they were now in control of a hegemony which contained three to four million people.<sup>3</sup> A significant factor in this decline is the constant series of wars that Sparta found itself in, with the Persian Wars being followed by the Peloponnesian War and the subsequent war with Thebes. In addition to the Spartiate population decline was the switch from collective ownership of land by the polis to private ownership.<sup>4</sup> The change from collective ownership to private ownership caused a wealth gap amongst Spartiates, eventually leading to many falling into poverty. Since they could not pay the fee for the *sysstia*, which all citizens had to meet, impoverished Spartiates were stripped of their citizenship. These demoted Spartiates would form a new class of free men known as the *hypomeion*.<sup>5</sup> The *hypomeiones* felt marginalized because Spartan society had cast them down from the positions that their families had held for hundreds of years, leading to many plotting revolts with the other Spartan lower classes. Consequently, the Spartan state did not just fail to prevent the demographic collapse of the Spartiate population, but they also managed to create new enemies simultaneously.

The factors driving population decline would continue and became apparent to all of Greece when a quarter of the Spartiate population was annihilated fighting against Thebes at the Battle of Leuktra.<sup>6</sup> That quarter of the population may have been as low as 700, according to Plutarch, and they were at the head of an army of 10,000 hoplites made up of troops from across the Peloponnesian League, which would proceed to disintegrate overnight.<sup>7</sup> In the aftermath of Leuktra, every citizen up to the age of 60 was drafted for the defence of the polis.<sup>8</sup> The number of men drafted would not be enough, as Spartan territory would be invaded for the first time in their history.<sup>9</sup> Sparta would lose half of its land, including Messenia, which would never be recovered. The defeat at Leuktra caused the Spartan hegemony to collapse. Sparta had already allowed the Spartiate population to decline, but their

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<sup>2</sup>Cawkwell, *The Decline of Sparta*, 387.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Cartledge, "Agesilaos and the Crisis of Sparta," *History Today* 36, (July 7, 1986): 33.

<sup>4</sup>Cawkwell, *The Decline of Sparta*, 388.

<sup>5</sup>Richard J. A. Talbert, "The Role of the Helots in the Class Struggle at Sparta," *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 38, no. 1 (1989): 34-35.

<sup>6</sup>Paul Cartledge, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta: A Regional History 1300-362 BC*, 2nd Edition. London: Routledge (1992): 34.

<sup>7</sup>Cawkwell, *The Decline of Sparta*, 385.

<sup>8</sup>Scott M. Rusch, *Sparta at War: Strategy, Tactics, and Campaigns, 550-362 BC*. London: Frontline Books (2011).

<sup>9</sup>Cartledge, *Agesilaos and the Crisis of Sparta*, 34.



authority at home and abroad continued to depend on the Spartiates. When the Spartan class was mauled at Leuktra, the Spartan state was dragged along.

The Spartiates are often stereotyped to be some of the greatest warriors in all of human history due to the perception rooted in their lifelong dedication to military training and discipline. According to Xenophon, Lycurgus the Lawgiver even forbade Spartiates from participating in any form of business or craftsmanship.<sup>10</sup> The burden, or rather blessing, of being able to practice commerce fell upon the *perioikoi*. Their name can be roughly translated as ‘those who dwell around,’ referencing their distinction from the Spartiates who were official citizens of Sparta and lived in Sparta.<sup>11</sup> But unlike the helots, who were state-owned slaves, the *perioikoi* were, by all definitions, free men. The term Lacedaemonian was commonly used by ancient scholars to refer to the Spartiates and *perioikoi* collectively, and many foreigners could not tell them apart.<sup>12</sup> However, some critical everyday differences between the classes, such as the *perioikoi* not being obliged to send their sons to military training at the *agoge*, and the *perioikoi* celebrated certain cults whose altars attracted Greeks from other lands but were not venerated by the Spartiates.<sup>13</sup> However, the vast majority of historical references to the *perioikoi* were about their military capacity.<sup>14</sup> They were often described as identical to the Spartiates on the battlefield, just as how they were in civilian life, and their presence on the battlefield was by no means trivial. At the Battle of Mantinea in 479 BC, 5,000 *perioikoi* troops accompanied an equal number of 5,000 Spartiates.<sup>15</sup> Considering the decline of the Spartan population, it is likely that during the Spartan hegemony, the *perioikoi* made up most, or considering helot troops, at least the bulk, of the Spartan army. This shift meant that the Spartan state’s military class, who were also their ruling class, were no longer the predominant force in their army.

Sparta was a society that refused to give political or free rights to its lower classes, much like many other Greek city-states. Sparta, however, was unique as they had the helots, an entire class of enslaved people owned by the state who lived primarily outside of the city of Sparta, rather than a multitude of privately owned foreign

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<sup>10</sup>Xenophon, “The Polity of the Athenians and the Lacedaemonians,” in *The Works of Xenophon*, translated by Henry Graham Dakyns. MacMillan & Co. (1891).

<sup>11</sup>Carlos Rene Villafane Silva, “The *Perioikoi*: A Social, Economic and Military Study of the Other Lacedaemonians,” PhD diss. *University of Liverpool* (August 2015): 6.

<sup>12</sup>Silva, *The Perioikoi: A Social, Economic and Military Study of the Other Lacedaemonians*, 7.

<sup>13</sup>Nicolette Pavlides, “The Sanctuaries of Apollo Maleatas and Apollo Tyritas in Laconia: Religion in Spartan-Perioikic Relations,” *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 113 (2018): 295.

<sup>14</sup>Silva, *The Perioikoi: A Social, Economic and Military Study of the Other Lacedaemonians*, 98.

<sup>15</sup>Cawkwell, *The Decline of Sparta*, 387.

slaves who lived heterogeneously with the citizens.<sup>16</sup> Although they were not foreign, the Spartiates treated the helots of Lakonia and Messenia as enemies within their state and saw them as no different than external foes.<sup>17</sup> The perceived helot threat to the Spartiates is exemplified by the aftermath of the Battle of Sphacteria.<sup>18</sup> According to Thucydides, the Spartiates encouraged the helots to choose from amongst themselves those who fought the best on the recent campaign,<sup>19</sup> under the guise of rewarding their services with freedom. Believing their compatriots were about to be liberated for their contributions, over 2,000 veteran helots were chosen. However, these veterans were subsequently paraded around the temples of Sparta to be executed. This account highlights the extent to which the Spartans feared the helots, even willing to slaughter the most valorous of their kind during an all-out war with Athens as a warning to others. The account further shows that the helot soldiers did not receive much respect from their state, but the Spartans were willing to show respect to their allies with the concept of *euonia*, or goodwill.<sup>20</sup> Through *euonia*, the Spartans allowed the members of the Peloponnesian League, a Spartan-dominated military alliance, to do whatever they wished regarding their domestic policy as long as Sparta retained nominal command of the combined armed forces. Each member of the Peloponnesian League also had their equal vote on military matters. Sparta was willing to treat foreign allies as their equals while the helots who lived in their land were treated as subhuman. This heinous treatment led to vast resentment from the helot class towards the Spartiates; if the helots were placed in a situation where they were treated like foreigners, then they had no reason to continue being a part of the Spartan state.

Despite their fear of the helots, the Spartiates continued to give them an increased role in their army throughout the Peloponnesian War and the Spartan hegemony. Thucydides' account of the slaughter of the 2,000 showed that the helots were numerous enough to have well over that number of able-bodied men amongst their class.<sup>21</sup> The helot population would continue to grow while the Spartiate population was shrinking, with modern estimates placing their population between 170,000 and 224,000 during the Peloponnesian War.<sup>22</sup> The Spartiates would never cease to fear the possibility of a helot revolt, and the reason a revolt did not occur later during the Spartan hegemony was because the helots were afraid of Spartan retaliation.<sup>23</sup> The Spartiates attempted to appease some helots by promoting them

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<sup>16</sup>Talbert, *The Role of the Helots in the Class Struggle at Sparta*, 23-24.

<sup>17</sup>Cartledge, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta: A Regional History 1300-362 BC*, 31.

<sup>18</sup>Talbert, *The Role of the Helots in the Class Struggle at Sparta*, 24.

<sup>19</sup>Talbert, *The Role of the Helots in the Class Struggle at Sparta*, 24.

<sup>20</sup>Matthew A. Sears, "Thucydides, Rousseau, and Forced Freedom: Brasidas' Speech at Acanthus." *Phoenix* 69, no. 3/4 (2015): 243-245.

<sup>21</sup>Talbert, *The Role of the Helots in the Class Struggle at Sparta*, 24.

<sup>22</sup>Talbert, *The Role of the Helots in the Class Struggle at Sparta*, 23.

<sup>23</sup>Cawkwell, *The Decline of Sparta*, 390-391.

to *neodamodeis*, an already existing class consisting of helot veterans who were freed from servitude to the state.<sup>24</sup> Despite gaining their freedom, the *neodamodeis* harboured resentment towards the Spartiates and saw themselves as another oppressed class, oppressed by the lack of land allocation for their military service. The helot discontent, alongside their growing number and proven combat skills, set the stage for a revolt. This critical moment arrived after the Battle of Leuktra when helots of Lakonia and Messenia sided with the Theban forces to stage a significant uprising for the first time in centuries.<sup>25</sup> Initially, treating the helots as an enemy within the Spartans inadvertently fabricated the conditions for rebellion by increasingly relying on the helots for military service while giving them little incentive other than the possibility of freedom.

The *perioikoi* significantly increased their presence in the Spartan army, where they were brothers in arms with the Spartiates, but the denial of political representation and power remained a devise factor between the two classes. From the Spartan perspective, the massive increase in *perioikoi* troops was not precisely enough to worry them as much as the contemporary increase in helot troops because the *perioikoi* had never revolted in the past.<sup>26</sup> The *perioikoi* even saw the Spartan kings as their kings and believed what was good for Sparta was good for them. However, the *perioikoi* were loyal to Sparta as long as Sparta was powerful. When Sparta's power was broken at the defeat at Leuktra, many *perioikoi* had no reason to stay loyal. The *perioikoi* were experts in agriculture, trade, and manufacturing,<sup>27</sup> vital areas to the Spartan poleis. Given their expertise, the *perioikoi* saw little incentive to support the reconsolidation of Sparta when they possessed the potential to gain autonomy themselves. Many of the *perioikoi*, consequently, joined the helots in taking over Lakonia and Messenia, ridding themselves of overlords whose expertise was hoplite warfare.<sup>28</sup> Had Sparta given at least some form of political representation to the *perioikoi*, they could have had more of a stake in choosing to stay by the Spartiates' side in their crisis. Instead, the *perioikoi* treated the crisis that caused Sparta to fall as their opportunity to rise.

Sparta was for centuries considered one of the most powerful Greek city-states, with the strength of its land forces, which were feared by Athens and the like. But the fall of Sparta's nation would not lie in some significant sacking of their capital in the Homeric magnitude. The Spartan elite had allowed their Spartiate class to grow small through the unending wars and increasing poverty rates. The state's authority continued to rely on those Spartiates, a great deal of whom would be

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<sup>24</sup>R. F. Willetts, "The Neodamodeis," *Classical Philology* 49, no. 1 (1954): 28-29.

<sup>25</sup>Cartledge, *Agesilaos and the Crisis of Sparta*, 34.

<sup>26</sup>Silva, *The Perioikoi: A Social, Economic and Military Study of the Other Lacedaemonians*, 70.

<sup>27</sup>Silva, *The Perioikoi: A Social, Economic and Military Study of the Other Lacedaemonians*, 54.

<sup>28</sup>Silva, *The Perioikoi: A Social, Economic and Military Study of the Other Lacedaemonians*, 66.

wiped out at Leuktra. The Spartan ideology pushed for the brutal treatment of the helots, resulting in their disdain towards the Spartan state. The Spartans continued recruiting more helots into the army while not winning their loyalty, creating a competent class that could rebel. The Spartans allowed the *perioikoi* to become the predominant Lacedaemonians in the army, controlling both war and the private sector. Since the *perioikoi* had no political rights, they had no reason to stay by the Spartiates' side when they collapsed. The Spartans refused to allow their society to adapt to demographic shifts or change their attitude toward their lower classes. As a result, Sparta was destroyed by their own hubris, pushing people away from the state.

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# FAITH AND EMPIRE: THE JESUITS' AMBIVALENT LEGACY IN THE AGE OF DISCOVERY

GABRIEL MAMEDE

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*This paper explores the role of the Jesuits in the Age of Discovery and colonization, specifically looking into the impact on Indigenous Peoples in the Americas. Focusing on the Jesuit Relations, the analysis delves into biases present in historical narratives. The Jesuits played an important role as agents of both European powers and the Catholic Church in language adaptation, cultural assimilation, and dissemination of narratives for European consumption. The paper focuses further into the optimistic portrayal of the Christianisation process of First Nations by the Jesuits, influenced by fundraising motives. The Jesuit's influence extends to historical narratives and perceptions of spirituality, where Indigenous rituals were interpreted through a Christian lens. Despite its invaluable historical significance, these accounts perpetuate stereotypes, favouring White Christian historiography.*

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Canada's early history, and most of the New World's, is often depicted by the perspective and biases of the White Christian colonizers, which often romanticizes Indigenous Peoples within a narrow view. The history of the Jesuits missionaries to the New World can easily be mistaken by an oversimplified view of a merely religious enterprise, however the religious order also carried other roles beyond curing the human soul. Analyzing the *Jesuit Relations*, a source often used to refer to the early moments of New France and explore the biases that become an obstacle to accurately telling the story of the time, including how the Jesuits described the Indigenous Peoples' spiritual practices and ways-of-life and how their accounts were not serving just a Christian perspective, but also an economic and Eurocentric one. This paper argues that the Jesuits, as agents of colonization, played a significant role in language adaptation, cultural assimilation, and the dissemination of narratives tailored to European audiences. Such involvement was multifaceted, serving religious and economic interests. This analysis reveals how their contributions to colonization were intertwined with their spiritual endeavors, highlighting the need to critically assess historical sources to achieve a more accurate understanding of the past.



Founded in 1540 by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, significantly impacted the Age of Discovery alongside European explorers and colonizers, aiming to spread White-Christian values. The Jesuits played an important role as both agents of the Church and Empires.<sup>1</sup> In almost every encounter with Indigenous Peoples in North, Central and South America, the Jesuits learned and documented their language, adapting a writing system and compiling grammar. The Jesuits' most documented linguistic effort was with the Tupi-Guarani in South America.<sup>2</sup> The first Tupi grammar was published in 1595 by priest José de Anchieta,<sup>3</sup> now considered patron saint of catechism in the Roman Catholic Church. The endeavour of compiling vocabulary, grammar, and syntax was a challenge to the first Portuguese Jesuits in the east coast of Brazil, such as Anchieta, since several languages were spoken in the region, and Tupi just happened to be the most spoken. This linguistic effort, for instance, has been a facilitator for the benefit of the colonizers in assimilating these groups as interactions.

When establishing settlements in South America, Jesuit missionaries did not impose Portuguese, but rather used Tupi as the lingua-franca, facilitating the emergence of a “supra-ethnic Tupi,” shaping other future interactions, as other ethnicities were expected to learn Tupi.<sup>4</sup> What seems to be a simple communication effort by early Jesuits, proved to be a way of expanding the domain over Indigenous Peoples in South America and producing Christian subjects to the Portuguese crown. Similarly in New France, French Jesuits were expected to have produced grammars and dictionaries for the local languages, Jean de Brebeuf was one of the most successful Jesuits to master the Huron language, allowing him to print the very first document in Huron, Ledesma's catechism.<sup>5</sup> His was one of the first works by French Jesuits in compiling the languages of the region and facilitating further colonization of French North America. Another role was adapting Indigenous culture to a more palatable one to the European standards. That role can be seen when Jesuits in China decided not to interfere in rites honouring Confucius, to protect their relationship with the locals.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Catherine O'Donnell, *Jesuits in the North American Colonies and the United States: Faith, Conflict, Adaptation* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 8.

<sup>2</sup>Capucine Boidin, “Beyond Linguistic Description : Territorialisation. Guarani language in the Missions of Paraguay (17th–19th centuries)” in *Cultural Worlds of the Jesuits in Colonial Latin America* (London: University of London Press, 2020), 127.

<sup>3</sup>Boidin, “Guarani language,” 128.

<sup>4</sup>Boidin, “Guarani language,” 131.

<sup>5</sup>Margaret J. Leahey, “Comment peut un muet prescher l'évangile?” *Jesuit Missionaries and the Native Languages of New France.* *French Historical Studies* 19, no.1 (Spring 1995), 115-116.

<sup>6</sup>Lionel Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 34.

In the 1740s, the Portuguese Chief Minister, Marquis of Pombal recognized the Jesuits role as *de facto* agents of state and possibly foreign ones, when deciding to expel all Jesuits from the Portuguese Empire.<sup>7</sup> Soon after Pombal's decision, other European powers followed, including France, during a process that culminated in the order's dissolution under the crown's possessions in 1764. There is no doubt about the Society of Jesus' importance to the Catholic Church and history post-discovery. Their active role has allowed them to shape historical narratives and colonial dynamics, which is underscored by the Jesuit expulsion. Although expelled for their overwhelming political presence, the Jesuit's influence persisted through their cultural and intellectual influence. Their detailed accounts in the Jesuit Relations and other documents continued to shape European views on Indigenous Peoples.

During the Enlightenment, the concept of the 'noble savage' emerged as a secular romantic portrayal of Native peoples inhabiting the New World.<sup>8</sup> This idealized image influenced the perception of Indigenous cultures including the accounts in the Jesuit Relations. These records penned by Catholic missionaries in New France not only aimed to update the Church on the progress of the missions. Despite their religious intent, the narratives found in the Jesuit Relations were influenced by European racial perspectives, perpetuating stereotypes and biases.<sup>9</sup> For instance, the simplistic and limited depiction of the Natives as savages, the author in one of the letter says, "The nature of the Savage is patient, liberal, hospitable; but importunate, visionary, childish, thieving, lying, deceitful, licentious, proud, lazy; they have among them many fools, or rather lunatics and insane people . . ." <sup>10</sup> This passage captures the bias perpetrated at the time on Indigenous Peoples in the New World as both innocent and collaborative, therefore receptive to colonization, but also morally broken, thus the urgent need for assimilation to European norms.

Beyond serving as mere historical records, the *Jesuit Relations* played an important role in introducing the literate French and European elites to the peoples of the New World.<sup>11</sup> To maintain support and funds for their missions, the Jesuits often adjusted the tone and language of their accounts to emphasize aspects that would resonate more strongly with European sensibilities. This deliberate modulation of

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<sup>7</sup>Catherine O'Donnell, *Faith, Conflict, Adaptation*, 35-36.

<sup>8</sup>Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality On the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men* (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2009), 16.

<sup>9</sup>Daniel K. Richter, "Iroquois versus Iroquois: The Jesuit Missions and Christianity in Village Politics, 1642-1686" *Ethnohistory* 32, no. 1 (Winter 1985), 2.

<sup>10</sup>François Du Peron, *Letter of Father François du Peron of The Society of Jesus, to Father Joseph Imbert du Peron, His Brother, Religious of The Same Society (At the village of la Conception de Notre Dame, 27 of April, 1639)*, ed. S.R. Mealing, *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: A selection* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 54.

<sup>11</sup>Allan Greer, *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in the Seventeenth-Century North America*. (Boston: Bedford/St/ Martin, 2000), 17.

narrative served to reinforce prevailing colonial attitudes and support the missionary agenda.<sup>12</sup> The missionaries shaped their written-records of Indigenous rituals and beliefs to fit an easy-to-understand language for the members of the Church on the other side of the Atlantic. For example, to illustrate the biased Christian view of the Indigenous People by the Jesuits, take the letter of Father François du Peron to Father Joseph Imbert du Peron in 1639, New France, where the author says, when referring to Indigenous Peoples: “. . . All their actions are dictated to them directly by the devil, who speaks to them, now in the form of a crow or some similar bird. . . .”<sup>13</sup> The constant theme in their depictions of demonism and savagery served, consciously or not, to influence the decisions of those financing these missions back in Europe. When writing these records, the Jesuits tended to overestimate their success converting Natives to the Abrahamic religion, counting the number of baptisms performed as a memento of how successful their missions were, as shown by the letter from Father Paul Ragueneau to the Jesuit Superior-General Vincent Caraffa; “Christianity has certainly made progress here, in many ways, beyond our expectation. We baptized, the past year, about one thousand seven hundred . . . .”<sup>14</sup> These letters also depicted the fears of war and savagery of unfriendly Native groups. In the same letter, the author says:

But one thing—the fear of war and the rage of foes—seems able to overthrow the happy state of this infant church, and stay the advance of Christianity; for it grows yearly I and it is clear that no help can come to us save from God alone . . . . With their wonted cruelty they dragged into captivity mothers with their children, and showed no mercy to any age.<sup>15</sup>

When citing these numbers, New France’s Jesuits showed to their superiors that their missions were worth allocating materials and human resources. Furthermore, the scarcity of Indigenous written sources documenting the colonization era has reinforced the reliance on the Jesuit Relations as a primary historical source. While these accounts offer valuable insights, they must be analyzed critically, as they reflect the agendas of their authors. The reliance on oral tradition among indigenous communities has been a subject of contention among earlier historians questioning the reliability compared to written sources. Despite the Jesuit Relations being an excellent source for the early days of New France, it is essential to remain vigilant

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<sup>12</sup>Bronwen Catherine McShea, “Presenting the “Poor Miserable Savage” to French Urban Elites: Commentary on North American Living Conditions in Early Jesuit Relations”, *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 44, no. 3 (Fall 2013), 705.

<sup>13</sup>François Du Peron, to Father Joseph Imbert du Peron, 55.

<sup>14</sup>Father Paul Ragueneau, *Letter of Father Paul Ragueneau to the very reverend Father Vincent Caraffa, General of the Society of Jesus, at Rome (1649)*, ed. S.R. Mealing, *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: A selection* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1985), 63.

<sup>15</sup>Ragueneau, *Letter of Father Paul Ragueneau*, 63.

in identifying and addressing bias in historical sources to construct a more accurate depiction of colonial encounters and their legacies.

Layers of biases and nuances can be uncovered by the critical study of the *Jesuit Relations*. Under the guise of the spiritual and cultural emissaries for the Catholic Church, the Jesuits engaged in systematic language adaptation and cultural assimilation efforts. These endeavors were strategically aligned with colonial ambitions, facilitating European dominance and Indigenous subjugation. The optimistic portrayal of the missions' success in the *Jesuit Relations*, influenced by fundraising needs, contributed to a historiography that often sidelined Indigenous voices in favor of a White, Christian narrative. This analysis uncovers the Jesuit's dual legacy: as agents of cultural engagement and actors in the colonial project, highlighting the importance of critically reassessing historical accounts to better acknowledge and integrate Indigenous perspectives and experiences.

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# NAPOLEON BONAPARTE: DICTATOR IN ENLIGHTENED MONARCH'S CLOTHING

SYLVIA LEUNG

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*Napoleon Bonaparte, one of the most controversial figures of all time, has been lauded as a monarch who revolutionized every aspect of his Empire and criticized as the ultimate enlightened despot. This paper looks at the many orchestrated efforts of Napoleon, including his coronation and unprecedented reforms, and how those efforts translated to manipulation of popular sovereignty and absolute monarchy. Evidence from his legislation, military campaigns, and relationships with the clergy, the press, and the arts is given, showing that Napoleon's social and legal restructuring bore the hallmarks of both Enlightenment ideals and the absolute power of the monarch. It is concluded that while Napoleon introduced significant reforms which built upon the Revolution, his reign was marked with ruthlessness, penal injustice, media suppression, propaganda, and favouritism among an elite of Notables. France from 1800 to 1814 lived under a regime where enlightened policies were blurred with absolutist rule.*

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State leaders had the art of controlling their subjects and not the art of controlling their own ambitions. They maintained power over all citizens through laws, police, spying and force; some managed to break through those complexes and instituted enlightened policies that would lead to a fairer and better society. We call this style of leadership enlightened despotism. In this essay, we look at how Napoleon Bonaparte ruled, and why he justified himself as the most illustrious representative of this genre. By combining traditional monarchical rule that championed the absolute power of kingship with one based on Enlightenment ideals that served him through political and social reform, Napoleon embodied the archetype of the enlightened despot.

Though not a believer himself, Napoleon used religion to bolster his power knowing that religion was a vital tool in maintaining social order. His religious policy allowed greater religious tolerance and gave the French Protestants and Jews



the same civil rights as Catholics.<sup>1</sup> Napoleon was broad-minded about religion, but he was much keener on the value of organized religion in curbing social unrest: “The People must have a religion and that religion must be in the hands of the government.”<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, he signed the Concordat of 1801, which was supplemented by the Organic Articles in 1802, to legislatively define the status of the Catholic Church in France and monitor any politically harmful Catholic or Protestant movements or activities within the Empire. The Concordat was also a move to reconcile revolutionaries and Catholics to the regime and weaken the royalist cause.<sup>3</sup> Under the Concordat, the French Protestants were given a greater measure of protection. Roman Catholicism was no longer the official state religion, yet remained the religion of the great majority of French citizens. Under Napoleon, the Catholic Church was a subject of the state; he controlled appointments and made it financially dependent on the government.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout his reign, Napoleon never separated the Church from the state. The Concordat was a clever strategy to curry favour with his many subjects who were still attached to their traditional religion and thus an alliance with the Catholic Church became a political necessity. Despite being excommunicated by the Pope and subsequently abrogating the Concordat, Napoleon continued to use the Church to celebrate military victories.<sup>5</sup> Intertwining war and religion was a pretext for waging holy wars – a page from the dictator’s playbook. Finally, in December 1804 Napoleon crowned himself at Notre Dame in the presence of Pope Pius VII.

Napoleon orchestrated his own coronation to show that he was not only the people’s choice, but God’s choice as well. The coronation was a highly ritualized discourse on the Empire’s later turn towards absolute-style monarchy, based on revived notions of divine right.<sup>6</sup> By having his coronation at Notre Dame (rather than at the Vatican) and placing the crown on his own head, Napoleon subverted and reordered the divine hierarchy. The symbolism of this inversion could not be understated. Napoleon derived authority as monarch from God without agency of the Pope and could not therefore be held accountable for his actions by any earthly authority. “There with the one hand on the bible, he swore an oath to ‘... to govern only in view of the interest, the well-being and the glory of the French people.’”<sup>7</sup> The significance of the oath was that it constituted a ‘social pact’ between the sovereign and his people and a guarantee of the political and civil liberties of all French citizens.<sup>8</sup> The coronation thus associated an emerging dictatorship with the

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<sup>1</sup> Robert B. Holtman, *The Napoleonic Revolution* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978) 121.

<sup>2</sup> Stuart T. Miller, *Mastering Modern European History* (New York: Macmillan, 1997), 22

<sup>3</sup> Miller, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Holtman, 138.

<sup>5</sup> Miller, 20.

<sup>6</sup> Philip Dwyer, “‘Citizen Emperor’: Political Ritual, Popular Sovereignty and the Coronation of Napoleon I,” *History* 100, no. 1 (339) (January 2015): 41.

<sup>7</sup> Dwyer, 51.

<sup>8</sup> Dwyer, 51.

contradictory symbols of popular sovereignty and absolute monarchy.<sup>9</sup> To intertwine religious duty with civic duty, Napoleon issued the Imperial Catechism in 1806 as the basis for religious instruction in French schools. Again, a divine mandate could not be expressed more clearly.

Having usurped the Directory and seized power, Napoleon started with the constitution to set about organizing his dictatorship. The Constitution of the Year VIII, proclaimed by the end of 1799, confirmed his powers via God and the will of the people. It instituted a complex governmental system run by three Consuls, with all real power concentrated on Napoleon as First Consul. The other two Consuls were chosen by an unelected Senate, one for foreign and one for internal affairs. In 1802, with the rejoicing of the Peace of the Amiens in the background, Napoleon converted his office from a 4-year term into a life tenure and amended the constitution “to give himself dictatorial powers over the electoral and legislative systems.”<sup>10</sup> The extension of his term of office was ratified by a plebiscite, a common tool used by dictators to create a facade of representativeness. In 1804, Napoleon abolished the Consulate when he ascended to the throne as Emperor.

The Constitution of the Year VIII was a foundational document that established a dictatorship.<sup>11</sup> The nation was sovereign but no longer consulted. “[Napoleon] used these powers to restructure the prefects, departmental, local government and criminal courts systems so that he could control them in his own interests.”<sup>12</sup> The principle of electing officials was discarded even for local mayors. While it affirmed rights of property and individual liberty, the poor were excluded and there was little scope for accountability. Firstly, “[a] system of indirect ‘selection by tenths’ filtered out real democracy and favoured an elite of Notables. The Constitution of [the] Year X increased the ‘filtering up’ process and introduced a property qualification for public elections.”<sup>13</sup> Secondly, the three organs of state (the Tribunate, the Legislative body, and the Senate) were indirectly controlled by the First Consul and those prefects, mayors, deputies and police commissioners at regional and local level were all appointed by the First Consul.<sup>14</sup>

Napoleon’s government suppressed dissent with weapons of terror and propaganda virtually unchecked. Spying activities were widespread to give the Emperor information about people’s private lives; and mental asylums were deployed in addition to prisons.<sup>15</sup> The police made arbitrary arrests and innocent people were issued *lettres de cachet*.<sup>16</sup> Poet Desorgues and medical student Faure were among

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<sup>9</sup> Dwyer, 57.

<sup>10</sup> Miller, 20.

<sup>11</sup> Holtman, 78.

<sup>12</sup> Miller, 20.

<sup>13</sup> Miller, 21.

<sup>14</sup> Miller, 21.

<sup>15</sup> Georges Lefebvre, *Napoleon, from 18 Brumaire to Tilsit, 1799-1807*, trans. Henry F. Stockhold (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 167.

<sup>16</sup> Letters issued by the state by which a subject was imprisoned without trial and without an opportunity of defense.

the victims who were confined as lunatics for their satire against the Emperor.<sup>17</sup> “Nobody felt safe; and the provision merchant Lassalle, whose deals had been interfered with by [Napoleon], was ... imprisoned without trial.”<sup>18</sup> In short, early 19th century French society lived under a legal system where suspicion alone was enough to condemn. Napoleon’s maniacal surveillance emanated from a desire to control everything and, just as his reluctance to grant his subordinates any real independence, this was the sign of a despotic temperament.<sup>19</sup>

Napoleon created “a directorship of the press”<sup>20</sup> and ordered the censorship of letters, of books, and of the press<sup>21</sup> to control public opinion. As a result, 97 out of the 157 Paris printing presses were shut down, and booksellers had to be licensed and take the oath.<sup>22</sup> The *Monitor*, which barely gave details of unfavourable news like the Battle of Trafalgar, became the official government newspaper and *Journal des Curés* the only religious paper in France.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, in every area under his authority outside of France, there was an official newspaper to present the Napoleonic point of view, the Italian newspaper *Il Corriere d’Italia* for example.<sup>24</sup>

Napoleon carried out a massive social restructuring policy, characterized by a top down centralized approach that emphasized elitism and allegiance. As a result, powers previously held by the traditionally entrenched groups were shifted. An elite of Notables (estimated to total 75,000) was created, the majority being the bourgeoisie of the Revolution, who were blended with the old nobility (the Second Estate) from the *Ancien Régime* to form a new order of status, command, and reward.<sup>25</sup> “There was an endless distribution of rewards, pensions, and gifts in the form of income or land. The army received the lion’s share.”<sup>26</sup>

In 1802, Napoleon established the Order of the Legion of Honour, which grew to 32,000 members by 1814, with soldiers making up 95 per cent of its membership.<sup>27</sup> Titles were used to reward military and civilian service. While the re-hierarchization fed the appetite for distinction or honour and spurred social mobility, it did not favour the peasants who formed more than 80 per cent of the Third Estate. It also created a rebranding of the Second Estate. Use of territory (donations of lands and rents from the conquered territories) as a reward for the newly ennobled groups worked against the principle of the redistribution of land and opportunity. In Westphalia and Warsaw especially, it bolstered feudalism.

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<sup>17</sup> Lefebvre, 167.

<sup>18</sup> Lefebvre, 167-168.

<sup>19</sup> Patrice Gueniffey, *Bonaparte: 1769-1802*, trans. Steven Rendall (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015), 685.

<sup>20</sup> Lefebvre, 170.

<sup>21</sup> Holtman, 166.

<sup>22</sup> Lefebvre, 170.

<sup>23</sup> Holtman, 165.

<sup>24</sup> Holtman, 165.

<sup>25</sup> Miller, 23.

<sup>26</sup> Lefebvre, 193.

<sup>27</sup> Miller, 23.

Again, this was a very colonial or imperial notion that all conquered land be centralized and then redistributed in exchange for power.

In 1804, Napoleon overhauled the entire legal system comprising 360 local codes of the *Ancien Régime* and implemented the Civil Code of France (renamed the *Code Napoléon* in 1807). It became the bible of the new society but was dual in character. The Civil Code restored paternal authority within the family, deprived women of any individual rights, and reduced the rights of property of illegitimate children.<sup>28</sup> A man ruled his wife and his children; he alone legally controlled all family assets, including any property his wife processed before the marriage. A father even had the right to imprison his children at will. A woman could not conduct any business without her husband's permission, nor could she inherit her dead husband's land. While it allowed individuals to choose their own occupation, it banned worker organizations.<sup>29</sup> The Civil Code did not therefore guarantee the equality of all citizens before the law. Renaming the code after himself was highly symbolic: "I am the Law."

During Napoleon's reign, increased taxation and censorship was imposed by the French Government on the newly conquered territories. Conscription into the French army to conquer more territory was not an uncommon policy to force upon newly conquered people. By a decree of May 1802, Napoleon re-imposed slavery in Martinique and other West Indian colonies. He proved how ruthless he could be when he ordered the massacre of 3,000 prisoners who had surrendered at Jaffa in 1799.<sup>30</sup> He had, indeed, little concern for the human costs of the wars he waged. "After the carnage of one battle, [Napoleon] once remarked, 'one Paris night will replace them all'."<sup>31</sup> He also deserted two armies in his life: one in Egypt in 1799 and one in Russia in 1812.

Napoleon gave much attention to economic progress simply for political reasons, not for improving the lot of mankind and allowing people to share in the benefits of civilization.<sup>32</sup> The French Occupation of Egypt (between 1798-1801), which ended in defeat, claimed to defend French trade interests and establish scientific enterprise in the region. It was a *de facto* military campaign aimed at cutting off Britain's access to India and its trade – "a crime and a folly."<sup>33</sup> With an entourage of 167 *savants*, he established the *Institut d'Égypte* that redefined the study of Egypt and

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<sup>28</sup> Miller, 22.

<sup>29</sup> Holtman, 93.

<sup>30</sup> Gueniffey, 483-484.

<sup>31</sup> Miller, 20.

<sup>32</sup> Lefebvre, 165.

<sup>33</sup> Gueniffey, 414.

Egyptology.<sup>34</sup> This was a classic example of eurocentrism, as though *the Other* could only be understood by gathering knowledge by force. During the campaign, Napoleon's cohort of *savants* accidentally discovered the Rosetta Stone that would aid in deciphering hieroglyphics decades later. The campaign was thus to some extent a scientific success.

In 1801, Napoleon started formalizing education to centralize power. The system of *lycées* was established, which also reflected the emphasis on elitism and support for authority.<sup>35</sup> Like the Civil Code, the *lycées* spurred social mobility but showed little interest in the welfare of the poor and women. These selective secondary schools were designed to train the future military and civil leaders of France; a third of the scholarships were reserved for the sons of soldiers and civil servants. The curriculum in secondary education was standardized by the introduction of the *baccalaureate* in 1809. Equally, the establishment of the regulatory University of France in 1808 represented control of post-secondary education. The Paris *Opéra* also saw an overhaul of ballet training during the Napoleonic years. Collective formal training was given to students in the *Opéra* studios instead of privately outside the theatre. Talent, not personal connection, was the only consideration for advancement. Ballet as a result turned more meritocratic and not aristocratic.<sup>36</sup>

Despite opening more opportunities for commoners, state-sponsored education narrowed the curriculum and lent more rigidity. During his reign, Napoleon maintained tight control over the Paris stage throughout the Empire.<sup>37</sup> As a result, ballet became more militant and extremely disciplined.<sup>38</sup> According to Ovalles, "Napoleon's military victories abroad, including the looting of precious [ancient] Roman works, [fostered the development of] neoclassicism in France, changing [ballet dance] costumes, choreography, and optics."<sup>39</sup>

Napoleon revolutionized in all respects and created a new regime that redefined the centre of power by blurring enlightened policies with absolutist rule. He manipulated his way towards unlimited, centralized power through a myriad of significant reforms. His reign was marked with ruthlessness, penal injustice, media suppression, propaganda, and favouritism among an elite of Notables. While his motivations may have involved genuine enlightened values (as behind the Egyptian campaign), those values still privileged the concentration of power. The French regime under Napoleon was one heavily associated with despotism no matter how enlightened a skin it was wearing.

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<sup>34</sup> Dana Kappel, "Soldiers and Savants: An Enlightened Despot Discovers Egypt," *Seton Hall University Dissertations and Theses (ETDs)* (Spring 2013):1, African History Commons.

<sup>35</sup> Miller, 22.

<sup>36</sup> Golda Dopp Ovalles, "Ballet and Bonaparte: Napoleon's Lasting Influence on the Art of Dance," *Journal of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters* 98 (January 2021): 31.

<sup>37</sup> Alan I. Forrest, *Napoleon: Life, Legacy, and Image: A Biography* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2013), 240.

<sup>38</sup> Ovalles, 31.

<sup>39</sup> Ovalles, 31-32.

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# PSEUDO-SLAVERY IN THE AMERICAN SOUTH

OWEN STEWART-JORDAN

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*Despite the abolition of slavery following the end of the American Civil War in 1865, conditions for formerly enslaved people stayed inhumane, and the institutions of slavery struggled to maintain a form of slavery, or, as I call it, pseudo-slavery in the American South. The 13th Amendment put an end to slavery on paper. However, racially biased laws like the Black Codes put freedmen back to work in slave-like conditions. This essay addresses how the legal system and the need for cheap labour, in combination with the existing systemic racism in the American South, led to the exploitation of freedmen in a system nearly identical to slavery.*

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The aftermath of the Civil War marked a significant transition for formerly enslaved individuals. The practice of slavery was banned in the former Confederate states, allowing for increasing autonomy within the African-American population and leading to substantial shifts in their social status and economic opportunities. Many newly freed individuals began integrating into the workforce and broader American society. However, while the government officially banned slavery, scholars argue that the legal system, coupled with the demand for inexpensive labour and existing systemic racism in the Southern Confederate States, facilitated the exploitation of freedmen in a system of pseudo-slavery.

The abolition of slavery intensified the demand for inexpensive and exploitable labour within the African-American population, as white Americans were unwilling to work the arduous jobs once performed by enslaved people. The White workers demanded higher wages, resulting in labour shortages that led to a significant decline in profitability in industries reliant on exploitation, such as the cotton industry. Meanwhile, former enslavers, faced with financial hardship, became fixated on retaining elements of slavery to maintain profitability because the old rationale of racial injustice and profitability behind slavery remained intact.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude: Black Forced Labor After Slavery* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1978), 9.

Given how the Southern economy thrived on cheap labour to maximize profits, the abrupt abolition of slavery left plantation owners in desperate need of alternative labour sources.<sup>2</sup> However, as white Americans refused to fill the workforce left by slavery, alternative cheap labour became imperative, leading to exploitative practices in post-Civil War America. As a result, the existing legal and cultural institutions in the South, paired with a refusal to work by the white American community, led to the inevitable exploitation of the recently freed African American population.

After the abolition of slavery, legal bodies quickly moved to create a solution to the labour shortage by enacting discriminatory laws known as the 'Black Codes.' The aim of the 'Black Codes' is to re-establish a semblance of the master-slave relationship. Historian Daniel Novak has observed that the Black Codes enacted in the southern states were created to reinstate “a system of peonage or debt slavery,”<sup>3</sup> effectively curtailing the newfound power of African Americans. According to the Black Codes, recently formerly enslaved individuals, called freedmen, were required by law to secure employment or face charges of vagrancy and subsequent imprisonment.<sup>4</sup> However, the Black Codes mandated work and restricted freedmen’s ability to own land and establish businesses, effectively barring freedmen from working anywhere other than the plantations they had escaped.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the government levied toll taxes on freedmen, and failure to pay these taxes often resulted in freedmen being forcibly signed to contracts on plantations under the auspices that they were settling their debt. This cycle of tax incursion perpetuated a system wherein freedmen forced into labour became prisoners of legal racism.

In addition, the system targeted freedmen’s children by coercing them to work on plantations for free if freedmen failed to provide financial support to their offspring.<sup>6</sup> While specific laws surrounding the Black Codes, such as those addressing vagrancy, child labour, and the right for criminals to be effectively sold or auctioned off to work, did not specifically target the black population, they held immense amounts of biases. Hence, Novak asserts, “[N]one of these laws applied specifically to blacks, but their intended application was clear to all concerned”<sup>7</sup> as they were targeted at freedmen. The new legal system was a mockery of freedom. For freedmen who were not only forced to work but often unpaid due to superficial

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<sup>2</sup>Roger Ransom and Richard Sutch, “Capitalists without Capital: The Burden of Slavery and the Impact of Emancipation,” *Agricultural History* 62, no. 3 (1988): 147.

<sup>3</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 9.

<sup>4</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 10.

<sup>5</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 11.

<sup>6</sup>Michael Schuman, “History of Child Labor in the United States—Part 1: Little Children Working,” *Monthly Labor Review* (2017): 4; Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 10.

<sup>7</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 12.



targeted fines that employers levied on them, the South remained a cesspool of exploitation and racially biased legislation.

As freedmen were forced back onto the plantations, the sharecropping system was devised to benefit landowners while exploiting workers. According to historians Roger Ransom and Richard Sutch, sharecropping was characterized as a repressive social regime based on racial intolerance and discrimination.<sup>8</sup> Under sharecropping, former enslavers assigned portions of land to families for cultivation. In this system, former enslavers would give the produce to the landowner in exchange for a percentage of a family's crops that they could sell, potentially making a profit.<sup>9</sup> While sharecropping may have appeared equitable, its implementation was marked by systemic exploitation and inherent inequalities. Freedmen, who were often forced into sharecropping contracts by the legal system, found themselves trapped in a cycle of debt and poverty.<sup>10</sup> Some scholars, such as Novak, argue that the system of credit borrowing, known as *liens*, was employed by landowners to coerce workers into wageless labour and subject them to unfair working conditions.<sup>11</sup> As Novak states, under this system,

The planter (or merchant) who lent the goods was given a lien on the crop. Even if the cropper [had] a crop plentiful enough to remove his overvalued debts after the harvest, he would have to borrow again to survive the winter. The wage-paying employer could fine his worker for absence from work (regardless of cause) or for failure to meet standards of performance set by the employer himself.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, according to historian Harold Woodman, landlords could manipulate and add to existing *liens* to keep borrowers in debt.<sup>13</sup> In addition, freedmen faced repercussions if they attempted to breach the sharecropping contract, including threats of punishment, vagrancy, and criminal charges.<sup>14</sup> As a result, this created a power dynamic between the landowners and sharecroppers, making fair prices extremely difficult.<sup>15</sup> While there were instances of economic prosperity among sharecroppers, these financial successes were exceptions within a broader system characterized by exploitation and racial injustice. However, for the majority of freedmen working as sharecroppers, the systemic bias against them created a

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<sup>8</sup>Roger Ransom and Richard Sutch, "Capitalists without Capital: The Burden of Slavery and the Impact of Emancipation," 149.

<sup>9</sup>Harold D. Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," *Agricultural History* 53, no. 1 (1979): 324-26.

<sup>10</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 19.

<sup>11</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 19.

<sup>12</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 19.

<sup>13</sup>Harold D. Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," 331-32.

<sup>14</sup>Harold D. Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," 335.

<sup>15</sup>Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 19.

racially biased system of pseudo-slavery, in which non-compliance often resulted in incarceration.

The inception of the US prison industrial complex during the aftermath of the Civil War in the 1860s<sup>16</sup> served as a mechanism to perpetuate existing racial hierarchies. As historian Jaron Browne highlights in his discourse on *Prison Labour Exploitation*, “Prisons were built in the South... as a mechanism to re-enslave Black workers”<sup>17</sup> and was systemically racist. Acknowledging that the prison system was predicated on racism, queries as to why the prison system exploded with incarcerated freedmen. With the introduction of the Black Codes in Southern states, freedmen could be convicted for any litany of reasons, from loitering, disobeying curfew, or, in extreme cases, spitting on the sidewalk.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the Black Codes provided reasons for freedmen to be lawfully yet unethically detained for failing to comply with their labour contracts, leading to high levels of incarceration among the freedmen. Additionally, the 13th Amendment’s wording allowed Southern states to use prisoners as unpaid labour, further incentivizing the imprisonment of African Americans to serve as labour.

In addition, the 13th Amendment, despite its intent to abolish slavery, inadvertently facilitated a new form of oppression for freedmen. By stating that “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction,”<sup>18</sup> the 13th amendment opened opportunities for convict labour.<sup>19</sup> Paired with the legal system of Black Codes, freedmen were often convicted unjustly and subjected to horrible conditions akin to the recent system of slavery. Prisons started taking advantage of this legal uncertainty through a convict leasing system to private enterprises, wherein convicts could be bought from the prisons to work as labourers in plantations, coal mines, sawmills, and other industries.<sup>20</sup> The entire system was racially motivated, as the majority of convict labourers were black. In contrast, white convicts were exempted from the systemic exploitation that led freedmen into the prison system.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the treatment of black and white convict labourers was drastically different, with black workers

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<sup>16</sup>Jaron Browne, “Rooted in Slavery: Prison Labor Exploitation,” *Race, Poverty & the Environment* 14, no. 1 (2007): 42.

<sup>17</sup>Jaron Browne, “Rooted in Slavery: Prison Labor Exploitation,” 43.

<sup>18</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South: ‘The Negro Convict Is a Slave,’” *The Journal of Southern History* 59, no. 1 (1993): 94, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2210349>; Kim Gilmore, “Slavery and Prison — Understanding the Connections,” *Social Justice* 27, no. 3 (81) (2000): 197–98.

<sup>19</sup> Jaron Browne, “Rooted in Slavery: Prison Labor Exploitation,” 42.

<sup>20</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South: ‘The Negro Convict Is a Slave,’” 88.

<sup>21</sup> Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude*, 9-25; Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 90-94.

enduring punitive treatment while white labourers were spared.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, white workers also made up a part of the convict labour force and were exposed to the same inhumane and exploitative conditions but to a lesser degree of abuse. Additionally, due to the private nature of convict leasing, there were rarely any forms of regulation, allowing for convict labourers to be subjected to inhumane working conditions and treated like chattel.<sup>23</sup> While working conditions continued to deteriorate, the privatization of convict labour for railway companies and the chain gangs created a new form of violent exploitation.

In particular, convict labourers bought by railway companies experienced the worst conditions at the time. Selena S. Butler, a teacher and advocate for the African American community, addressed the National Association of Colored Women in 1897, recounting stories from convict labourers employed by private enterprises.

In a particular county, a Negro boy was sentenced to the chain gang. The grand jury sent for this boy, and on his way, it was noticed that instead of occupying a seat in the buggy, he rode astride a pole that rested upon the seat and the dashboard of the buggy. An investigation showed that the boy had been so cruelly whipped that he could not sit down.

What grade of citizenship can any town or state expect to have when it “sends up” a boy for thirty days for stealing five cents worth of peanuts to take his first lesson in a place whose influence is everything that tends to destroy soul and body? In Wilkes County, an aged coloured man was whipped so unmercifully that he fell upon the ground in a helpless state and said: “Boss, are you going to kill me?” With an oath, the inhuman white “boss” said, “yes.” Then the [older] man begged to be killed, that he might die immediately. After cruelly beating the old man, the young white “boss” dragged him to a tree and chained him up so that he could not lie down. In this position, he remained only a short while, for death relieved him of his earthly torture. His murderer is still in jail.<sup>24</sup>

Although the perpetrator ended up in jail in the second story, the actions described were commonplace for convict labourers. Despite the punitive treatment of convict labourers, their enslavers remained unpunished for their maltreatment. In addition, inhumane conditions were not the primary reason for the convict leasing's abolition. Quite to the contrary, the people of the South drove the abolition of convict leasing as they viewed convict labourers to be taking job opportunities from honest workers

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<sup>22</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 108.

<sup>23</sup>Selena S. Butler, *The Chain-Gang System: Read before the National Association of Colored Women at Nashville, Tenn., 16 September 1897* (Tuskegee: Normal School Steam Press Print), 1897, 7.

<sup>24</sup>Selena S. Butler, *The Chain-Gang System*, 7.

for the benefit of private companies.<sup>25</sup> Instead, they sought to put convict labour in the hands of the county to work on undesirable state development projects.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the primary reason for the abolition of convict leasing lay in the average free man demanding workplace rights, as convict labourers made no complaints about their unpleasant working conditions despite lower wages.<sup>27</sup> Consequently, the abolition of convict leasing ushered in a new and arguably worse form of slavery in the South: the state-controlled Chain Gangs.

Already on the rise during the era of convict leasing, the Chain Gangs, a system of chained convict labour, thrived for years after convict leasing was abolished, representing some of the most racially biased, exploitative, violent, and inhumane conditions that were levied upon southern black prisoners. The state-controlled chain gangs were put to work relentlessly on the ever-expanding road network in the southern states and forced to work in dehumanizing conditions without reprieve while chained by the ankle to other convicts.<sup>28</sup> Under the conditions of the chain gangs, convicts were expected to work inhumane hours with little food and water, living conditions fit for animals, and the constant threat of punishment.<sup>29</sup> Even at night, when the convicts went to sleep, they would be chained together in crowded rooms and, sometimes, in “wheeled cages.”<sup>30</sup> The conditions in the chain gangs became so bad that many, like Alex Lichtenstein, equated them directly to slavery. In the words of a northern penal reformer, “[T]he convict on the road is the slave of the state.”<sup>31</sup> Similar to the enslaved people in the pre-civil war era, the freedmen in the chain gang system also endured capital punishment and forced labour from brutal overseers. A worker on North Carolina’s chain gangs claimed they were worked to the bone and beat like they were dogs,<sup>32</sup> all for crimes that ranged from severe crimes to gambling, fighting, loitering, and vagrancy.<sup>33</sup>

Although the abolition of slavery marked the end of the Civil War era in American history, the post-emancipation saw the rise of pseudo-slavery. Through alternative labour practices by the Southern states, such as sharecropping, convict leasing, and chain gangs, the newly freed members of the African-American community still endure systemic oppression and exploitation. These practices were aided by institutional racism and legal codes, subverting the promise of liberty and parity. In addition, the legacy of this exploitation persists today, evidenced by the

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<sup>25</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 85-110.

<sup>26</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 85-110.

<sup>27</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 103.

<sup>28</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 93.

<sup>29</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 92.

<sup>30</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 93.

<sup>31</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 91.

<sup>32</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 92.

<sup>33</sup>Alex Lichtenstein, “Good Roads and Chain Gangs in the Progressive South,” 94.

disproportionate representation of African Americans in the contemporary prison industrial complex. For instance, according to the Pew Research Center, while only 14.2%<sup>34</sup> of the American population identifies as black, the African American community still comprises a staggering 38.4%<sup>35</sup> of inmates in the modern prison complex. This ongoing injustice underscores the structural nature of racial inequality in America, requiring collaborative efforts to address historical injustices and overcome systemic prejudices to create a more just and equitable society for everyone.

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<sup>34</sup>Mohamad Moslimani et al., “Facts about the U.S. Black Population,” Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project (Pew Research Center, March 13, 2023), <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/fact-sheet/facts-about-the-us-black-population/>.

<sup>35</sup>“Federal Bureau of Prisons,” BOP Statistics: Inmate Race, 2023, [https://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics\\_inmate\\_race.jsp](https://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics_inmate_race.jsp).

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# THE MEN WHO ESCAPED FROM SHELLS: SHELL SHOCK AND VETERAN STRUGGLES IN POST-WWI BRITAIN

VAN VALDEZ

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*The Interwar years remain a popular period in modern history research. The predominant discourse on the Interwar period, however, focuses on the macrohistorical level, as analyses of post-WWI societies concentrate on the economic and cultural changes that occurred on the level of the state. This essay aims to shift the focus of the discourse to the human aspect of postwar societies by using the lived experiences of WWI veterans. As the First World War ushered the age of industrial warfare, WWI veterans encountered numerous difficulties when it comes to social reintegration because of their war experiences—chiefly shell shock. Using post-WWI official British documents and personal accounts, this essay reconstructs a shell-shocked veteran’s lived experiences in British society after the First World War. Furthermore, this essay argues that the compounded hardships of rampant unemployment, dehumanizing treatment from the Ministry of Pensions and the medical sector caused domestic breakdowns and a profound sense of alienation and disillusionment among WWI veterans.*

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The advent of modern warfare during the First World War took a massive toll on Britain’s economy, leading to a pervasive recession post-WWI Britain. In the aftermath of war, the state faced the daunting and costly task of reintegrating combatants back into civilian life.<sup>1</sup> Through the analysis of British government and medical policies, letters, and interviews of WWI veterans during the interwar years, this essay aims to provide a broad overview of the living conditions of veterans in post-WWI Britain. This essay will argue that the post-WWI government and medical policies in Britain exacerbated the social and economic challenges faced by veterans in terms of social reintegration, which contributed to a pervasive sense of isolation and disillusionment among them.

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<sup>1</sup>Graubard, “Military Demobilization in Great Britain Following the First World War,” 297–311.

The government's failure to provide economic insurance for returning soldiers created a crisis of unemployment and financial insecurity among veterans in post-WWI Britain. Returning soldiers, due to the ongoing recession in Britain, faced bleak employment prospects upon coming home.<sup>2</sup> Amongst the soldiers, a number of these soldiers carried with them the physical and mental trauma of fighting in the frontlines. Combat trauma, alongside the economic recession, significantly hindered these men from finding jobs. Most had trouble transitioning back to civilian workplaces as "life in the trenches did not necessarily fit a man for a variety of employment situations."<sup>3</sup> Those with physical injuries, such as missing limbs, could no longer work in trades that entailed heavy manual labour and demanded full body mobility, such as farming and mining.<sup>4</sup> They also experienced discrimination from pursuing skilled occupations.<sup>5</sup> As a result, unemployment ran rampant among WWI veterans in postwar Britain; statistics from 1929 reported that a staggering "fifty-eight per cent of all those out of work were men who had served in the Great War."<sup>6</sup> This scenario is not what the British government promised when it established the Ministry of Pensions in 1915. The Ministry of Pensions was, among others, created to support and address the needs of disabled soldiers by providing financial compensation and rehabilitation.<sup>7</sup> Veterans who experienced setbacks due to war-related injuries should have been able to request assistance from the Ministry. However, contrary to their mandates, the Ministry acted not in the best interests of veterans. Peter Leese claims that the Ministry was mostly concerned with supporting the military's stance on shell shock, reducing financial burden, and public staging of government response to concerns.<sup>8</sup> For one, the Ministry regarded veterans' illnesses with distrust. The examination boards that assessed disability claims openly conveyed this distrust during examinations.<sup>9</sup> B. W. Downes of the 9th Battalion Cameronians described his encounter with the medical board:

Mackenzie and his friend, the M.P. for Brighton pressed for a medical board for me and I duly appeared before one. The Chairman of the board said they had assessed my hip and leg wounds at 20% disability, but they were not giving me anything for the chest wound as in their opinion it was

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<sup>2</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 90–91.

<sup>3</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 20.

<sup>4</sup>Elsy, "Disabled Ex-Servicemen's Experiences of Rehabilitation and Employment after the First World War," 49–58.

<sup>5</sup>Elsy, "Disabled Ex-Servicemen's Experiences of Rehabilitation and Employment after the First World War," 49.

<sup>6</sup>Davison, *The Unemployed: Old Policies and New*, 94, quoted in Peter Leese, "Problems Returning Home: The British Psychological Casualties of the Great War," 1058.

<sup>7</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 29.

<sup>8</sup>Leese, "Problems Returning Home: The British Psychological Casualties of the Great War," 1064.

<sup>9</sup>Leese, "Problems Returning Home: The British Psychological Casualties of the Great War," 1058.



due to shell shock or ‘war neurasthenia’—‘as we call it’, he observed pretentiously and would disappear after a while in civvy street...<sup>10</sup>

John Collie, the Ministry’s Director of Medical Services and the man who oversaw the management and allocation of war pensions, was concerned that “money would be wasted as the result of a class-based conspiracy which supported malingering.”<sup>11</sup> It is important to note that Collie had been actively campaigning against malingering and fraud in accident insurance claims through his publications as far back as 1912.<sup>12</sup> The Ministry would continually deny disabled veterans just compensation for their service injuries on the basis of malingering.<sup>13</sup> Even for those who received a pension, uncertainty loomed as the Ministry could have cut it off at any time. George Peakes, one such veteran, experienced abrupt cessation of his pension in 1922 after appearing before a special board at the House of Lords despite receiving said pension since 1918.<sup>14</sup> The combined difficulties of obtaining employment and an adequate pension after the First World War caused veterans and their families suffering that became evident before the public. “The destitute shell-shocked soldier”<sup>15</sup> became—and continued to be—an inextricable and distinct figure in Britain’s “imaginings of the First World War.”<sup>16</sup>

During this period, the number of returned soldiers who exhibited symptoms of shell shock grew progressively. To resolve this pressing issue, the medical field needed to conduct deeper research and investigation on the condition. One can observe how the prevailing notions regarding gender roles and race in post-WWI Britain coloured the discourse around shell shock. For one, society expected men to be inherently resilient and impervious to mental distresses caused by the war. Men should—by virtue of their “extremely aggressive”<sup>17</sup> nature—be “psychologically capable of killing.”<sup>18</sup> Psychiatric breakdowns in the face of violence—as in the case of shell shock—was, therefore, a manifestation of failed masculinity. Failed masculinity, in this sense, referred to an “abnormality in [the

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<sup>10</sup>Downes, “Memoria Technica as Used in the Treatment of War-Torn Compression in the War of 1914–18,” 28, quoted in Peter Leese, “Problems Returning Home: The British Psychological Casualties of the Great War,” 1059.

<sup>11</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 96.

<sup>12</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 16.

<sup>13</sup>Leese, “Problems Returning Home: The British Psychological Casualties of the Great War,” 1064.

<sup>14</sup>Imperial War Museum, “Legacy,” 10:34.

<sup>15</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 88.

<sup>16</sup>Loughran, “Shell Shock, Trauma, and the First World War: The Making of a Diagnosis and Its Histories,” 97.

<sup>17</sup>Bourke, “Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Sufferings of ‘Shell-Shocked’ Men in Great Britain and Ireland, 1914–39,” 59.

<sup>18</sup>Bourke, “Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Sufferings of ‘Shell-Shocked’ Men in Great Britain and Ireland, 1914–39,” 59.

man's] makeup.”<sup>19</sup> Ergo, shell shock was a result of preexisting physiological defects, not war. Medical experts also established links between a soldier's race and their predisposition for shell shock. Their claims—unsupported by data or statistics—identified Irish soldiers as more likely to be “driven mad in war”<sup>20</sup> compared to their English, Scottish, or Welsh counterparts. Notably, prejudiced beliefs regarding the psychology of the Irish population had already existed before the First World War.<sup>21</sup>

The haphazard management of shell shock resulted in inconsistent treatment of shell-shocked veterans. As shell shock was often conflated with neurasthenia and other mental illnesses, an affected veteran had increased chances of receiving a misdiagnosis.<sup>22</sup> This indecision in handling shell shock caused reluctance from the medical community to provide care for men suffering from shell shock within general hospitals.<sup>23</sup> Those who experienced more severe cases of shell shock and needed further medical care were sent to mental hospitals. The post-WWI British society, however, held strong prejudice against institutionalized patients; mental hospitals were regarded as confinement institutions for people with extreme mental conditions. So, institutionalized patients were those deemed incapable of coexisting with the larger society. Additionally, mental hospitals suffered from poor management and maintenance in the years immediately after the war.<sup>24</sup> Taking all of these into consideration, institutionalization in post-WWI Britain was more akin to incarceration than medical confinement. Citing associations “between shell shock and crime, alcohol and syphilis,”<sup>25</sup> William Robinson, the Senior Assistant Medical Officer at the West Riding Asylum, assessed that “the majority of service patients would have become patients in mental hospitals whether there had been a war or not.”<sup>26</sup>

As the public rhetoric around shell shock grew around this notion, disabled veterans were judged based on alleged predisposition to insanity and its corresponding degree of curability. The previously mentioned medical board that assessed disability claims for the Ministry of Pensions had the authority to determine a

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<sup>19</sup>Bourke, “Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Sufferings of ‘Shell-Shocked’ Men in Great Britain and Ireland, 1914–39,” 59.

<sup>20</sup>Bourke, “Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Sufferings of ‘Shell-Shocked’ Men in Great Britain and Ireland, 1914–39,” 60.

<sup>21</sup>Bourke, “Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Sufferings of ‘Shell-Shocked’ Men in Great Britain and Ireland, 1914–39,” 61.

<sup>22</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 57.

<sup>23</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 80.

<sup>24</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 119.

<sup>25</sup>Robinson, “The Future of Service Patients in Mental Hospitals,” 40–48, quoted in Fiona Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 108.

<sup>26</sup>Reid, *Broken Men: Shell Shock, Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914–1930*, 108.

veteran's eligibility for pension. If the Ministry could prove that a veteran's mental injuries were, in fact, due to a pre-existing condition (e.g., "abnormality") and not due to service, then the Ministry—or the state for that matter—was not obligated to provide treatment of said injuries.

The physical and emotional toll of caring for veterans with disabilities placed undue strain on their respective domestic families' lives. The impact of veterans' physical and mental traumas on their domestic lives remains an overlooked topic. Unfortunately, the study and treatment of wars has been—and still is—predominantly viewed through the male perspective. With that said, one can still glean valuable insights regarding veterans' home lives from official documents and correspondences. One Ministry of Pensions report on a paraplegic officer named J.E. Cornell and his wife expressed how "the officer [was] certainly in need of more care than his wife [was] able to provide."<sup>27</sup> A follow-up to this report conveyed that "this officer's wife had broken down and was no longer able to look after her husband."<sup>28</sup> While the follow-up did not detail the wife's breakdown, it is possible that it was due to a combination of physical and emotional exhaustion as veterans did not receive ongoing treatment for physical disabilities after their hospital confinements.<sup>29</sup> Numerous reports of a similar nature in the Ministry's records demonstrated the extreme reliance of veterans on their wives for emotional support as the veterans endured financial hardships and mental anguish.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, the lack of evidence that captured the sentiments from wives of returned soldiers prevents comprehensive understanding of their roles as caregivers. One can turn to post-WWI literary works instead to help shed light on the subject. A specific scene in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* offers a dramatized glimpse of how wives of disabled veterans viewed their circumstances.<sup>31</sup> Failing to enjoy her stroll with Septimus, Rezia thinks to herself:

Why should I suffer? . . . No; I can't stand it any longer, she was saying, having left Septimus, who wasn't Septimus any longer, to say hard, cruel, wicket things to talk to himself.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Letter from Area Deputy Commissioner of Medical Services, Newcastle to Area Director General of Medical Services, quoted in Jessica Meyer, "'Not Septimus Now': Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain," 121.

<sup>28</sup>Letter from Area DCMS, Newcastle to Area DGMS, quoted in Jessica Meyer, "'Not Septimus Now': Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain," 121.

<sup>29</sup>Elsy, "Disabled Ex-Servicemen's Experiences of Rehabilitation and Employment after the First World War," 54.

<sup>30</sup>Meyer, "'Not Septimus Now': Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain," 124.

<sup>31</sup>Meyer, "'Not Septimus Now': Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain," 131.

<sup>32</sup>Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, 55.

Through Rezia's monologue, one can register a wife's struggle to relate with and understand her disabled husband's suffering. Because of cultural norms, the postwar British society expected women to make great sacrifices to preserve household integrity. This sacrifice extended to their own physical safety; wives often experienced aggression—even violence—from their disabled husbands.<sup>33</sup> The overlooked ordeals imposed by veterans' disabilities on their families slowly corroded the supposed sanctuary of homes, ultimately leading to marital breakdowns.<sup>34</sup>

The compounded struggles for support, recognition, and reintegration into post-WWI Britain left veterans feeling alienated from and disillusioned of society. After coming home from the war, they dealt with unemployment and denial of just compensation in the form of pensions. Furthermore, they experienced mistreatment and vilification when they sought help for their mental injuries. The "British public decided that it had had enough of war,"<sup>35</sup> and the veterans witnessed how they—along with the war—faded altogether from society's consciousness. W.D. Esplin recalls the disappointment from the crowd after arriving at Netley Hospital:

It so happened not many of our number wore bandages: we bore few signs, outward and visible, that we had been wounded. We were not the battle-stained heroes who had been expected. There was a silence which could be felt. We hung our heads in inexplicable shame. 'Let's get off home', a buxomy, loud-voiced dame counselled. 'Them's only some of the barmy ones.'<sup>36</sup>

Home was no longer a refuge, either. As the war continued to rage internally, veterans with disabilities faced the risk of causing harm to their loved ones. The poet Robert Graves describes his mental illness and the perceived burden on his wife, Nancy:

Shells used to come bursting on my bed at midnight, even though Nancy shared it with me; strangers in daytime would assume the faces of friends who had been killed . . . I felt ashamed of myself as a drag on Nancy.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Meyer, "Not Septimus Now": Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain," 126–127.

<sup>34</sup>Meyer, "Not Septimus Now": Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain," 128.

<sup>35</sup>Elsy, "Disabled Ex-Servicemen's Experiences of Rehabilitation and Employment after the First World War," 49.

<sup>36</sup>Esplin, Typescript in PRO PIN15/2502, quoted in Joanna Bourke, "Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Sufferings of 'Shell-Shocked' Men in Great Britain and Ireland, 1914–39," 63.

<sup>37</sup>Graves, *Goodbye to All That*, 254.

Their experience of combat during the war set them apart from civilians who saw no combat. Because of different lived experiences of the war, they struggled with feelings of alienation. As a soldier who fought in the trenches, Leonard Hewitt explains his perspective:

In no circumstances in my opinion can anyone tell you what war is like unless they're actually in the front line . . . unless they've been in the front line they cannot tell you. And even if they do tell you, you cannot grasp the thing, what it is, it's impossible to convey by word the actual scene in the trenches. Impossible. Without feeling. And then, if anyone tells anyone of it, unless they'd been there they wouldn't understand.<sup>38</sup>

And at the foremost, “there was a powerful sense of hopelessness. A sense, rightly or not, that the promises of the postwar world were unfulfilled.”<sup>39</sup> Disillusioned with the state's unfulfilled promises, William Kirk expressed his discontent:

I was very dissatisfied when I came home, conditions I found. We were promised lands for heroes to live in and all that sort of thing, but when we came home, we found nothing. Everybody, everybody, wanted us – king and country wanted us – in 1914 and when we come back nobody wanted us.<sup>40</sup>

There remains no definitive figure for the total number of men who suffered from shell shock after the First World War. Official records state that 55,469 veterans were drawing pensions by 1929.<sup>41</sup> However, this number does not take into account misdiagnosed cases, rejected claims, and those who simply chose not to disclose their conditions.

It would not be until the Second World War that soldiers suffering from trauma resulting from combat—under the diagnosis of Combat Stress Reaction—would receive more considerate treatment.<sup>42</sup> And despite a century of invested efforts in military psychology, modern militaries around the world still grapple with trauma associated with combat.<sup>43</sup> In the age of industrial warfare, combat trauma appears to be an inescapable phenomenon among combat veterans. As such, accounts of veterans will continue to be—like Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the*

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<sup>38</sup>Hewitt, “Interview with Leonard James Hewitt,” 9:00.

<sup>39</sup>Leese, “Problems Returning Home: The British Psychological Casualties of the Great War,” 1066.

<sup>40</sup>Imperial War Museum, “Legacy,” 2:32.

<sup>41</sup>Thomas John Mitchell and G. M. Smith, *History of the Great War, Based on Official Documents. Medical Services: Casualties and Medical Statistics of the Great War*, 320–321.

<sup>42</sup>Feltham, *What's the Good of Counselling & Psychotherapy?*, 231–232.

<sup>43</sup>McDonald, “Combat Stress and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder,” 5–7.

*Western Front*—an “account of a generation of men who, [despite] [escaping] from shells, were destroyed by the war.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, dedication page.

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