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**Holly Ellis, Saima Nasar and Daisy Payling**

## Sincere Lies and Creative Truth: Recantation Strategies during the English Reformation

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When necessary, some sixteenth-century reformers would lie in order to uphold the truth. Specifically, they would recant their religious beliefs when faced with hostility from the crown or the church. It is easy to assume that those who recanted simply failed in their faith, but in certain circumstances it was actually considered morally acceptable to recant, and indeed admirable. This paper will argue that some reformers' recantations did not reflect real rejection of their beliefs, but a form of resistance to doctrines with which they did not agree. Through their submission to authority, they could successfully subvert authority.

Such an approach to recantation fills a gap in sixteenth-century reformation historiography. Many historians focus on the martyrs, the recusants and the exiles of the sixteenth century. Although all three of these groups, in both major confessions, contain people who recanted, few historians consider recantation in their works. If recantation is mentioned, it is often accompanied by the implication that the recantation was a shameful act of cowardice, or a minor incident in the life of a martyr and a potential destroyer of his or her reputation. Peter Marshall mentions it as an impediment in the career of Thomas Bilney.<sup>1</sup> Eamon Duffy, in his *Fires of Faith*, suggests that only the weak recanted, and continued to recant until they were bolstered into accepting martyrdom by a fear of hellfire.<sup>2</sup> Sarah Covington, in her *The Trail of Martyrdom*, considers recantation a small part of the 'evasive world' of religious upheaval, an inevitable side effect of constantly changing definitions, authorities and values.<sup>3</sup> In *Charitable Hatred*, Alexandra Walsham considers recantation as just one of many forms of religious vacillation that occurred in the sixteenth century.<sup>4</sup> None of these, or indeed similar works, analyze the full range of possible reasons to recant, or look at the methodology of recantation. Nor do they examine in detail the interplay between crown and reformer during the process of recantation, which could be as useful as the study of scaffold speeches has proven to be.<sup>5</sup>

This leaves a blank page in the history of religious persecution and tolerance in sixteenth-century England. This paper hopes to contribute to some recent studies which are attempting to fill it, such as those of Susan Wabuda and Brad Gregory. These historians both suggest that the crown did not press for recantation only to maintain power. Wabuda notes that the crown used recantations to show

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<sup>1</sup> P. Marshall, *Reformation England* (London: Hodder Education, 2003), p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> E. Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England Under Mary Tudor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 163.

<sup>3</sup> S. Covington, *The Trail of Martyrdom* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 2003), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> A. Walsham, *Charitable Hatred* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, K. Kesselring's *Mercy and Authority in the Tudor State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

what was and was not current religious policy.<sup>6</sup> Gregory studies the way that recantation was used to reclaim heretics from the danger of hellfire.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, this paper intends to look at the purposes of recantation, but through the point of view of the reformers instead of the authorities. The reformers in this study used recantation to work around the crown's expectations and fulfill their own goals. Recanting allowed them to maintain their salvation, to fulfill their duty of obedience to the sovereign without compromising their religion, to obey their personal conscience, and to promote their own faith. They had to develop means of skillful truth-telling, which required a certain amount of creativity and often caused the lines between truth and lies to slide subtly out of focus.

This led to a form of subversion that is similar to the 'ordinary resistance' described in James Scott's *Weapons of the Weak*.<sup>8</sup> The peasants of Scott's study employed such strategies as feigning ignorance and evading the authorities either physically or verbally. Many sixteenth-century reformers used the same strategies, but where Scott's peasants subverted authority for reasons of economics or power, these reformers subverted authority as a reflection of passionate and personal religious conviction, mingled with a sense of civic responsibility. This can be seen more and more clearly as the sixteenth century progressed. The early Lollards almost all submitted fully, rarely making much of an attempt to sidestep or resist authority. They did not develop distinct methods to manipulate truth in order to simultaneously obey God and king.<sup>9</sup> Reformers during the reign of Henry VIII, particularly William Tyndale and Thomas More, studied what constituted lies in order to try to reconcile conscience and the duty of obedience. This developed into more detailed studies of resistance theory during the Marian exile. Then, during the era of recusancy and Catholic missions in later Elizabethan England, the methods of creative truth employed at the beginning of the century contributed to the development of casuistry.

The time period for this paper will extend from the reign of Henry VIII through to the beginning of Mary's reign. Due to the constraints of space and time, Marian resistance theory will not come into the discussion. Also, casuistry will not be fully treated because it was a different means of creative truth, one which employed different strategies from those currently under discussion, and took place in a very different historical context. This paper will contribute to a study of recantation which will be useful to the understanding of the culture of persecution and martyrdom that developed in sixteenth-century England. It will examine the definition of lying and how it could be manipulated, and how reformers employed strategies of creative truth in order to reconcile their religious beliefs with their social and political obligations.

## Recantation

Recantation involved revoking religious ideas once held, by making a public confession in the form of published statements, acts of penance, or public shame. It was designed to humiliate and subdue the people who were recanting, to bring them firmly back into the fold of spiritual and temporal authority, and to prevent others from following their example. However, the process of recantation could be manipulated in such a way that it had the opposite effect. As Susan Wabuda states, 'persecuted

<sup>6</sup> S. Wabuda, 'Equivocation and Recantation During the English Reformation: The 'Subtle Shadows' of Dr Edward Crome'. *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 44:2 (1993), pp. 226-228.

<sup>7</sup> B. S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 79.

<sup>8</sup> J. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 29.

<sup>9</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, p. 70.

reformers found other ways to testify to what they saw as the truth ...[and] used recantation as an opportunity to proclaim and affirm their faith'.<sup>10</sup> This can be seen in the story of Thomas Becon, a popular reformer who wrote many of the most influential tracts of the day. Becon recanted twice during the reign of Henry VIII, and yet still managed to maintain his reputation as a reformer. This may have been due to an understanding between him and his audience. As Susan Bridgen phrases it, Becon could cheerfully recant and then return to work because his recantation 'was feigned and recognized as such by all who heard it'.<sup>11</sup> Instead of discrediting him, recantation provided him with wider influence, for he summarized his offending works in his recantations, and that raised public awareness of their contents.<sup>12</sup> Essentially, Becon deliberately subverted authority through his recantation, using it as an opportunity to affirm, not betray, his beliefs.<sup>13</sup>

Thomas Cranmer attempted the same strategy. It is often said that Cranmer recanted six times before he dramatically rejected his recantation at his execution, but it would be more accurate to say that he made every effort *not* to recant six times before his dramatic rejection of his recantation. John Strype said that Cranmer 'thought to pen [his first recantation] so favourably and dexterously for himself, that he might evade both the danger from the state, and the danger of his conscience too', a claim that is supported by the text of that first recantation.

'For as much as the King's and Queen's majesties, by consent of Their Parliament, have received the pope's authority within this realm, I am content to submit myself to their laws herein, and to take the pope for chief head of this church of England, so far as God's laws, and the laws and customs of this realm will permit.'<sup>14</sup>

What constituted God's laws was not defined, and the limitations created by saying 'as far as the laws and customs of this realm will permit' allowed Cranmer to maintain his beliefs, which is the opposite to a recantation of belief. At the same time, taken at face value, it could be interpreted to mean that Cranmer recanted, accepted papal authority and submitted himself to the restoration of the Catholic faith. Unsurprisingly, neither Mary nor Philip took it in that sense, however, and the recantation was not accepted. In his second effort, Cranmer submitted himself to the Catholic Church of Christ, 'and unto the pope, supreme head of the same church, and to the king's and queen's majesties, and unto all their laws and ordinances'.<sup>15</sup> This is a good example of subversion through creative truth. Submission to the church and the law did not necessarily mean belief in the church and the law, nor did it deny Cranmer's former beliefs.

Cranmer's third recantation saw him attempt to reconcile the weakness noted above, while still not denying his faith.

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<sup>10</sup> Wabuda, 'Equivocation and Recantation', p. 225.

<sup>11</sup> S. Bridgen, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 351.

<sup>12</sup> M. P. Patterson, *Domesticating the Reformation: Protestant Bestsellers, Private Devotion, and the Revolution of English Piety* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007), p. 59; D. S. Bailey, *Thomas Becon and the Reformation of the Church in England* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1952), pp. 44-45.

<sup>13</sup> Wabuda, 'Equivocation and Recantation', p. 241.

<sup>14</sup> J. Strype, *Ecclesiastical memorials; relating chiefly to religion, and the reformation of it, and the emergencies of the Church of England, under King Henry*, vol. 3 (London, 1721), p. 233.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

'I am content to submit myself to the King's and Queen's majesties, and to all their laws and ordinances, as well concerning the pope's supremacy, as others. And I shall from time to time, move and stir all others to do the like to the uttermost of my power; and to live in quietness and obedience unto their majesties, most humbly without murmur, or grudging against any of their godly proceedings. And for my book which I have written, I am content to submit me to the judgement of the Catholic church, and of the next general council.'<sup>16</sup>

This hinted at a retraction of his book, though not until the next general council and only if it told him to do so, and suggested that he would preach in a manner that followed royal religious policy. It still limited his obedience to only godly proceedings, however, and showed a remarkable lack of enthusiasm. Not surprisingly, this was not acceptable in the eyes of queen and council either. Cranmer tried again. In his fourth recantation he began to claim that his beliefs had changed and to retract certain unpopular statements, but it still took two more drafts before his recantation was accepted. His sixth recantation included not only acknowledgement of heretical beliefs but also a condemnation of himself as a 'persecutor, a blasphemer, [and] a mischief-maker'. Strype claims that this sixth recantation put words in Cranmer's mouth, and then notes with admiration how Cranmer's last-minute rejection of the recantation in public and his dramatic death scene gave his enemies 'a notable disappointment'.<sup>17</sup> As in the case of Thomas Becon, recantation was used for subversion - although in this case it was a recantation of a recantation.

Not all subversion through recantation was staged in such a public forum. Often, reformers managed to employ strategies of creative truth in their recantations before they came to the point of public display. The next sections will examine these strategies, and the definitions of truth and lies that gave them their foundations.

## Re-Defining Lies

As Nicholas Ridley once said to Thomas Cranmer, heretics in early modern England had the choice to 'turn or burn':<sup>18</sup> they could recant or die at the stake. However, men such as Thomas Bilney, James Bainham, John Tewkesbury, Hugh Latimer and Robert Barnes chose to do both. All died as martyrs, and all recanted at least once during their lives. Some of these men suffered agonies of guilt after their recantations. They believed that by recanting they had either denied their beliefs or they had sinned by lying, based on St. Augustine's definition of a lie: 'a false statement made with the intention to deceive'.<sup>19</sup> Others felt no guilt at all, possibly because they believed that in some situations it was morally acceptable to lie or equivocate, or because they considered the motivation to deceive the most important part of the definition of a lie. If the motivation to deceive was what truly changed truth into a lie, their own reasoning could become an important element in dividing truth from falsehood.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 232.

<sup>18</sup> S. Byman, 'Ritualistic Acts and Compulsive Behavior: The Pattern of Tudor Martyrdom', *The American Historical Review*, 63:3 (1978), p. 636.

<sup>19</sup> P. Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 20. See also St. Augustine, 'On Lying,' in R. Deferrari (ed.), *Treatises on Various Subjects* (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc, 1952), p. 55.

In sixteenth-century England, people who managed to confuse or thwart their persecutors through various methods of creative truth were often praised for their ability rather than condemned for their recourse to dishonesty. Anthony Dalaber, George Joye, John Frith and John Careless all wrote against lying and deceitfulness, and yet they all displayed behaviour that seems to contradict their writings. In 1526, Robert Garrett heard that he was about to be arrested. His friend Anthony Dalaber sent him off to be a curate for his brother, under a false name and false papers. For some reason, Garrett returned, and Dalaber disguised him and sent him off again, this time to escape the country. Garrett was taken, and Dalaber was called in for questioning. He lied about when he had seen Garrett, what Garrett had said, and where he had gone. Even when a witness was called in to challenge what Dalaber said, he maintained his lie, gambling that the authorities were more likely to believe him than the witness, who was a young boy.<sup>20</sup>

In 1527, Wolsey's representatives accused George Joye of sharing the heretical views of Thomas Bilney and Thomas Arthur.<sup>21</sup> Joye was called in for examination, but when he arrived at the palace he was told his questioning had been delayed. The scribe tried to find out where Joye lived so that he could be found for examination on another day. Joye, as he later told John Ashwell, told the scribe 'a lie for his asking',<sup>22</sup> and fled the country. John Frith used a similar strategy in his escape attempt. In 1533, when pursued by royal authorities, Frith disguised himself as a common man and fled. He was captured in Reading and examined. Foxe relates that Frith 'pretended unto the magistrates that he was not the man, but another person'.<sup>23</sup>

John Careless also lied to crown authorities and his lie was bolder than those of either Joye or Frith. In 1556, Dr. Martin examined Careless about his writings and those of some other accused heretics, including a Mr. Henry Hart. Martin asked Careless if he knew Hart, and Careless responded that he did not. However, he did. In his record of the event, Careless later said that 'I lied falsely, for I knew him indeed, and his qualities too well'.<sup>24</sup>

As S.R. Maitland has noted, these men talked about their lies with openness and did not seem ashamed or even embarrassed about them.<sup>25</sup> Careless returned to prison after this examination: there, bothered by great 'heaviness of mind and conscience', he wrote to his friend John Philpot, looking for advice and consolation. The two men exchanged letters, and Careless confessed that he was ashamed of his reluctance to be in prison and the despair that imprisonment caused him. Philpot encouraged Careless, praised him for his godliness and admired Careless's 'manifest gifts of the Spirit'.<sup>26</sup> Neither man seemed at all concerned about Careless's lie to Martin. Nor do any of the other men who reported the lies of Frith, Dalaber and Joye seem concerned about the twisting of truth. Foxe reported Frith's subterfuge with an equanimity that comes close to admiration, calling Frith 'the simple man, which

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<sup>20</sup> J. Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1563 edition). Editorial commentary and additional information. (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 12.03.11], pp. 608-614. Please note: the spelling and punctuation of all quotations from early modern sources has been modernized.

<sup>21</sup> W. Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 207.

<sup>22</sup> G. Joye, *The letters whyche Iohan Ashwell priour of Newnham Abbey besydes Bedforde, sente secretly to the Byshoppe of Lyncolne* (London, 1548), p. D2r.

<sup>23</sup> Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, (1563), p. 502.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1530.

<sup>25</sup> S.R. Maitland, *Essays on Subjects Connected with the Reformation in England*. (London: Francis and John Rivington, 1849), p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> Foxe (1563), pp. 1535- 1537.

could not craftily enough colour himself.<sup>27</sup> Dalaber's report of his lies showed only an attitude of determination and protectiveness toward Garrett, and a strong dislike of papists. Joye's attitude was simply one of distrust toward the authorities.

These lies reveal a common purpose. Careless lied to defend the religious beliefs of himself and Hart, even though he did not agree with Hart. Joye and Frith lied to save their lives. Dalaber lied to save a friend's life. None of these people lied because they took pleasure in deception; their intent was to prevent something. Deception could therefore be justified, and allow them to preach against lies even while they altered the truth. Blending the theories of many of the classical and medieval studies of truth and lies made this distinction possible. Varying conclusions in the writings of St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and other church fathers and medieval theologians provided room for interpretation, which sixteenth-century theologians and canonists used to develop a new system of moral theology. Two treatises of St. Augustine formed its foundation: *On Lying*, which provided the basic definition of a lie, and *Against Lying*, which applied the theories of the first treatise to the persecution of heretics.

Augustine claimed that there were no circumstances in which lying was not a sin, but that circumstances could influence the severity of the sin. In contrast, St. Jerome acknowledged some situations where lying might be acceptable, including lying in order to prevent something worse from happening, such as church dissension. Clement of Alexandria, Origen and John Chrysostom agreed with this, for to them lying was acceptable in situations where telling the truth might be harmful. Thomas Aquinas looked at the practical difficulties of truth-telling more closely in his *Summa Theologica* and provided further distinctions and qualifications, such as the idea that 'truth is principally in the intellect, and secondarily in things according as they are related to the intellect as their principle'.<sup>28</sup> This allowed for various definitions of truth based on the variables within human intellect. Aquinas also distinguished between truth and truthfulness. He called a person's inclination to be truthful veracity, and considered veracity to be a virtue. As John Finnis summarizes, veracity was a matter of personal decency, honesty and uprightness, expressed through words or deeds that conformed to reality. Veracity did not require that all communicative expressions be true. In certain situations, it was acceptable to alter meaning or even lie.<sup>29</sup>

Sixteenth-century theologians used all these writings to re-define the lie and its eternal consequences. Considering the variation of beliefs regarding other aspects of the faith that existed between these men, their definition of what constituted a lie was remarkably consistent. All of them hinged on the motivation of deception. Miles Coverdale said that to deceive through lies abused the name of God.<sup>30</sup> In 1536, William Tyndale said that: 'to lie for the intent to beguile is damnable of itself'.<sup>31</sup> His great enemy, Thomas More, also emphasized that to deceive was the worst part of a lie, saying that to practise deception broke the seventh commandment: thou shalt not steal.<sup>32</sup> In the mid-

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 502.

<sup>28</sup> T. Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, ed. R.M. Hutchins (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1952) vol. 1, p. 95.

<sup>29</sup> J. Finnis, *Aquinas: Moral, Political, and Legal Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 156-157.

<sup>30</sup> M. Coverdale, *A Christen exhortacion vnto customable swearers what a right [and] lawfull othe is* (London, 1543), p. B2r.

<sup>31</sup> W. Tyndale, *An exposycyon vpon the v.vi.vii. chapters of Mathewe which thre chapters are the keye and the dore of the scripture, and the restoring agayne of Moses lawe corrupt by ye scrybes and pharyses* (London, 1536), p. F5v.

<sup>32</sup> T. More, *A brieffourme of confession instructing all Christian folke how to confesse their sinnes* (London, 1576), p. D1v.

1560s, Calvin defined a lie as: 'to do deceitfully ...to fail and break promise'.<sup>33</sup> All of these theologians condemned particular kinds of lies and allowed others, based on the intention to deceive. Justification based on motivation became a key factor. To deceive in order to accomplish something that was right became acceptable, though never ideal.

Calvin gave two examples of this, through the Biblical figures of Rahab and Rebecca. Rahab's deception was acceptable because it was meant 'to help our brethren, to provide for their safety'. Rebecca lied to enable God's plan for her son Jacob. Both women showed faith in their deception, which provided a good motivation to lie.<sup>34</sup> Thirty years earlier, Tyndale had used the same theory, although he gave as an example the story of King David deceiving King Achis the Philistine. Tyndale said that David was justified because he deceived Achis as part of his campaign against the Amalekites, who were enemies of the Jews. Tyndale considered deception acceptable for the sake of a higher purpose. As he said in his *Exposition on Matthew*:

"To bear a sick man in hand that a wholesome bitter medicine is sweet to make him drink it is the duty of charity and no sin. To persuade him that pursueth his neighbour to hurt him or slay him, that his neighbour is gone another contrary way, is the duty of every Christian man by the law of charity and no sin, no though I confirmed it with an oath. But to lie for to deceive and hurt, that is damnable only."<sup>35</sup>

Over the course of the sixteenth century, theologians developed degrees of culpability for lies, and justified these degrees through careful application and expansion of the theories of the church fathers and medieval theologians. A general structure came from St. Augustine, who arranged lies into what Vernon Bourke calls 'eight levels of seriousness', based on the amount of malice involved. Augustine placed lying to harm one's neighbour or for the pleasure of deception at a high level because of the high amount of malice in those sorts of lies. The lowest three levels were 'lying to improve the morals or social relations of one's associates, lying to save someone's life, and lying to save a person from sexual defilement'.<sup>36</sup> These lies contained little malice. Thus, the motivation for the lie was the underlying factor that influenced the intent to deceive and so changed the level of seriousness.

For sixteenth-century theologians, blasphemy bespoke a high degree of culpability. Men who seemed unashamed of their own lies, in contrast, spoke vehemently against blasphemy, by which they meant swearing falsely in God's name or teaching false doctrine. George Joye, in the same letter to John Ashwell in which he described how he lied to the scribe, also condemned people who lied about doctrine.<sup>37</sup> Thomas Becon, who recanted twice, wrote *An Invective Against that Most Wicked and Damnable Vice of Swearing*, which equated swearing falsely using God's name with adultery, gluttony, fornication and covetousness.<sup>38</sup> Martin Luther condemned the blasphemous lies of false teachers who

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<sup>33</sup> J. Calvin, *A commentarie of M. Iohn Caluine, vpon the booke of Iosue finished a little before his death* (London: 1578), pp. D1r, D1v.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. C1r.

<sup>35</sup> Tyndale, *An Exposition on Matthew*, p. F7v.

<sup>36</sup> V. J. Bourke, *Augustine's Love of Wisdom: An Introspective Philosophy*. (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1992), p. 188.

<sup>37</sup> Joye, *John Ashwell Letters*, p. L3v.

<sup>38</sup> T. Becon, *An inuectyue agenst the moost wicked [and] detestable vyce of swearing* (London, 1543), pp. 4-4v.

advocated doctrine over faith.<sup>39</sup> Tyndale said that a lie sworn to God dishonoured the name of God.<sup>40</sup> Almost as bad as blasphemy was perjury; the two were connected because each involved swearing falsely using God's name. As Calvin and More said, perjury broke both law and commandment, and so placed people under both human and divine judgement.<sup>41</sup>

At the other end of the scale, little culpability was applied to lying to save a life. This can partly explain why so many men and women who risked martyrdom for their faith showed little shame or embarrassment about their lies. As Perez Zagorin has noted, this is a logical aspect of a persecuted community, for lying was for them a means of self-protection.<sup>42</sup> Not only did such an argument justify the sort of lies told by Careless, Joye, Frith and Dalaber, it justified recanting to placate the authorities as well. In circumstances where recantation would not be blasphemy or perjury, people could recant in order to save lives – sometimes, their own. In some cases, their friends advised them to recant to save their own lives, even if they had to lie. Thomas Whyttell said when he signed his recantation that he had been 'desired and counselled' to do so.<sup>43</sup> Friends of Robert Wisdom told him to recant, because they did not believe he could tolerate prison.<sup>44</sup> According to Foxe, Thomas Bilney consulted his friends Master Dancaster and Master Farmer regarding his recantation in 1527, and recanted 'through infirmity rather than [inclination]', due to their persuasion.<sup>45</sup> In 1531, James Bainham was arrested and put in prison and Hugh Latimer advised him to recant. Latimer had heard that Bainham had been arrested for discrediting Thomas Becket and wrote to him saying that it was not an issue worth dying for.<sup>46</sup>

Subverting authority through recantation might also be justifiable to save a life. When Robert Barnes was arrested for heresy, his friends advised him to recant. He took their advice and then returned to his evangelism. He was soon re-arrested and the same friends suggested that he flee the country while he still could. He escaped from jail, leaving behind a note that said that he intended to commit suicide by drowning himself in the river because he had seen that Cardinal Wolsey was right and he was wrong. He wrote that he had tied a full recantation around his own neck and it could be retrieved when his body was found. Wolsey ordered a search to retrieve that recantation which lasted over a week, while Barnes fled to Antwerp unimpeded.<sup>47</sup>

Some people believed that the state of the liar's heart and mind also changed the degree of culpability in a lie, for if the lie came only from the mouth it was not as severe a sin. Gregory the Great, in his *Moralia*, said that Job was accused of lying because he claimed he was righteous in God's sight, but he was not lying because God agreed with what Job said, even if Job's friends did not. 'The ears of men judge our words as they sound outwardly, but the divine judgement hears them as they are uttered from within. Among men the heart is judged by the words; with God the words are judged by the heart.' This text, referred to in later discussions of the *Moralia* as *humanae aures*, was an important

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<sup>39</sup> M. Luther, *A faithful admonition of a certeyne true pastor and prophete sent vnto the Germanes at such a time as certain great princes went about to bryng alienes into Germany* (London, 1554), pp. G6r, G6v.

<sup>40</sup> Tyndale, *An Exposition on Matthew*, pp. F5v.

<sup>41</sup> J. Calvin, *Sermons of M. John Caluine, vpon the X. Commandementes of the Lawe, geuen of God by Moses, otherwise called the Decalogue* (London 1579), 23d; More, *A Form of Confession*, p. 22v.

<sup>42</sup> Zagorin, *Ways of Lying*, p. V.

<sup>43</sup> Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563), p. 1454.

<sup>44</sup> Susan Bridgen, *London and the Reformation*, p. 349.

<sup>45</sup> Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563), p. 480.

<sup>46</sup> Wabuda, 'Equivocation and Recantation', p. 240.

<sup>47</sup> N. Serawlook Tjernagel, *Henry VIII and the Lutherans* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1965), p. 54.

development in the study of lies and the truth, for it allowed what Zagorin calls the distinction of 'heart from word and inner state from its outward expression'.<sup>48</sup>

## Creative Truth

This distinction allowed methods of creative truth to develop. This paper will call these methods strategies of equivocation, although this term was not employed by the sixteenth-century reformers who developed them. In both modern scholarship and sixteenth-century writings, equivocation is often considered part of casuistry, but the two actually show distinct characteristics. Casuistry justifies action based on probability, plays with the interpretation of the truth and often denies the authority of the law. In contrast, equivocation justifies action based on the particular situation, plays with the truthfulness of the individual, and works through the authority of the law. For sixteenth-century reformers, equivocation was especially helpful in situations where there was no obligation to tell the truth, and when the spirit of the law differed from the letter of the law. It was a way to maintain one's personal faith without open defiance.

Johann Sommerville uses the following example: a traveller comes to a city and the guards ask him if he has come from a particular town where they think there is plague. The traveller has come from that town, and knows that there is no plague. However, he is afraid that the guards will not believe him and that they will not let him in if he says that he is from that town. Also, their real question is not whether he is from that town but if he could be carrying the plague. So he can answer their question in the negative because he is really answering their real question, which is whether or not they are in danger from plague by letting him in.<sup>49</sup>

Some of the most common methods of equivocation used humour, non-answers, or the ambiguity of language. These methods allowed people to safeguard their veracity, tell lies without living lies, and subvert the laws and institutions of the authorities who opposed them while they furthered their own causes. For example, records of the examinations of several accused reformers show a frequent refrain of 'I do not remember', which might be legitimate or might show the use of selective memory to avoid self-incrimination.<sup>50</sup> Thomas Rose equivocated many times when under examination by Bishop Gardiner, making statements that had many possible meanings. He reported to Foxe that his final speech successfully convinced his examiners to 'name it a recantation, which I never meant nor thought, as God knoweth', and saved him from execution. Gardiner decided that he would take Rose with him on his visitations. Rose agreed to go, then managed to escape and flee to the continent.<sup>51</sup>

In 1529, after Sir Thomas More gave Bishop Tunstall the job of hunting book agents, Tunstall went after those who sold Tyndale's New Testament. He planned to hold a public burning of the Bibles that he confiscated from them, but he did not manage to find as many copies as he wished. Augustine Packington offered to get Tunstall some Tyndale New Testaments to burn. Tunstall agreed, and actually

<sup>48</sup> Zagorin, *Ways of Lying*, p. 25.

<sup>49</sup> J. Sommerville, 'The New Art of Lying: Equivocation, Mental Reservation, and Casuistry', in Edmund Leites (ed.), *Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p.169.

<sup>50</sup> Strype *Ecclesiastical Memorials* Appendix vol 1, p. 42. See also Foxe (1563), pp. 244, 486, 566, 781, 808.

<sup>51</sup> J. Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1576 edition). Editorial commentary and additional information. (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 12.03.11], p. 1980.

paid for the books. Multiple copies of the New Testament duly arrived, and More demanded to know who had supported the importation of banned books. George Constantine truthfully told him that Tunstall had, while Packington gave Tyndale the money to pay for a fresh print run of the New Testament.<sup>52</sup>

The foundation for the use of humour in equivocation may have been St. Augustine's teaching that 'jocose' lies were not lies because, in theory, everyone was in on the joke.<sup>53</sup> William Jerome, Robert Garrett and Robert Barnes used humour when they recanted at Paul's Cross with such light-heartedness and good cheer that witnesses to the event realized that they did not mean a word of it.<sup>54</sup> Anne Askew feigned concern over the fate of mice sent to damnation because they ate the Host.<sup>55</sup> A man named Silver once found himself under accusation of heresy by Sir Thomas More, and when More made a pun that silver needed to be refined by fire, Silver retorted: 'But Quicksilver cannot stand for it'. According to John Strype, More was so delighted by such a 'ready answer' that he dismissed him.<sup>56</sup> John Philpot made several saucy retorts when examined by the Queen's Commissioners, Roper and Cooke, such as his response to Roper's statement that Philpot was an 'unmeet man' to be an archdeacon: Philpot said that he was as meet as the man who currently held the position.<sup>57</sup> Philpot also used humour when he responded to Roper's and Cooke's questioning with a tongue-in-cheek analysis of the effectiveness of their methods of interrogation. After Cooke's repeated threats that they would send him to prison for his impudence, Philpot responded simply, 'Hold that argument fast, for it is the best you have'.<sup>58</sup>

Providing non-answers was another popular method of equivocating. Non-answers included answering questions with questions, answering with so much excess detail as to confuse the story, answering with statements that did not really say anything, and answering with silence. The strategic use of silence was very popular in the sixteenth century. Anne Askew used it, with the excuse that women were not expected to speak out in religious matters. John Lambert also used it: Foxe reported that during Lambert's trial against Henry VIII, Lambert 'held his peace, defending himself rather with silence, than with arguments which he saw would nothing at all prevail'.<sup>59</sup> This reflects the teachings of both Augustine and Aquinas. Augustine wrote: 'it is not a lie when truth is passed over in silence, but when falsehood is brought forth in speech',<sup>60</sup> and Aquinas distinguished between keeping silent about the truth and telling falsehoods in legal situations. The first was allowable, because an accused person had no obligation to admit to things that the judge could not legally ask about when proceeding from information based on rumour, partial proof, or even evidence. Hiding details was not lying or trickery but 'prudent evasion'.<sup>61</sup>

The opposite of responding with silence was responding with excess information in order to obfuscate the truth. Some men tore down the famous Rood at St Margarets Pattens, and when arrested and accused the men used excess detail to confuse the story. They said that Cromwell had said that Latimer had said that Cromwell had ordered its removal. This web of name dropping never unravelled,

<sup>52</sup> Bridgen, *London and the Reformation*, p. 181.

<sup>53</sup> Saint Augustine, 'On Lying,' p. 54.

<sup>54</sup> Bridgen, *London and the Reformation*, pp. 311-312.

<sup>55</sup> Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* vol 1, p. 387.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>57</sup> Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563), p. 1391.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 1347.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 537.

<sup>60</sup> Saint Augustine, 'Against Lying', p. 152.

<sup>61</sup> Zagorin, *Ways of Lying*, p. 29.

and so the men went unpunished.<sup>62</sup> Thomas Cole also used confusion in his recantation, abjuring in a rambling and awkward sermon about stinking flowers which was so complicated that it was difficult to tell whether he was recanting his beliefs or teaching people how not to garden.<sup>63</sup>

Answers that did not actually say anything also confused the story. William Pykas, when asked if it was lawful to swear, provided a non-answer by saying merely that he could not tell,<sup>64</sup> which could have meant that he could not distinguish the answer, or that he could not say the answer. When asked his opinions about Henry VIII's supremacy over the church, John Haughton the Carthusian prior answered only that the marriage of the king was the king's business, not his.<sup>65</sup> Sir Thomas More preserved his life for months by answering the king with non-answers regarding the Oath of Supremacy.<sup>66</sup>

Using the ambiguity of language also became an important method of equivocation in sixteenth-century England. It was not a new idea; the Spanish Dominican Raymund of Pennafort suggested it as a method of equivocation in his 1223 *Summa*. To him, the ambiguity of language provided a foundation for equivocation through statements which possessed alternate meanings. They were not lies because the speaker did not intend to deceive, but merely hoped that the other person believed one meaning even though the other meaning was actually more applicable to the situation. In this method, playing with the conventions of language was essential. As Johann Sommerville says:

‘A consequence of this ...was that a man’s ability to avoid lying while at the same time preventing some disaster could depend upon such arbitrary factors as whether a deceptive ambiguity was available, and whether the speaker had the linguistic skills needed to notice it. Dexterity at punning became a virtue.’

This was especially important because if questioners picked up on the equivocation, they could keep asking until they had a question so specific that it was impossible to hedge. The ultimate goal was to equivocate so well that the questioner did not even notice the equivocation.<sup>67</sup>

When asked to recant, people often played with words in order to satisfy temporal law without denying personal beliefs. Richard Smyth read a retraction, not a recantation, in order to hedge around confessing his beliefs; similarly, Longworth gave a declaration, not a recantation. During John Bradford’s examination, the Chancellor asked Bradford if he was seditious. He said he was not and when accused of lying he justified his actions partly through a re-definition of the term ‘seditious’ that reflected the spirit of the word’s meaning, and not the letter.<sup>68</sup> During the Oxford disputation in 1554, Latimer confused the discussion on transubstantiation when he chose to use different meanings of the term ‘the body of Christ’, including Christ’s literal body, his perfect body, and what could be interpreted to mean the body of Christ’s believers.<sup>69</sup> By doing this, Latimer also managed to present his beliefs to a wide audience despite the presence of hostile authority, making his equivocation doubly purposeful.

In 1556 Bishop Foster asked John Fortune if he believed in the Catholic Church. Fortune chose to define the Catholic church as the church ‘whereof Christ is the head’ and then said that he did believe

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<sup>62</sup> Bridgen, *London and the Reformation*, p. 290.

<sup>63</sup> T. Cole, *A godly and frutefull sermon, made at Maydestone in the county of Kent the fyrist sonday in Lent* (London, 1553).

<sup>64</sup> Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* vol. 1, p. 82.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>66</sup> P. D. Green, ‘Suicide, Martyrdom, and Thomas More,’ *Studies on the Renaissance*, 19 (1972), p. 154.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>68</sup> Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1576), p. 1522.

<sup>69</sup> Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563), pp. 940, 941.

in it.<sup>70</sup> Also in 1556, a group of people underwent a mass trial and were asked to recant. The bishop phrased the recantation so that they had to say that they 'believed in the Catholic Church'. They defined 'Catholic' differently than the bishop had, and agreed to recant.<sup>71</sup> When the Bishop of Chichester examined Richard Woodman in 1557, he charged Woodman with rejecting the Catholic Church. Woodman said that he did not reject the Catholic Church, because he defined it as the 'true church', which 'he was in every day'. This could have referred either to himself as a temple for the Holy Spirit or to a group of believers with whom he met.<sup>72</sup> Sir Thomas More once surprised a man named Petit in his house while the latter was in his closet reading. More said: 'You say you have none of these new [banned] books', and Petit equivocated by saying simply: 'Your lordship saw my books and my closet'.<sup>73</sup>

Dr Edward Crome was arguably the master equivocator of Henrican England. As Andrew Pettegree notes in his book *Marian Protestantism*, Crome always 'did what was necessary to live and fight another day'. His contemporaries could not accuse him of cowardice, because he always defended the new faith when it most needed defence. 'In consequence, it is clear that, despite all Crome's slippery cavillations, he never forfeited the respect of other members of the evangelical elite'.<sup>74</sup> Over the course of Henry VIII's reign, Crome managed to recant three times and never lost his position as a respected preacher.

On 13 February 1531, Crome was forced to recant his belief that the Bible should be available for laypeople to read, that prayers for the dead were unimportant, and that 'the authority of the church ...was not above scripture, but to the church was given authority to expound and explicate it'. He recanted as ordered, but prefaced his articles of recantation with a 'reforming sermon' and announced that he had been ordered to read the articles, which negated any idea that he was actually recanting.<sup>75</sup> In 1541, Crome was arrested again, and equivocated again. The king gave him another recantation and told him to preach it with his sermon. The next Sunday Crome preached his sermon, which presented his views as he always had presented them. He said: 'There be some men that do say that I have been abjured, and some say that I am perjured, but the truth is that I am neither abjured, nor yet perjured'.<sup>76</sup> Then he read the document the king had given him, and few believed that he meant it. However, Crome could defend himself to the king, because when challenged for making that statement he could equivocate by presenting a creative truth: that he had said he was neither abjured nor perjured because he had not yet read the document that was his abjuration.

In 1546, Crome once again preached a controversial sermon and was arrested for heresy under the Act of Six Articles. On June 27, he read aloud a clear recantation, which admitted at the end that he had equivocated.<sup>77</sup> However, he did not specify what exactly had been equivocation and what had been truth in his recantation, which made people question his sincerity. John Bale and some other contemporaries felt that this last recantation was real and accused Crome of falling from grace; others thought that he was simply equivocating once again. It is interesting to note that Crome had refused to recant at first, and gave in only after people in his circle had been interrogated and tortured. The timing

<sup>70</sup> J. Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1570 edition). Editorial commentary and additional information. (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 12.03.11], p. 2100.

<sup>71</sup> E. Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England Under Mary Tudor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 140.

<sup>72</sup> Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563), p. 1588.

<sup>73</sup> Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* vol 1, p. 203.

<sup>74</sup> A. Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism* (Hants: Scolar Press, 1996), p. 98.

<sup>75</sup> Bridgen, *London and the Reformation*, pp. 331,332.

<sup>76</sup> Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, vol. 3 Appendix, p. 19.

<sup>77</sup> Wabuda, 'Equivocation and Recantation', pp. 230-235.

of his recantation might reflect fear that the same thing would happen to him, but it also might have been a calculated move to save his friends. They had been implicated in what Bridgen calls a 'shadowy plot', and after Crome's recantation the persecution against them ended.<sup>78</sup> This might be another example of the importance of motivation in justifying a lie. It also shows how people could subvert authority by obeying that authority, when they were employing methods of creative truth.

## **Conclusion**

Methods of creative truth included the use of humour, non-answers, and the manipulation of language and terminology. When faced with persecution for their beliefs, reformers employed these strategies very carefully, for such equivocation came very close to telling lies, which might then be considered disobedience to authority, blasphemy or perjury and carry a stern punishment. Thus, the skills needed to create truth had to be learned, practiced and used with care and discretion. Even more importantly, those who told creative truths had to be very self-aware. One's motivation was an essential part of the definition that divided truth from falsehood.

With such careful consideration and strategic use of equivocation, it was possible to subvert authority through submission to authority. Thomas Becon used the process of recantation to promote his own reforming works, as did John Tyndale when he used the experience of recantation as an opportunity to hand out his brother William's translations of the Bible.<sup>79</sup> Thomas Cranmer used recantation in an attempt to reconcile his beliefs about spiritual reform with his sense of obligation to the monarch. Edward Crome recanted to obey his monarch, in a way that would not compromise his conscience. None of these men were cowards; none of them are remembered as failures in their faith. Thus, they show how recantation was not necessarily a shameful act, but rather a unique and effective form of bravery.

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<sup>78</sup> Bridgen, *London and the Reformation*, pp. 368-370.

<sup>79</sup> Bridgen, *London and the Reformation*, p. 191.

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## United Nations Headquarters, New York: The Cultural-Political Economy of Space and Iconicity

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In December 1946, just over a year after its inception, the United Nations (UN) accepted an offer from the United States to permanently house its headquarters in New York City.<sup>1</sup> The United States was chosen as the host country in late 1946, and a last minute US\$8.5 million dollar donation by philanthropic businessman John D. Rockefeller Jr. secured New York as the settlement site over other potential locations, including Philadelphia, Boston and San Francisco.<sup>2</sup> The team of designers commissioned to work on the design were as international as their project, and included some of the most famous architects in the world: Wallace K. Harrison of the United States, and Le Corbusier of France. Construction began in October 1949 once the land was cleared of existing buildings,<sup>3</sup> and when it was completed in October 1952 the UN headquarters stood as one of the most daring pieces of modern architecture of the period, an 'image of bold progress for the international organisation',<sup>4</sup> [For image see: Fig. 1 in Appendix]. The most striking features of this construction, however, require deeper analysis: namely, the meanings and values represented by, and expressed through, the location choice for the headquarters (place), and the design of the structure (iconicity). Importantly, the geographical location of the building (chosen in a post World War II setting), and the iconic design that has come to represent the UN's physical locality, both feed off, and feed into, the cultural, political, and economic ideologies embodied in this 'world' institution from the outset.

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<sup>1</sup> T. Hamilton, 'Work Completed on U.N. Buildings' *The New York Times* (10 Oct 1952), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations. 'The Story of United Nations Headquarters' *United Nations*, (New York, 2009), p.2. Interestingly, the General Assembly met for the first time in London in early 1946 and yet made the decision to locate the permanent headquarters in the United States (subsequently settling on New York). Other potential country-locations could have included the remaining four members of the Security Council: the United Kingdom, the Republic of France, Soviet Russia or China. However, given the urgency felt by these nations for constructing an international post-war institution, the relative destruction suffered by the United Kingdom, France, Soviet Russia and China during the war, and the prominent role the United States played in assembling the nations and pushing for this form of international collaboration, the United States was selected as the preferable host-country. J. Loeffler, 'Introduction', in J. Loeffler and E. Stoller, (eds.), *The United Nations: The Building Block Series* (New York, 1999), pp. 1-14, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, 'Fact Sheet: United Nations Headquarters', *United Nations* (New York, n.d.), p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> P. Goldberger, *The City Observed: New York: A Guide to the Architecture of Manhattan* (New York, 1979), p.132.

Note: The UN Headquarters consists of four main buildings: The Secretariat, The General Assembly, Conference Area, and The Library (which was an additional construction, added to the complex in 1961).

Architecture is socially produced and fundamentally conditioned by prevailing politico-economic narratives.<sup>5</sup> Large-scale developers and their political allies have been known to foster 'placewars' through land development and the construction of "cultural superstructures". Indeed, in an analysis of the cultural construction of Los Angeles, Mike Davis has noted that Downtown arts projects have been increasingly favoured by the political elites, as cultural constructions (particularly the iconic) inflate property values and 'recenter' the region for the benefit of political and financial investors.<sup>6</sup> This paper seeks to build upon discourses that explore complex social constructions by analysing the simultaneous place-making and power-production dynamics that informed and represented the UN throughout the early years of its existence. Turning focus towards the construction of this iconic building in the New York City skyline, the analysis will explore the extent to which this privileged place - the 'World Capital' in a 'World City'<sup>7</sup> - represented an *exclusive* international imaginary, and how the subsequent architectural power-dynamics have affected international politics.<sup>8</sup>

Beginning with a macro analysis of prevailing cultural, political and economic changes within the era, the paper will narrow focus in order to examine the micro construction and design of the UN headquarters building. The first step in mapping wider contexts requires a contextualisation of the 1946 to 1952 period (the timeframe in which the United Nations was constructed), both in terms of post-World War II (WWII) internationalist narratives, and changing architectural practices. Drawing on theories that decode space and place, the paper will subsequently deconstruct the social power and knowledge embedded in the place-location chosen for the UN's permanent settlement. The analysis will then be narrowed to focus explicitly on the iconicity of the headquarters; the relationship between aesthetics and function, and the implicit politico-economic interconnectedness between the UN headquarters and wider ideologies surrounding the American skyscraper. Furthermore, as architecture is considered as a 'product for conspicuous consumption', the cultural political economy of the UN's iconicity, and the relation of iconicity, consumption and commerce, will be exposed and examined.<sup>9</sup> Finally, this paper will analyse the politico-economic value of utilising famous architects, or 'starchitects', for the construction of the UN headquarters. Starchitects represent a cultural elite but are often 'silently complicit' in aestheticising the agendas of the economically and politically

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<sup>5</sup> P. Jones, 'Putting Architecture in its Social Place: A Cultural Political Economy of Architecture', *Urban Studies*, 46 (12), (2009), p. 2520. For further discussion on general architectural types see: A. King, *Spaces of Global Culture: Architecture, Urbanism and Identity* (New York, 2004); and M. Kaika, and K. Thielen, 'Form Follows Power: A Genealogy of Urban Shrines', *City*, 10 (1), (2006), pp. 59-69.

<sup>6</sup> M. Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London, 2006). p.71; Edward Soja also examines the urbanisation processes that have emerged in modern Los Angeles. See, for instance: E. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford, 1996); A. J. Scott and E. W. Soja (eds), *The City: Los Angeles and Urban Theory at the End of the Twentieth Century* (London, 1996); E. Soja, *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (Oxford, 2000).

<sup>7</sup> F. Adams, 'New York Offers U.N. 350-Acre Site at Flushing as a Permanent Home; Conveys City Building to Assembly', *The New York Times* (19 Oct 1946), p.1.

<sup>8</sup> Scott states that cities have always been integral to the facilitation of cultural and economic activity. He argues that it is only through providing a conceptual account of this phenomenon (the social construction of buildings and cities) that place-specific culture-generation can be explored and examined. A. J. Scott, 'The Cultural Economy of Cities', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 21 (2), (1997), p.323.

<sup>9</sup> Kaika and Thielen, 'Form Follows Power', p.62.

powerful.<sup>10</sup> As a 'brand' in their own right with their own design baggage, this final section will reveal the cultural and political production of the 'individual' as they contribute to the beginning of a new institution. Drawing on the space, iconicity and starchitect lenses to highlight the cultural political economy of the UN within a built environment, this article will ultimately connect narratives of power in the UN to the built environment research agenda.

The United Nations was born in 1945 amid a storm of victory and defeat – victory for the Allied Powers of the United Kingdom (UK), the United States (US), Soviet Russia, China and France; and defeat for Germany, Italy and Japan (the Axis Powers) among others. Building on the precedent set by the League of Nations, the founding principles of the UN included the facilitation of cooperation in international law, international security, economic and social progress, and world peace. However, the forty-five nations invited to the 1945 San Francisco Conference that cemented the existence of the UN institution had all previously declared war on the Axis Powers, and/or supported an Allied-led internationalist system.<sup>11</sup> Thus, from the outset, the institution was shrouded by a veil of internationalism and conditioned by the subtle dichotomous power relations of the victorious versus the defeated. The United States, instrumental in the Allies' WWII victory, was the driving force behind the establishment of the UN as an international organization for peace.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, in December 1946 the US (New York to be exact) was selected as the host country for the permanent residence of the UN headquarters. The historical evolution of the UN as an international political entity is beyond the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, the placement of the UN's headquarters in New York and the aesthetic place-making processes that located the UN within American space, was telling of an emerging American-dominated, cultural political economy of peace following the close of WWII.<sup>13</sup>

Mazower has noted that commentators in the 1940s were distinctly wary of the 'internationalism' seemingly represented by the institution and these principles, viewing the UN instead as 'an Alliance of the Great Powers embedded in a universal organisation'.<sup>14</sup> While the 'Great Powers' – the US, the UK, Soviet Russia, China and France – had central involvement in the creation of this institution, American political and economic hegemony was subtly expressed through a process of cultural production with distinctive semiotic and aesthetic components. Decades earlier, US President Woodrow Wilson had proclaimed that, 'the great things remaining to be done can only be done with the whole world as a stage'.<sup>15</sup> The

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<sup>10</sup> Jones, 'Putting Architecture', p. 2521.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations, '60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the San Francisco Conference' (2005), Accessed 15 May 2011, <http://www.un.org/aboutun/sanfrancisco/>.

<sup>12</sup> M. Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Woodstock, 2009), p.17.

<sup>13</sup> It is important to note that New York and the United States were not one and the same in population configuration, nor in ideas of internationalism. This paper does not aim to generalise New York outwards to the whole of the United States; rather, it seeks to clarify how the complex place-making processes of the United Nations in New York City were in a constant state of (re)negotiation and convergence with certain American internationalist/corporatist ideologies. Such work will provide a spring board onto further analysis into the tension between New York City and the United States as sites of potentially divergent 'internationalism', and how this tension has fed back into the identity-politics of the United Nations.

<sup>14</sup> Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Wilson cited in A. Eban, 'The U.N. Idea Revisited', *Foreign Affairs*, 74 (5), (Sep.–Oct. 1995), p. 50.

performative element of this 'stage' came to visible fruition in two stages - firstly in the UN's inaugural 1945 San Francisco Conference:

'Oliver Lundquist and Jo Mielziner - the latter famous as a Broadway designer of Musicals - had transformed the \$5 million San Francisco Opera House into a glittering hall. . . . Lundquist and Mielziner adorned the stage with four golden pillars tied together with olive branch wreaths symbolizing the four freedoms that President Roosevelt had proclaimed'.<sup>16</sup>

The American emotional and aesthetic investment in this event at a time when a destroyed Europe was undergoing post-war reconstruction displayed a balance of wealth and power that came to define the early UN years - no effort or expense was spared 'to heighten the impact of the conference' and the global image of America.<sup>17</sup> These ostentatious, 'glittering' symbols of peace representing the New World Institution were a means of garnishing *existing* WWII elite power with gold trim, and served to constitute these social relations as *new* and *global* during a moment of significant political, social and economic change.<sup>18</sup>

The second (and more permanent) performative element that heralded the beginning of the UN - and fed off, and into, American ideological domination of the institution - was the commissioning of the UN headquarters to be located in New York, and to be designed by some of the world's leading architects. As a blueprint for a New World Order,<sup>19</sup> a visionary building was demanded in order to represent such hope and responsibility. Importantly, the late 1940s and early 1950s witnessed a sea-change in the design and iconography of architectural practice. The internationalism and politico-economic ideologies that marked the end of the Second World War also affected the architectural imagination of the New World Order.<sup>20</sup> Sklair has defined the 1950s as the beginning of the global era in architecture; a directional change from the earlier, pre-global state- and/or religion-driven construction, towards an architecture shaped by global capitalism and consumerism. This is not to say that a building which paid homage to capitalist and consumerist influences in its design was necessarily wholly capitalist and corporate; rather, Sklair has suggested that post 1950s architectural design articulated a certain struggle for global meaning and power that was affected by economic transformations.<sup>21</sup> This international architectural 'struggle' was influenced by significant features of the period, namely: pervasive capitalist economic discourses, the internationalisation of images and technology, and the

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<sup>16</sup> Schlesinger cited in D. Puchala, 'World Hegemony and the United Nations', *International Studies Review*, 7 (4), (2005), p. 573.

<sup>17</sup> Puchala, 'World Hegemony', p. 573.

<sup>18</sup> Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, p. 7

<sup>19</sup> Eban, 'The U.N. Idea Revisited', p. 39.

<sup>20</sup> Following the end of WWII, international changes were simultaneously global and economic. The Bretton Woods agreement was signed in 1944 and led to the creation of an international monetary political system. The International Monetary Fund (1946) and The World Bank (1947) were created shortly thereafter and underlined the emergence of a global, political economics underpinned by capitalist and neoliberal ideologies. W. Rennen and P. Martens, 'The Globalisation Timeline', *Integrated Assessment*, 4 (3), (2003), p. 141.

<sup>21</sup> L. Sklair, 'Iconic Architecture and Urban, National and Global Identities', in D. Davis and N. Libertun de Duren, (eds.), *Cities and Sovereignty: Identity Politics in Urban Spaces* (Bloomington, 2011), p. 179.

dispersal of design expertise.<sup>22</sup> As a result, the 'corporate/capitalist' image and the 'global power' image in architectural design grew simultaneously and became inextricably linked.

A key individual influence on the UN headquarters' construction was the Rockefeller Center (also located in New York), designed and built throughout the 1930s, and 'conceived as a place in which monumental architecture would spur both business and culture to new heights'.<sup>23</sup> Links to this institution were both economic and cultural – the UN headquarters was mostly financed by a Rockefeller donation in 1946; the headquarters' chief designer was Wallace K. Harrison, principal designer of the Rockefeller Apartments and a fierce international modernist architect; and the design process began in an office at the Rockefeller Center. The commercial success that followed the Rockefeller construction demonstrated to New York City that urban boosterism could accompany globally iconic architecture. In turn, the iconicity of the complex demonstrated to the UN the value of image-capital. Thus, within the period, emerging pseudo-internationalist narratives and changing architectural practices laid the foundation for a global 'United Nations Imaginary' that offered an American-centric cultural dimension to politico-economic prerogatives.

Certainly, the Rockefeller Center was not alone in developing this commercial culture of skyscraper-boosterism. The ever-growing skyline of New York City has often been read as a representation of corporate power and marketing. However, as Carol Willis has observed: 'skyscrapers should best be understood both as the locus of business and as businesses themselves'.<sup>24</sup> The 1920s saw a frenzied development of vertical structures, with over one hundred buildings of twenty stories or more being added to the skyline. In 1931 the Empire State building was unveiled as a speculative venture designed to attract business investment and, as the world's tallest building, a site to be visually consumed. Unveiled by a host of dignitaries, including Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mayor Jimmy Walker, the political fanfare and visual iconicity of the Empire State Building marked the structure as integral to the image of New York City, and bolstered representations of the city as a utopia for advanced capitalism.<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, the spatial connection to New York was not without meaning or consequence. The location of the UN headquarters presented (and presents) paradoxical and competing spatial narratives.<sup>26</sup> In official terms, the UN's headquarters are located in eighteen acres of

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<sup>22</sup> King, *Spaces*, p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> Goldberger, *The City Observed*, p.168.

<sup>24</sup> C. Willis, *Form Follows Finance: Skyscrapers and Skylines in New York and Chicago* (New York, 1995), p.10.

<sup>25</sup> C. Willis, 'Form Follows Finance: The Empire State Building', in D. Ward and O. Zunz (eds), *The Landscape of Modernity: Essays on New York City, 1900-1940*, (New York, 1992), p.162.

<sup>26</sup> Massey has defined 'space' as a simultaneity of experiences and 'stories-so-far' on a global scale; it is a process without stasis in which individual and/or collective lived moments feed into global narratives and inform wider subjective realities. The more localised lens of 'place' refers to the collection of these stories in a particular region. In other words, place – as neither fixed nor static – is the local assortment of fluid, interrelated histories and experiences, which are the result of an ongoing, transnational flow of people, knowledge and culture. As a 'story' interwoven in the process of New York City, the United Nations headquarters has both influenced, and been influenced by, New York's transnational flows. D. Massey, *For Space*, (London, 2005), p. 9. For further discussion of space as a collection of interrelated histories, see: A. Escobar, 'Culture sits in places: reflections on globalism and subaltern strategies of localization', *Political Geography*, 20 (2), (2001), pp. 139-174. Note: The definition reference can be located on p. 146.

international territory. However, as an institution, it has faced many place-based restrictions: it is bound by US regulation to prevent individuals seeking refuge in the UN from the US; it falls under city protection and utility provision; the building was part funded by a New York City 'gift' of \$7 million; and every visitor to the 'World Capital' must comply with US entry requirements and pass through US territory.<sup>27</sup> Such restrictions reaffirm the position of the nation-state as the arbiter of social change. Furthermore, Friedman has noted that 'cities are large, urbanized regions that are defined by dense patterns of interaction rather than by political-administrative boundaries'.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, the UN headquarters was inextricably spatially bound to New York City, and the implications of this spatial relationship on the UN's identity are twofold: cultural and politico-economic.

Firstly, scholars have noted that many cities seek to create a 'city image' with which to advertise and represent a specific identity.<sup>29</sup> The city image can 'spatialise a moment in a city's (projected) transition',<sup>30</sup> and the iconology of this image is not referent to one particular building, but is often linked to a wider architectural design and influence.<sup>31</sup> The early twentieth-century built-cityscape of New York encoded a cultural, visual transition; a new understanding of the 'urban space as spectacle'.<sup>32</sup> Monumental buildings and neat plazas came to dominate both the skyline and the ground-level of the city; the visual components of this occupied space denoted a dedication to modern, grand progress. Indeed, on a visit to New York in 1930, Le Corbusier marvelled at the novelty of that landscape and referred to it as 'a vertical city, under the sign of the new times'.<sup>33</sup> When offering the UN a site in New York in which to build the headquarters, the mayor of New York reaffirmed the importance of the modern, urban spectacle, stating that 'nowhere else in the United States was there a site comparable to "these beautiful... surroundings"'.<sup>34</sup> New York was presented to the UN as a city that projected success through the spectacle skyline; in turn the construction of the UN headquarters in New York was expected to complement the city's visual identity.

Moreover, the identity politics behind the city spectacle firmly connected the UN headquarters to the city of New York. Cityscapes and monumental architectural forms are orientating – they visually fix our geographical awareness, telling us where we are. The skyline of New York City has long provided a fixed reference point for defining cultural locality, particularly due to its frequent appearance in the American media.<sup>35</sup> Following UN acceptance of New York as the site for construction, the UN headquarters' 39-storey Secretariat Building [See Fig. 1 in Appendix] became fixed within that cityscape and, as a stand-alone structure with acres of space around the base, it has maintained a strong presence in the midtown skyline since completion in 1952. Thus the headquarters has, in itself, become an orientating spectacle.

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<sup>27</sup> United Nations. 'The Story', pp. 2-3.

<sup>28</sup> J. Friedmann, 'Where we stand: a decade of world city research', in P. Knox and P. Taylor, (eds.), *World Cities in a World System*, (Cambridge, 2000), , p. 23.

<sup>29</sup> M. Balshaw and L. Kennedy, 'Introduction: Urban Space', in M. Balshaw and L. Kennedy, (eds.), *Urban Space and Representation* (London, 2000), p. 16.

<sup>30</sup> Jones, 'Putting Architecture', p. 2528.

<sup>31</sup> J. E. Buchard, 'The Meaning of Architecture', *The Review of Politics*, 20 (3), (1958), p. 369.

<sup>32</sup> Balshaw and Kennedy, 'Introduction: Urban Space', p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> Le Corbusier cited in D. Ward and O. Zunz, 'Between Rationalism and Pluralism: Creating the Modern City', David Ward and Olivier Zunz (eds), *The Landscape of Modernity: Essays on New York City, 1900-1940* (New York, 1992), pp. 3-18, p.4.

<sup>34</sup> Adams, 'New York Offers U.N. 350-Acre Site', p.1.

<sup>35</sup> L. Sklair, 'Iconic Architecture and Capitalist Globalisation', *City*, 10 (1) (2006), p. 40.

In addition, the recognisability of a city image like the UN – or set of images in the case of a city skyline – is desirable for its ability to transform the heterogenous disorder of the general city (with its competing social groups, invasive sounds, ambiguous spatial boundaries and social anomie) into an image of overarching homogeneity.<sup>36</sup> The Secretariat skyscraper and the modernist, curved structure of the General Assembly were slotted into the cityscape and have remained central tourist attractions in the city; silently complying with Manhattan's touristic cityscape uniformity and homogeneity. Thomas Bender has described the UN headquarters in the 1950s as a 'bookend' for the public space of Forty-Second Street. Lined up next to other influential constructions of the era, including the Daily News Building, the Chrysler Building, *New York Times*, the New York Public Library and the New Amsterdam Theatre, the east-west line of Forty-Second Street 'fairly represented the culture and power of the city'.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, as a socially produced construction embedded in the 'spectacle' of the New York City skyline, the UN headquarters could neither be visually neutral, nor autonomous. This inseparability of the UN headquarters and New York cityscape – the visual linkages of the local 'place' and global 'space' narratives – has cemented an aestheticised power-relationship whereby the governmentality of the UN headquarters simultaneously influences, and is influenced by, the iconicity of New York City.

This governmentality must be understood in cultural, political and economic terms. Importantly, this New York cityscape 'spectacle' represented, and still represents, the visual manifestation of capitalist progress. New York, as one of the prime centres of American capitalism – a 'World City', as it is frequently defined – has served as a centre through which many economically relevant (national and transnational) variables have flowed, including: money, workers, commodities and information.<sup>38</sup> From 1946 to 1952 the 'World Capital' of the UN headquarters was socially produced within this capitalist centre of economic flows. Beneath the layer of the cityscape 'spectacle' exists the street-level reality of daily practices of international and national employees simultaneously *working for* the UN and *living in* New York City; multinational tourists simultaneously viewing the *UN headquarters* and admiring the *wider New York City skyline*. Moreover, it is important not to overlook the surrounding Manhattan population (native, nationalised and immigrant) who have shaped the spatial and cultural identity of the city. There is often an assumed isomorphism of space, place and culture within a territorial boundary, but New York City was as diverse in population (and restricted in movement) as the world that the United Nations' building was attempting to represent.

New York saw a large influx of immigrants following the end of the Second World War. It has been described as part of the "Immigrant Belt" alongside other global cities such as Los Angeles and Miami, and the city was fundamentally changed by this movement of displaced-persons (as each individual brought their own stories, experiences and expectations into the city).<sup>39</sup> As a cosmopolitan 'World City', New York seemingly offered an ideal site for the internationalism the United Nations was keen to represent. However, the social stratification and hierarchies of difference that came to characterise population settlement in New York also fed into an *exclusive* internationalism woven into the United Nations' identity and practice.

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<sup>36</sup> J. Robinson, 'Divisive Cities: Power and Segregation in Cities', in S. Pile, C. Brook and G. Mooney, (eds), *Unruly Cities?* (London, 1999), p. 150.

<sup>37</sup> T. Bender, *The Unfinished City: New York and the Metropolitan Idea* (New York, 2007), p.4.

<sup>38</sup> Friedmann, 'Where we stand', p. 22.

<sup>39</sup> R. G. Rumbaut, 'Origins and Destinies: Immigration to the United States Since World War II', *Sociological Forum*, 9 (4), (1994), p.585.

Indeed, cities in the United States underwent rapid suburbanization from the 1950s onwards, as they transformed from 'highly centralized agglomerations into scattered, decentralized metropolitan areas'. The middle class white population abandoned the centre for the suburbs and immigrants took their places.<sup>40</sup> Although immigrant populations increasingly inhabited the inner-cities, they maintained separate communities that were excluded from economically prosperous areas, such as Forty-Second Street. John R. Logan et al have described these communities as 'immigrant enclaves', where segregation has become a normalised part of the settlement process. One was only able to leave such an enclave (and "move up" the social hierarchy to the suburbs) when one had been assimilated into the mainstream and conformed to American socio-economic norms of "respectable" work and financial stability.<sup>41</sup> This street-level stratification of the American population presents a fractured underbelly that contrasts with the homogenised (transnational, commercial) skyline of New York City.<sup>42</sup> A culture of inequality and a pressure for conformity informed the daily lives of many inhabitants of New York, and the normalised processes of spatial segregation in the areas surrounding the UN headquarters fed into the institution's pseudo-internationalist identity and practice. Thus a subtle street-level/sky-line dichotomy created a tension between spatial narratives of the United Nations in New York City, and built-environment narratives of the United Nations' Headquarters in the New York City skyline.

What is more, further location-specific restrictions conditioned the spatial identity of this institution. Delegates *entering* the UN headquarters on official business (or otherwise) must have first passed through the United States, and to do so demanded compliance with US entry requirements. The explicit politico-economic narratives embodied in this 'lived space as a strategic location',<sup>43</sup> the cultural-visual representations embodied by the 'spectacle' skyline, and the tension between cityscape homogeneity and street-level diversity, have fundamentally conditioned the perceived 'place' of the institution within internationalist discourses. Legally it resides in international territory, yet ideologically it is fixed in New York City spatial discourses, and the divisions inherent in the make up of the city are continuously (re)performed and (re)worked by the United Nations as it inhabits that space. The governmentality of the UN is inseparable from its representations and spatial associations, and the institution has thus become integrated into American (particularly New York) 'urban spectacle' narratives.

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<sup>40</sup> D. S. Massey and N. A. Denton, 'Suburbanization and Segregation in U. S. Metropolitan Areas,' *American Journal of Sociology*, 94 (3), (1988), p.592.

<sup>41</sup> J. R. Logan, R. D. Alba and W. Zhang, 'Immigrant Enclaves and Ethnic Communities in New York and Los Angeles,' *American Sociological Review*, 67, (2002), p.299-300. Social distinctions in New York were not born out of immigration; the city has a history of conscious and controlled social division. In an exploration of aristocracy in New York in the nineteenth century, Eric Homberger noted a 'heightened self-awareness among the aristocrats' that constituted an exclusive (and narrowly defined) elite. Such social-demarcation was then deliberately cultivated, and 'exclusivity' remained a central component of control, as well as an identity-framing process. The history of New York can thus be seen as one of an evolving social diversity *and* division. E. Homberger, *Mrs Astor's New York: Money and Social Power in a Gilded Age* (New York, 2004), p.4.

<sup>42</sup> Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson present an interesting study on the politics of 'difference'. They explore the difficulty of mapping a particular 'culture' onto a particular 'place' when an area has immigrant populations that inhabit the 'borderlands'. A. Gupta and J. Ferguson, 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference,' *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), (1992), p.7.

<sup>43</sup> E. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford, 1996), p. 68.

King has argued that, after '[r]ecognizing that New York is imagined, and imaged, through its Manhattan skyline... attention needs to be focused on the central importance of the materiality and visibility of the *building*, in constituting and representing not only the city, but also the nation... [and] the world (or better, worlds)'.<sup>44</sup> The individual building embodies the cultural, political, economic and administrative values of the institution, and the iconicity of the architecture symbolises its political *presence* and economic *power*.<sup>45</sup> Importantly, iconicity in architecture is not contingent on height or scale, as buildings may have an institutionally sanctioned and/or symbolic significance.<sup>46</sup> The UN headquarters complex actually incorporates a hybrid of iconic designs, with buildings both of skyscraper-stature, and low-lying monuments. The UN Secretariat Building was influenced by mid twentieth-century skyscraper iconicity; while the General Assembly Building was created as a subtly curved, low-lying construction that offered an image of aesthetic modernist monumentality.<sup>47</sup>

Sklair has noted that buildings are created to symbolise something beyond their function and that the iconicity of their design is never arbitrary.<sup>48</sup> By 1929, 56% of America's corporations had established their headquarters in New York City or Chicago.<sup>49</sup> Through the prestige of location and the height of the tower, the skyscraper came to represent capital accumulation, advertisement power and the establishment of a physical presence (and corporate ego) for an unmaterial entity.<sup>50</sup> Embedded within a corporate American skyline, the Secretariat Building identified with New York's skyscraper-iconology and connected the UN institution to a modernist, (regional and global) corporate ideology. Certainly, tall buildings are a practical response to economic pressures for more workable space on a proposed site. Nevertheless, as well as space-efficiency, height also produces symbolic capital; a symbolic capital that is aestheticised and 'viewed' more than it is practically utilised. Dovey has asserted that capital has become increasingly concerned with the generation of images and signs rather than 'use value'.<sup>51</sup> The aestheticised images and signs of a building construct an authenticity linked to notions of cultural, politico-economic power and authority. As an architectural design practice pre-dating the construction of the UN headquarters, the skyscraper represented American civilisation and modernity as a capitalist enterprise.<sup>52</sup> From the peak of the World Trade Center in the 1970s, for instance, de Certeau described the power of height and the view it afforded of the world below:

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<sup>44</sup> A. King, 'Worlds in the City: Manhattan Transfer and the Ascendance of Spectacular Space', *Planning Perspectives*, 11 (2), (1996), p. 101.

<sup>45</sup> King, 'Worlds in the City', p. 101.

<sup>46</sup> Sklair, 'Iconic Architecture and Urban, National and Global Identities', p. 186.

<sup>47</sup> The UN headquarters complex contains two more buildings: the Conference Center and the Library Building. The Conference Center connects the Secretariat and the General Assembly buildings, and it is cantilevered over the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive. This building is functional rather than aesthetically striking and the politics of power for this construction predominantly reside in the place-name: Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive. Although the identity politics of naming places is beyond the scope of this paper, further analysis is needed. The Dag Hammarskjold Library Building was not added until 1961 and so falls beyond the time-parameters of this paper.

<sup>48</sup> Sklair, 'Iconic Architecture and Urban, National and Global Identities', p. 180 -p. 191.

<sup>49</sup> Kaika and Thielen, 'Genealogy of Urban Shrines', p. 61.

<sup>50</sup> King, 'Worlds in a City', p. 109.

<sup>51</sup> K. Dovey, *Framing Places: Mediating Power in Built Form* (London, 1999), p. 107.

<sup>52</sup> King, *Spaces*, p. 12.

'A city composed of paroxysmal places in monumental reliefs. The spectator can read in it a universe that is constantly exploding. . . . On this stage of concrete, steel and glass ... the tallest letters in the world compose a gigantic rhetoric of excess in both expenditure and production'.<sup>53</sup>

Skyscrapers were often produced in the interests of urban boosterism, and iconic towers, such as the Empire State Building (the tallest building in the world from 1931 to 1972), were constructed to accentuate the capital potential of an area.

The Rockefeller Center exemplified (and pioneered on a grand-scale) this twentieth-century development. John D. Rockefeller Jr. enlisted a 'battery of professionals' in the 1930s (including Wallace K. Harrison, later Chief-Architect of the UN Headquarters), in order to produce an unprecedented profitable business and commercial complex that was to be 'architecturally and aesthetically of the highest order'.<sup>54</sup> The capital symbols of the Rockefeller Center demonstrated authenticity and power through a combination of design references, including: the utilisation of traditional European design principles (by simplifying the form of a building), an embrace of European modernism (by using glass and concrete materials), the maximisation of city-central commercial land, and the practical conformity of constructing a commercial space in line with New York zoning regulations.<sup>55</sup> While the production of the United Nations as an institution was a predominantly political endeavour, the production of the UN Headquarters building was implicitly influenced by the Rockefeller corporate, modernist image-capital. Harrison and the team of international architects continued in the Rockefeller tradition and embraced the inevitability of a skyscraper, as land was limited and valuable. The modernism of the glass Secretariat Tower and the curved General Assembly Building presented an image disassociated with history; and the tower was hailed as an 'expression of the functionalist ideal'.<sup>56</sup> The utilisation of this modernist, functional architecture for the UN was influenced by the established authenticity and authority of the tower – a structure that was underpinned by practicality, urban commercial boosterism and corporate iconicity. Moreover, the unique glass-curtain that distinguished the UN headquarters from other steel skyscrapers of the period was shortly thereafter re-appropriated by American corporate interests. Emulated by buildings such as Lever House (1952) and the Seagram Building (1958), the glass-box became an explicitly commercial symbol.<sup>57</sup> Consequently - as the authenticity and power of an institution is linked to the production of symbolic capital in the architectural façade - the politico-economic authority of the UN was overtly commercial.

Furthermore, the cultural-economic linkages between UN iconicity and New York City are augmented by acknowledging the building as a commodity to be consumed. Balshaw and Kennedy have argued that the act of looking is, in itself, an act of consumption.<sup>58</sup> Iconicity is a form of advertising and it attracts investors and tourists – cities strive to retain architectural icons, as the 'brand' recognition that comes from aesthetically and institutionally important buildings draws an increasingly mobile financial and tourist class.<sup>59</sup> When the search began for

<sup>53</sup> M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, translated by Steven Rendell (Berkeley, 1988), p.91.

<sup>54</sup> D. Reynolds, *The Architecture of New York City: Histories and Views of Important Structures, Sites and Symbols* (London, 1984), p. 254.

<sup>55</sup> Reynolds, *The Architecture of New York City*, p. 256.

<sup>56</sup> J. Loeffler, 'Introduction', p. 7-8.

<sup>57</sup> Reynolds, *The Architecture of New York City*, p. 155.

<sup>58</sup> Balshaw and Kennedy, 'Introduction: Urban Space', p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> Jones, 'Putting Architecture', p. 2526.

a suitable site to house the UN complex in 1945, the commercial value of constructing the 'World Capital' in New York was at once realised:

'The Rockefellers and other city and state boosters wanted more than anything to keep the UN in New York'.<sup>60</sup>

As an attraction for commerce, the UN headquarters offered cultural-economic opportunity to New York City. The connotations of locating the 'World Capital' in New York strengthened the image of the region as a 'World City'. Moreover, the longevity of political investment inherent in the permanent establishment of the UN headquarters in the city underlined the permanence of the cultural-economic capital that New York could offer other cultural or commercial entities. Images often have limited capital value outside of advertising,<sup>61</sup> and the image capital value that the UN headquarters offered New York included the sellable notion of a city worthy of long term political and economic investment; a cultural centre whose iconic facade represented the political-world in corporate-America, and corporate-America in the political-world. Jencks has argued that it is also important not to underestimate the public desire for good iconic buildings.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, iconic architecture can 'provide sites of momentary, memorable definition in lives of heterogeneous flux'.<sup>63</sup> Iconicity is individually perceived as well as collectively conceived. Thus, as a viewed and consumed entity within the New York landscape, the UN complex became inextricably linked – both commercially and publically – to New York City narratives, and the UN headquarters offered the region further commercial opportunities. From the outset, through design and location, the UN building constituted the symbolic authority behind the UN institution and New York City as interlinked, and as a 'real' combined power for commercial transformation.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to narratives of building-capital, architects themselves – as designers of the project – impute certain ideological values onto an institution. The architects that designed the UN headquarters were carefully chosen and, on the surface at least, they represented the internationalism inherent in the UN. The Chief Architect was Wallace K. Harrison of the United States; the members of the board included: Nikolai G. Bassov of the Soviet Union, Charles-Edouard Jeanneret – known as Le Corbusier – of France, Liang Seu-Cheng of China, Sir Howard Robertson of the United Kingdom, Gaston Brunfaut of Belgium, Ernest Cormier of Canada, Sven Markelius of Sweden, Oscar Niemayer of Brazil, G. A. Soilleux of Australia, and Julio Vilamajo of Uruguay. First and foremost, this selection of architects represented an exclusive form of internationalism. Representatives from the defeated nations of WWII were excluded in the creation process and this served to emphasise the post-WWII dichotomous power relations that characterised the political set-up of the UN.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Loeffler, 'Introduction', p. 4.

<sup>61</sup> Sklair, 'Iconic Architecture and Capitalist Globalisation', p. 26

<sup>62</sup> C. Jencks, 'The Iconic Building is Here to Stay', *City*, 10 (1), (2006), p. 10.

<sup>63</sup> Brooker, cited in Balshaw and Kennedy, 'Introduction: Urban Space', p. 6-7.

<sup>64</sup> For more analysis on the construction of symbolic authority, see: M. Kaika 'Autistic Architecture: Reimag(in)ing the Square Mile', in L. Moreno, (ed.), *The architecture and urban culture of financial crisis: the Bartlett Workshop Transcripts* (London, 2008), pp. 90-9.

<sup>65</sup> The political set-up of the UN placed the majority of international authority in the hands of the 'Great Powers'. The five permanent members of the UN Security Council (who have veto power on any UN resolution) are the five main victorious nations of WWII: the UK, the US, China, France, and Russia (which replaced the Soviet Union).

Furthermore, sitting on the board were several well-established, 'famous' architects, including Harrison, Le Corbusier and Niemayer. Famous architects, also known as 'starchitects' in contemporary academic literature, are considered as iconic brands in their own right – often, the starchitect image can determine the success of a building, as they are commissioned to represent the construction, as well as to design it.<sup>66</sup> The term 'starchitect' is most notably used to describe architects (such as Frank Gehry) who produce visually unusual structures (such as the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao), and achieve fame through dramatic impact or notoriety.<sup>67</sup> Although the UN Headquarters was not as unusual in design as the Guggenheim Museum, or Rem Koolhaas' Seattle Central Library for instance, the work of Harrison and Le Corbusier et al provides an interesting pre-history to our contemporary understanding of the term. In the first instance, many of the designers came with significant image capital. Almost thirty years prior to the construction of the UN, Le Corbusier had achieved fame following publication of *Vers une Architecture*, a polemical book that dismissed stylistic architecture and pressed for a design based on function.<sup>68</sup> The previous architectural work of Harrison (both New York centric and iconic), included the Rockefeller Center and the Theme Center for the 1939 New York's World Fair.<sup>69</sup> This cultural elite, represented by Harrison, Le Corbusier and the international design team, was selected to emphasise the cultural production of the project and make the politico-economic strategies of the UN more meaningful.<sup>70</sup>

Furthermore, the production process achieved a certain amount of notoriety. Harrison and Le Corbusier were the primary focus of media scrutiny during the production of the UN headquarters due to their prolific design portfolio in the Western world and their, at times clashing, modernist visions.<sup>71</sup> One particular clash involved disagreement over how to protect the Secretariat Building from excessive heat and glare. Le Corbusier preferred stone facades but the rest of the board preferred to maximise natural sun-light and use all over glazing. Experiments were undertaken to discover the most heat-efficient material and Le Corbusier's brise-soliel lost out to tinted glass. Later on in the design process allegations surfaced that Le Corbusier unfairly took credit for some of Harrison's design ideas.<sup>72</sup> Koolhaas has described these (at times fractious) architectural collaborations as "enablers", as teamwork often perverses the 'master's' usual style and contributes to the more idiosyncratic elements of a building.<sup>73</sup>

The fame-notoriety dynamic that surrounded the design team of the UN building certainly provided one pre-cursor to the 'starchitect' persona we are familiar with today. What is more, the collaboration produced highly uneven power relations that subsequently fed into the identity of the UN institution itself.<sup>74</sup> The presentation of cooperation in this elite group of

<sup>66</sup> Jones, 'Putting Architecture', p. 2530.

<sup>67</sup> M. Patterson, 'The Role of the Public Institution in Iconic Architectural Development', *Urban Studies*, (2012), pp.1-17, p.9.

<sup>68</sup> Le Corbusier, *Toward an Architecture*, translated by John Goodman, First Frances Lincoln Tradition (London, 2008).

<sup>69</sup> Loeffler, 'Introduction', p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> Jones, 'Putting Architecture', p. 2520.

<sup>71</sup> Goldberger, *The City Observed*, p. 132.

<sup>72</sup> D. Arnold, 'Air Conditioning in Office Buildings After World War II', *Ashrae Journal*, (1999), p.34.

<sup>73</sup> Rem Koolhaas cited in B. Colomina, 'Collaborations: The Private Life of Modern Architecture', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 58 (3), (1999), pp. 462-471, p.476.

<sup>74</sup> For more analysis on the influence of architectural design on power relations, see: P. Kraftl, 'Geographies of Architecture: The Multiple Lives of Buildings', *Geography Compass*, 4 (5), (2010), pp. 402-415.

architects was pervasive, deliberate, and even occasionally contrived. UN officials had realised the symbolic importance of an international, shared design and thus went out of their way to present an image of the architects working together in harmony – the Office of Public Information for the UN, for example, circulated photographs of the design team at work together.<sup>75</sup> This public relations campaign sought to articulate an amiable, international process of cooperation among the world's most famous architects in order to lay the foundation for an institution that would involve the cooperation of the world's politicians. Interestingly, Jones has argued that architects represent a form of public intellectual who speak to the community through their buildings.<sup>76</sup> As a prologue to the voice of the UN diplomat, the voices of the UN architects could ultimately be viewed as non-democratic, hierarchical, non-neutral, and oftentimes discordant.

The architects were not decided by competition, but were specially selected by Trygve Lie (the UN's first General Secretary) and Wallace K. Harrison.<sup>77</sup> This initial appointment of the Rockefeller-architect Harrison as leader of the design of the UN strengthened cultural associations of the institution with New York iconic architecture-narratives. Loeffler has described how Le Corbusier saw the construction of the UN as an opportunity to make his mark in Manhattan, but the French designer lost out in the political battles and 'Harrison managed to sideline Le Corbusier's crusade to take control of the design process'.<sup>78</sup> Thus, as the Chief Architect and a New York based starchitect, Harrison imputed implicit American values onto the project from the outset. There were frequent references in the media to the fact that the construction space was donated by John D. Rockefeller Jr.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, the role of the starchitect in strengthening politico-economic power relations is one of unavoidable complicity. Architects are reliant on patronage and client funding, and as such they cannot escape the imperatives of the political and economic elite. McNeill has gone so far as to argue that architects should be viewed as global service providers that often embrace the power of the client in determining the design process.<sup>80</sup> As a cultural elite led by an American architect, directed by UN normative values, and influenced by New York's built environment, the starchitects commissioned to produce the 'World Capital' in the 'World City' immediately faced restricted autonomy and ideological client-determinism. Financial and spatial investment in the UN headquarters came from both the United Nations *and* New York. Thus the complex intersection between political clientelism, starchitect representation, and the symbolic capital of the design of the UN headquarters constituted a 'United Nations Imaginary' that was inherently underlined by an American-centric cultural, political economy of power.

Ultimately, architecture must be understood as 'referent', in that it refers to, or symbolises, 'diverse systems, intentions, histories, meanings and cultural assumptions'.<sup>81</sup> The cultural and politico-economic symbolism of locating the UN headquarters in New York, utilising iconic corporate, modern architecture, and enlisting famous architects cannot be understated. The semiotic and aesthetic components of the UN headquarters' design process (and finished product) articulated a global image that was neither autonomous nor neutral. In a

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<sup>75</sup> Loeffler, 'Introduction', p. 6.

<sup>76</sup> Jones, 'Putting Architecture', p. 2531.

<sup>77</sup> Loeffler, 'Introduction', p. 4.

<sup>78</sup> Loeffler, 'Introduction', p. 5.

<sup>79</sup> Adams, 'New York Offers U.N. 350-Acre Site' pp. 1-2; Hamilton, 'Work Completed', pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>80</sup> D. McNeill, 'Globalisation and the Ethics of Architectural Design', *City*, 10 (1), (2006), p. 51; p. 53.

<sup>81</sup> Kraftl, 'Geographies of Architecture', p. 405.

post-war setting the world was looking towards cooperative, internationalist reconstruction and peace – the UN represented this in institutional form. Selecting New York as the base for permanent settlement for the UN ‘World Capital’ underlined American post-war authority, and indicated that America would be a prominent nation behind this international institution. The Secretariat Building was embedded in the New York City skyline and thus fed off, and fed into, the image capital of New York’s cityscape. Directly influenced by the Rockefeller Center – financially, aesthetically, and by the starchitect Wallace K. Harrison – the UN headquarters was built in line with emerging New York corporate and global spatial narratives. Moreover, the iconicity of the Secretariat and General Assembly buildings authenticated New York’s use of the ‘urban spectacle’ to advertise the region as a ‘World City’. Of course, it is essentialist to argue that the symbolism of the UN headquarters reduces the institution to pure corporate, American interests. Nonetheless, it is crucial to recognise that the physically rooted headquarters of an institution is designed and constructed in accordance with surrounding social, economic, cultural and political norms.

The UN institution as a political entity operated, and still operates, within a distinctly American culture and environment; and thus UN governmentality has inevitably been conditioned by privileged and excluded image-capital and cultural representations. The privileged message inherent in the UN’s iconic built form was one of exclusive internationalism (conditioned by the post-WWII power balance) and American-inspired corporate modernism. Moreover, the economic daily reality of employees working within the UN and living in New York, the cultural diversity (and tensions) inherent in the city’s immigrant-rich population, the economic and political place-based restrictions imposed on the UN by New York City, and the visual homogeneity that the building offers individuals who view the city skyline, has firmly planted the UN institution within American cultural politico-economic narratives. Architecture is simultaneously configured by power and is itself a resource for power, and thus it is vital to analyse the cultural political economy that informs, and is informed by, the place-making and design processes of a building. Furthermore, analysing the built environment of an institution offers the opportunity to expose what is unsaid in the institution’s agenda. The production of the UN headquarters in New York from 1946 to 1952 was fundamentally a cultural, politico-economic process that impacted on the image, and subsequent identity, of the United Nations.<sup>82</sup> The constructed ‘United Nations Imaginary’ represented by the organisation’s headquarters was not (and is not) a unique phenomenon, and further study of the embeddedness of iconic architecture in local and global space narratives will not only expand our knowledge of buildings, architects and spaces; it will expose the power dynamics inherent in politically produced image-capital.

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<sup>82</sup> For more analysis on culture as a marker of identity and difference see: J. Best and M. Paterson, ‘Introduction: Understanding cultural political economy’, in J. and M. Paterson, (eds.), *Cultural Political Economy Volume 10* (Oxon, 2010), pp. 1-26.

## Appendix

Fig. 1. The United Nations Headquarters, New York.<sup>83</sup>



On this 18 acre site the 39 storey, glass-walled Secretariat Building dominates the skyline. The long white General Assembly is visible as a low-lying curved structure on the bottom right.

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<sup>83</sup> Photo Source: WorldIslandinfo, 'United Nations Complex', (2006), Accessed 15 May 2011, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/76074333@N00/157652121/in/set-72157594151576488>.

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<http://www.flickr.com/photos/76074333@N00/157652121/in/set-72157594151576488>

## Ahafo: Big Men, Small Boys and the Politics of Regionalism in Ghana from 1896 -1986

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The nationalist struggle in the Gold Coast (Ghana) reached its acme between 1948 and 1956 when political parties such as the United Gold Coast Convention, (UGCC), the Convention People's Party (CPP), Ghana Action Party, Togoland Congress, Muslim Association Party, Ghana National Party and the Northern People's Party worked to achieve self-governance or independence. Two of these political parties, whose activities and policies impinged on the fortunes of Ahafo were the Convention People's Party (CPP) and the National Liberation Movement (NLM), later the United Party (UP). This paper proposes to examine how Kukuom Odikro Yaw Frimpong, in conjunction with various chiefs and Ahafo youth, exploited the rigorous political rivalry between the CPP and the NLM to their advantage in order to secure the creation of the Brong Ahafo Region out of the Ashanti Region whilst ensuring the restoration of the Kukuom Ahafo State Council.

### Ahafo in Historical Perspective

Brong Ahafo remained part of the Ashanti region from British colonisation in 1901 to the passing of the Region Act in 1959. Before the creation of the new region, both the Ahafo and Brong districts of Ghana did not only constitute part of Ashanti administratively, but also traditionally. The headmen (Adikrofo) and chiefs of these areas were also members of the Asante Confederacy, which had been restored in 1935 and later the Asanteman Council (established in 1935). Administratively, the Brong and Ahafo territories constituted one provincial administration -the Western Province of Ashanti- administered by a Provincial Commissioner at Sunyani, who was responsible to the Chief Commissioner in Kumasi. The various Bono states like Takyiman, Banda, Dormaa, Gyaman, Wenchi, had been incorporated into the Asante kingdom through wars of conquest. The Ahafo had been subjects of the various Kumasi Wing Chiefs. They came from different backgrounds such as Denkyira, Akyem and Asante, and were settled on the territory following the Asante conquest and annexation of Ahafo land from Aowin between 1720 and 1722.<sup>1</sup>

After the conquest and annexation of Ahafo land in 1722, the Kumasi Wing Chiefs systematically established the various Ahafo communities over a number of years. Immediately following the Asante conquest and annexation Ahafo became an Asante dependency and was

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<sup>1</sup> K. O. Kwarteng, *Ahafo C 1719–1959 from Dependence to Independence*, M.Phil Thesis presented to Department of History, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, 2000, pp.9–10. See also: K. O. Kwarteng, 'The Asante Conquest of Ahafo in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century :A Historical Legacy', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New series 6 (2002), pp. 62–66.

administered directly from Kumasi. Arhin observes that Ahafo 'as a distinct district with the potentialities of an Oman state, had the most bizarre political constitution of an Akan state. There, the patch work of allegiance, which was also introduced in Bono Manso (Techiman), was made the framework of the constitution.<sup>2</sup> Each Ahafo village thus became a member of the division of its Kumasi overlord.

Following the exile of Prempeh I to Seychelles Island in 1896, Ahafo became a British protectorate. This agreement was entrenched in the Treaty of Friendship and Protection, signed by Captain Davidson Houston and twelve Ahafo Adikrofo at Kukuom. As a British protectorate, Ahafo was provided with a traditional constitution which created three divisions. Kukuom Odikro became the Omanhene and head of one of the divisions, while the Adikrofo of Mim and Noberkaw were made heads of the Nifa (Right) and Benkum (Left) divisions respectively, with the rest of the Ahafo villages subordinated to them. As part of the arrangement, the British distinguished the Ahafo who lived down-stream of the Tano River from those who had settled up-stream. They referred to the former as the Asunafo-Ahafo and the latter as the Asutifi Ahafo. During the 1900–1901 Yaa Asantewaa war, the Omanhene of the Asunafo-Ahafo, Barimansu of Kukuom joined forces with the Asante warriors in an uprising against the British. Despite this, the British administration, after quelling the uprising, maintained the Asunafo-Ahafo paramountcy as a single chiefdom.<sup>3</sup>

Although the Treaty of Friendship and Protection elevated the status of Noberkaw and Mim in status for Odikro to Divisional Chiefs, Chief Beditor of Mim was reluctant to sign because he and his people found their uncustomary subordination to Kukuom irksome.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, between 1900 and 1914 he made several attempts to undermine the unity of the Asunafo-Ahafo paramountcy.<sup>5</sup> Just as Mim was not willing to be subservient to Kukuom, Kenyasi I and Ntotroso, non-signatories to the treaty were also unenthusiastic to serve the Mimhene as stipulated by the traditional constitution. The British colonial government was required to use force and intimidation in order to subject the two unwilling villages to the Mimhene.<sup>6</sup>

There was no sense of unity in the Asunafo-Ahafo paramountcy. In 1932 an intense conflict erupted between the Omanhene, Kwaku Mensah and the Noberkawhene, Kwabena Atta which had wide ramifications for Ahafo. The paramountcy was divided into two irreconcilable opposing factions, which engendered a constitutional crisis in the region. The problem was so acute that the Chief Commissioner of Ashanti, Newlands, was 'reluctantly compelled to regard the Ahafo people as being incapable of governing themselves'<sup>7</sup>. Consequently, two cases in Ahafo were referred to the Kumasihene, Prempeh II for resolution: (i) a succession dispute at Mim and (ii) charges of impropriety against the Omanhene that could not be adjudicated by the Asunafo-Ahafo Traditional Council.<sup>8</sup> On 31 January 1935, when the British colonial

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<sup>2</sup> K. Arhin, 'The Structure of the Greater Ashanti', *Institute of African Studies*, Legon, (1977), p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> K. Arhin, 'Aspects of Colonial District Administration: The case of North Western District of Ashanti 1904–1911', *Research Review*, 8, 1-3, (1971), p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> W. Tordoff, *Ashanti Under the Prempeh, 1888-1936* (Oxford University Press, London, 1965), p. 138

<sup>5</sup> Kwarteng, M.Phil thesis, op cit, pp. 73–80.

<sup>6</sup> Public Records and Archives Administration, Kumasi, ARG1/2 /21 Extract from Provincial Record Book, Western Province of Ashanti (WPA). See also: Tordoff, op cit, p164; K. O. Kwarteng, 'Extension of British Rule to Ahafo, 1896-1914', *Journal of Philosophy and Culture*, 11, 1(January 2004), p. 145.

<sup>7</sup> PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG1/2/1/21 from Assistant Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, Kumasi, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, Kumasi, on Ahafo Native Affairs, 15<sup>th</sup> July 1932.

<sup>8</sup> Kwarteng, M.Phil Thesis op. cit, p. 83–91.

administration decided to restore the Asante Confederacy, it had to abrogate the Asunafo–Ahafo paramountcy and return all the Ahafo chiefs to their pre-1896 allegiances at Kumasi.

Despite the political tensions in Ahafo, the Chief Commissioner of Asante did not take a unilateral decision in abrogating the Asunafo Ahafo Paramountcy. He consulted the Omanhene, Kwaku Mensa and the major Ahafo chiefs in 1932 about the possibilities of restoring the Asante kingdom to its former status. Initially, the Omanhene expressed reservation about the restoration due to uncertainty regarding his future status, but in due course, he supported the proposal. His support was evident through his choice to visit and salute to the Akuroponhene, the former overlord of Kukuom under the Asante Kingdom when visiting Kumasi. Moreover, the Omanhene agreed that the Ahafo chiefs should again serve the Asantehene through their overlords in Kumasi after the restoration, but insisted that the British authorities allow him to maintain his Omanhene status.<sup>9</sup> The Noberkawhene was hostile towards the Kukuomhene, Kwaku Mensah and played a leading role in his eventual destoolment. Despite this, he remained half-hearted about the restoration of the confederacy. In a communication to the District Commissioner in Sunyani, Noberkawhene cautioned: 'if we serve at Kumasi the whole of Ahafo will become entangled as all the sub-chiefs in this District have got different masters at Kumasi and our so performing will bring our District into a ruined condition.'<sup>10</sup> In contrast, the Mimhene unreservedly welcomed the proposal, and together with most of the Ahafo Adikrofo supported the restoration of the Asante Confederacy with alacrity. This support grew from their frustration at being subordinate to Kukuom. The other Adikrofo supported the restoration of the confederacy as they believed it would relieve them from the perceived torment of rule by the divisional head of Kukuom, Noberkaw and Mim.

### **Ahafo under the Asante Confederacy**

The expectations of the Ahafo Adikrofo were shattered under the confederacy as conditions were no better than they had been under the Asunafo–Ahafo Paramountcy. Having secured the right to once again exercise authority over the Ahafo, the various Kumasi overlords subjected the Ahafo to treatments which Kwarteng describes as 'humiliating, exploitative, extortionate and intimidating'.<sup>11</sup> With the exception of the Odikro of Sankore, who received humane treatment from his overlord, the Atipinhene,<sup>12</sup> the rest were victimised and disrespected by their Kumasi overlords. This treatment is evident in the following examples:

- (i) At their own leisure and convenience, the Kumasi overlords could summon any chief from Ahafo without observing the proper protocol. In 1937 several Ahafo Adikrofo were at one time or another summoned to Kumasi, where they were kept waiting for several days and even weeks without being seen.<sup>13</sup>
- (ii) A chieftaincy dispute arose at Noberkaw and the elders were summoned to Kumasi by the Akyeamehene, who demanded that the elders install his favoured candidate, though

<sup>9</sup> Tordoff, *op cit*, p. 118.

<sup>10</sup> J. Dunn and A. F Robertson, *Dependence and Opportunity: Political Change in Ahafo* (Cambridge University Press, London, 1973), p. 245.

<sup>11</sup> Kwarteng, M.Phil Thesis, *op cit*, p. 121.

<sup>12</sup> PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 6/2/86: Report on the Ahafo District for the Quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 1937.

<sup>13</sup> PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 6/2/86: Sinclair Assistant District Commissioner of Goaso's report on Ahafo District for the Quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 1937.

that candidate had previously been destooled by the elders for misappropriating stool funds.<sup>14</sup>

- (iii) Another succession dispute erupted at Kukuom when the kingmakers nominated, elected and presented a candidate to the Akuroponhene, but he rejected the kingmakers' choice, instead supporting the candidacy of Kwaku Mensa, the ex-Omanhene destooled in 1933. The kingmakers of Kukuom spent seven months at Akuropon negotiating for the acceptance of their candidate. It was only after the Akuroponhene had been severely rebuked by the District Commissioner of Kumasi that the enthronement of the Kukuomhene-elect could take place.<sup>15</sup>
- (iv) The Ahafo also suffered arbitrary arrests and fines by the Kumasi overlords. In early 1937 the Ntotroso people realized that their Odikro was about to give their land to the chief of Barikese and chose to destool him. When the Bantamahene learnt of this, he sent a messenger and seven policemen from Kumasi to arrest the people of Ntotroso. The police and the messenger entered the Ntotroso stool house (palace), forced open the boxes, dug up the stool money and took away over £1000.<sup>16</sup>
- (v) The police and the messenger took away the stools and stool properties and threw them into the bush.<sup>17</sup> Thereafter, they arrested almost the entire leadership and people of Ntotroso, Gyedu and Wamahinso and took them to Kumasi and put them in cells. In the trial that followed, the Bantamahene fined the people £45 including 3 sheep for destooling a chief without his approval and charged them £60 as bail fees.<sup>18</sup> The Ntotroso people alleged they paid £30 for six lorries, which transported them from Ntotroso to Kumasi, paid £20 to the Bantamahene as *aseda*<sup>19</sup> and £65 as bribe to the Kumasi chiefs. In all they spent £200 which they had to borrow from someone in Kumasi.<sup>20</sup> The Bantamahene denied some of the Ntotroso people's allegations as figments of their imagination. However, his confirmation of the mass arrest clearly indicates the Kumasi overlords' high-handed treatment of their Ahafo subjects.
- (vi) The Kumasi overlords also exploited the financial resources of Ahafo to enrich themselves to the neglect of the development of Ahafo communities. Customarily and legally the Kumasi chiefs were entitled to some percentage of the royalties, tributes and ground rents and forest reserve gratuities from Ahafo as landlords. However their methods of collection were tantamount to exploitation. Immediately following the restoration of the confederacy, the Kumasi chiefs re-asserted their ownership of the Ahafo lands and began to claim their entitlements.
- (vii) The Kumasi chiefs also assumed the responsibility of alienating Ahafo forest lands to strangers or land speculators. The Ahafo Adikrofo reverted to their previous role as caretakers and was thus unable to alienate land without the express permission or approval of the Kumasi landlords, nor could they sign leases without Kumasi participation.<sup>21</sup> In 1937, for instance, the United Africa Company (UAC) and Cadbury Fry

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., Report on the Ahafo for the Quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 1937.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., Report on Ahafo District for the Quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1937.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Thanksgiving.

<sup>20</sup> PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 6/2/86: report on Ahafo District for the Quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1937

<sup>21</sup> Kwarteng, M.Phil op cit, p. 124.

obtained leases of building plots at Goaso at a rent of £5 and £3 per annum respectively.<sup>22</sup>

- (vii) It would be expected that, due to the location of the plots, the Odikro of Goaso would oversee the transaction. Instead, the Akwaboahene, the landlord, the Mim Odikro, the caretaker of the Akwaboahene and the Goaso Odikro as a sub-caretaker each claimed a share in the rent. The three chiefs signed the lease of Cadbury Fry, but only the Akwaboahene and Mim Odikro signed the UAC lease.<sup>23</sup> Despite these leases Akwaboahene took all the profits leaving the two Ahafo Adikrofo with nothing.<sup>24</sup>
- (viii) The rapacity of the Akwaboahene is especially evident in the exploitation of the Kubi Shrine of Ayomso. The Akwaboahene, the landlord of Ayomso stool lands, stationed a clerk at Ayomso to claim a third of the Kubi shrine's revenue, leaving Ayomsohene and the Shrine with the remaining profits.<sup>25</sup>
- (viii) The Akwaboahene was not the only Kumasi chief who deprived and cheated the Ahafo of their financial resources. The Hiahene who also owned part of the Ahafo lands made persistent demands of tributes, rents and gratuity from Ahafo. For example, in October 1937, the Hiahene called on the Assistant District Commissioner at Goaso to obtain permission to tour all the villages situated on his stool lands, so that he could conclude written agreements with the chiefs regarding the collection and disposal of tributes from settler farmers. The request was declined by the Assistant District Commissioner (D.C), who saw the whole scheme as not only unsatisfactory, but also as an attempt to deprive the Ahafo of revenue. Moreover, the D.C. reported the matter to the Asantehene who warned the Hiahene not to make any financial raids of the Ahafo.<sup>26</sup>
- (ix) The financial deprivation of the Ahafo Adikrofo by the Kumasi chiefs is further illustrated in the payment of forest reserve gratuity. The forest reserve gratuities from Ahafo were paid to the Asantehene, who in turn paid the Ahafo chiefs their share. But this arrangement was fraught with abuse. In fact the Ahafo chiefs were unaware of how much they were due, and the clerks of the Asantehene's office capitalized on this ignorance and demanded a commission. One of the Adikrofo complained that a clerk of the Asantehene's office 'claimed a commission of £4 on every gratuity of £15.10.0d for his services and the messenger who had been sent for the money handed over the £4'.<sup>27</sup> In 1938 the Abuom Odikro complained that the Nyinahinhene, his overlord collected Abuom share of the gratuity from Bonsam Bepo Forest Reserve and appropriated it.<sup>28</sup>

The exploitation of the Ahafo by the Kumasi chiefs reached its peak in late 1938, when both the Hiahene and the Akwaboahene requested the District Commissioner in Kumasi to permit them to inspect Ahafo farms and to conclude official agreements with the Adikrofo on

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<sup>22</sup> PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 6/2/86: report on Ahafo District by District Commissioner (D.C.) 21<sup>st</sup> February 1938.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., Report on the Ahafo District for the Quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 1937.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. The Hiahene proposed to the D.C. that the tribute should be divided into three equally parts among, himself, the Asantehene and the caretaker chief. In other words each party would take one-third.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., Report on the Ahafo District for the Quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1937.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., Report on the Ahafo District for the Quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1938.

the payment of tributes. However, both the Assistant District Commissioner of Goaso and the District Commissioner of Kumasi objected to such a move on the grounds that it was improper to allow individual chiefs from Kumasi to enter into agreements with the Adikrofo regarding tribute payment.<sup>29</sup> To tackle the problem once and for all, the District Commissioner recommended to the Chief Commissioner of Asante, to devise a scheme for the sharing of tributes that would be acceptable to all the stakeholders of Ahafo. In the estimation of the District Commissioner, this would be beneficial to all the parties and the government as well.<sup>30</sup>

The suggestion of the D.C was accepted by the Chief Commissioner and thus, he contacted the Asantehene. After intensive consultations between the two, it was agreed that the Asantehene should work out a blue-print for the division of tributes from Ahafo.<sup>31</sup> Subsequently, the Asantehene, on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1939 invited the landlords of Ahafo, the Hiahene, the Akwaboahene, the Nyinahinhene, the Nkawie Paninhene and the Assuonwinhene to Manhyia Palace. With the assistance of some of his elders, he settled all the boundary disputes between the landlords of Ahafo and finally partitioned the Ahafo lands among them.<sup>32</sup>

The Asantehene held another meeting with the Ahafo landlords on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1939 concerning the division of tribute from Ahafo. The agreement entrenched the division of tributes from settler farmers in Ahafo. The agreement was as follows: three ninths to the Golden Stool; four ninths to the landlords; and two ninths to the caretaker chiefs.<sup>33</sup>

The Ahafo were dissatisfied with the arrangement, because, it did not serve their interest, but they did not dare to challenge this. They saw the whole scheme as skewed towards the Kumasi chiefs and the Asantehene who were the supposed landlords. Above all, rather than halting the exploitation of the Ahafo resources by the Kumasi chiefs, the agreement instead served to facilitate it. From that time until 1958 the Kumasi chiefs alienated large portions of the Ahafo virgin forest to land speculators who established cocoa and oil-palm plantations. They also leased forest reserves to timber concessionaires to establish timber firms. These agreements earned the Kumasi Chiefs thousands of pounds which they used to construct large, multi-storey buildings in Kumasi. In 1958, the newly elected CPP government passed the Ashanti Stool Lands Act (No.28 of 58) which transferred the trusteeship and management of all lands vested in the Golden Stool and its occupant, the Asantehene, to the Governor-General.<sup>34</sup>

Despite the ill-treatment the Ahafo received from their Kumasi overlords, the Asantehene allowed Ahafo representation on the council of Kumasi State and on the Asante Confederacy Council. The Odikro of Mim, Kwaku Appiah, was made the Ahafo spokesman and representative on these councils.<sup>35</sup> But some of the Ahafo, particularly those who had Denkyira background, were unsatisfied with this and believed that the best solution to their plight was the restoration of the Kukuom paramountcy.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> PRAAD Kumasi, ARG1/2/157: Tribute in Ahafo—Collection—from the D.C. Kumasi to the Chief Commissioner, Asante, Kumasi, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1938.

<sup>31</sup> PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 6/2/86: Report on Ahafo District for the Quarter ending June, 1939.

<sup>32</sup> PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/2/157: Ahafo Lands, from D. C. Kumasi to Chief Commissioner Asante, Kumasi, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 1939.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> A. Brempung, *Transformation in Traditional Rule in Ghana (1951–1996)* (Sedco, Accra, 2001), p. 37.

<sup>35</sup> Dunn and Robertson, op cit, p.246. See also: K. O. Kwarteng, *A Political History of Mim: 1896–1966*, BA Long Essay, Department of History, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, (1991), p. 45.

### **Kukuomhene, Yaw Frimpong: Party Politics, Regionalism and Paramountcy.**

Those Ahafo who supported the restoration of the Kukuom paramountcy were buoyed when Yaw Frimpong acceded the Kukuom stool as Odikro in 1944. Dunn and Robertson describe him as 'a more astute and determined politician than his predecessor who...lacked the political sensitivity to recognize that acquiescence in the reestablishment of the Ashanti confederacy in 1935 would imply the sacrifice of his paramountcy and the return of Ahafo to Kumasi yoke.'<sup>36</sup> His immediate concern following accession was to reestablish the Kukuom paramountcy by mobilizing all the resources at his disposal within and beyond the district.<sup>37</sup> Between 1944 and 1948 his efforts were met with little success. However, the emergence of partisan politics in the Gold Coast and Asante gave impetus to his campaign..

In 1949, the Convention People's Party, a break-away faction from the United Gold Coast Convention was formed under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah. This new party, which derived its strength mainly from individual youth and youth movements, won the 1951 election. Kwame Nkrumah was released from prison and offered the position of the Leader of Government Business.<sup>38</sup> In 1954, following two CPP policy decisions, namely, the re-demarcation and regional distribution of the electoral districts and cocoa politics, which the Asante youth in the CPP and the Asante chiefs found to be inimical to the Asante interest, the National Liberation Movement was formed.<sup>39</sup> The Asantehene supported the National Liberation Movement which was vehemently opposed to the CPP government. Between 1954 and 1956 an intense political rivalry ensued between the CPP and the NLM and their allied chiefs, with the latter advocating for a federal constitution, while the former maintained it should be unitary.<sup>40</sup>

Initially the Kukuom Odikro Yaw Frimpong joined the NLM but later defected to the CPP on the grounds that the Mim Odikro, Kwaku Appiah, who was the Ahafo representative on the Asanteman Council, had taken advantage of his position to undermine Kukuom's bid to regain the paramountcy.<sup>41</sup> The Mim Odikro's ambition was to fight for the re-establishment of the Ahafo state, with his appointment as the paramount chief of Ahafo. He also hoped that such a division should continue to be part of the Asante confederacy, but should not be subordinated to the Kumasi Wing Chiefs.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the Kukuom Odikro realized that he would be fighting a losing battle if he continued to remain a member of the NLM.<sup>43</sup>

Yaw Frimpong was assisted in his struggle by the formation of the Brong Kyempim Federation spearheaded by Techimanhene, Akumfi Ameyaw and Dormahene, Agyeman Badu, who nursed the ambition of seceding from the Asanteman Council.<sup>44</sup> Tradition relates that:

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<sup>36</sup> Dunn and Robertson, *op cit*, p. 246.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> M. A. Seiwa, Owusu, *Prempeh II and the Making of Modern Asante* (Woeli, Accra, 2009), pp. 103- 105.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* See also: A. A. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and change in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*, (Longman, London, 2000), pp. 182-183. National Liberation Movement was an Asante nationalist movement or party that championed the cause of Asante struggle against dictatorship of Kwame Nkrumah and the C.P.P. government prior to Ghana's independence.

<sup>40</sup> D. E. K. Amenumey, *Ghana: A Concise History from Pre -Colonial to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Accra, Woeli, 2008), p. 213.

<sup>41</sup> Dunn and Robertson, *op cit*, p. 246.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Kwarteng, M.Phil Thesis, p. 131.

<sup>44</sup> Dunn and Robertson, *op cit*, pp.246-7. See also S. Owusu, *op cit*, p.126; A. Brempong, *op cit*, p. 21.

One day when Agyeman Badu was a teenager, he visited Manhyia Palace with his uncle, the then Omanhene of Dormaa, who was embarrassed by the palace hands (servants of the Asantehene). The servants rudely ordered the Omanhene of Dormaa and his entourage to remain in the scorching sun until the Asantehene would be ready to attend to them. The Omanhene and his retinue stood in the blazing sun for at least two hours. This maltreatment and disregard towards the Dormahene offended the sensibilities of the future Omanhene, Agyeman Badu who had accompanied his revered uncle to Manhyia.<sup>45</sup>

For this reason, Agyeman Badu nurtured a grudge against the Asanteman, as soon as he acceded the Dormaa stool he forged an alliance with the Techimanhene, Akumfi Ameyaw who was equally dissatisfied with Asante hegemony to start a secessionist movement—the Brong Kyempim Federation—in 1952.<sup>46</sup> In order to win the CPP Government’s recognition for the separation of the Brong territory from the Asanteman Council, the Dormaahene and Techimanhene realized that their best chance of success depended upon supporting the CPP government.<sup>47</sup>

According to Arhin, in 1952, because the Asanteman Council had not openly allied itself with the opponents of the CPP, Nkrumah set up a committee chaired by Nene Azu Mate Korle, the Konor of Manya Krobo to mediate between the Asanteman Council and the dissident Brong chiefs. However, in 1954 as soon as the Asanteman Council became openly antagonistic to the CPP, Nkrumah made a common cause with the Brong chiefs, thus supporting their attempts to assert their independence from the Asanteman Council.<sup>48</sup> Having received the assurance of support from the CPP government, the Techimanhene led the Brong chiefs to renounce their membership of the Asanteman Council.<sup>49</sup>

When Yaw Frimpong realized he shared parallel aspirations with the Dormaahene, Agyeman Badu and the Techimanhene, Akumfi Ameyaw, he gravitated towards them to fight for a common cause – the creation of a separate and independent region, and the restoration of the Ahafo paramountcy.<sup>50</sup> On 17<sup>th</sup> April 1956, Odikro Yaw Frimpong sent a petition with fifteen signatories to the Government in Accra. Copies of the petition were sent to the Governor, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Local Government, Kwame Nkrumah, the Ministerial Secretary to the Prime Minister, three Ministers and their permanent secretaries, as well as sixteen Members of Parliament (MPs), the Regional and District Administrative officers.<sup>51</sup> The petition elucidated: (i) that the Ahafo agreed to join the Asante confederacy with the understanding that the Kukuomhene would retain his Omanhene status; (ii) that Ahafo was not given representation on the Asanteman Council and that the representation of the Mimhene, who was before 1935, the Nifahene of Ahafo and therefore a subject to the Omanhene of Ahafo; (iii) that the Ahafo derived no benefit from the work of the Asante Regional Development Committee;

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<sup>45</sup> Information obtained from Ms Mary Owusu. She informed the writer that Mr. G.K. Owusu, 67 years, resident in Tanoso Kumasi in 2009 gave her this information.

<sup>46</sup> A. Brempong, *op cit*, p. 21.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>49</sup> Dunn and Robertson, *op cit*, pp. 246–7.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> PRAAD, Sunyani, RAO2/83, from Nana Yaw Frimpong, Kukuomhene et al, Kukuom, to the Governor, Accra, 17<sup>th</sup> April 1956.

(iv) that before 1935, Ahafo and the Brong had been administered from the provincial headquarters at Sunyani, therefore, the Ahafo wanted the creation of a new region in Asante to promote more development.<sup>52</sup> The petition concluded that the Ahafo had been administered by Asante for a lengthy period and yet remained under-developed. This made a strong case to move the Brong administration, with the Kukuomhene being recognized as the Omanhene of Ahafo.<sup>53</sup>

A critical examination of the signatories of the petition reveals that they were CPP members. Further, the petition did not represent the views and aspirations of the majority of Ahafo. Out of the twenty-eight stools in Ahafo only seven chiefs signed the petition—Kukuom, Dantano, Sienna, Kenyasi II, Ayomso, Etwineto and Hwidiem. Moreover, six of the signatories were Kukuom elders with only Kenyasi and Acherensua represented by non-elders. Subsequently, Kwarteng concluded that the petition represented the parochial interest of Kukuom Odikro Yaw Frimpong and not the Ahafo as a whole.<sup>54</sup>

For unknown reasons the government did not respond to the petition and thus it was repeated by Yaw Frimpong. This time it was addressed to the Minister of Local Government. The signatories were the same seven chiefs and the representatives of nineteen towns and villages, who were all CPP members. This time the petition was successful and assurance of support was exchanged between the CPP leaders in Accra, the Brong chiefs and Yaw Frimpong. Upon the CPP's 1956 election victory, which led to Ghana's Independence, the party leaders began to honour the petition's demands.<sup>55</sup>

The CPP government ensured an equal number of invitations were given to both the Asanteman Council and the Brong Kyempim movement for the Independence Day celebration on March 6th. In the following week, a new regulation gave the Techimanhene and Dormaahene the right to appeal to the Governor-General instead of the Asanteman Council in constitutional disputes.<sup>56</sup>

The CPP government further supported the aforementioned petition with the initiation of a separation agreement. The 1957 Constitution (Order-in-Council), made provision for the creation of five regions, namely, Eastern (including present-day Greater Accra); Western (including present-day Central Region); Ashanti (including present-day Brong Ahafo); Northern (including present-day Upper East and Upper West); and Transvolta/ Togoland (the present-day Volta Region).<sup>57</sup> However, in October 1957, when announcing the posting of Regional Commissioners, Ashanti alone was assigned two Commissioners, meaning that Western Ashanti, which was occupied by the Brong and the Ahafo, was effectively elevated to the status of a separate region.<sup>58</sup> This separation was cemented in the 1959 Brong Ahafo Region Act<sup>59</sup> which entrenched the carving out of two thirds of the Ashanti territory to create the new region.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> PRAAD, Sunyani, from RAO2/83, from Nana Yaw Frimpong, *op cit*, see also Dunn and Robertson, *op cit*, pp. 247–250.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Kwarteng, M.Phil thesis *op cit*, p. 132.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* p. 133.

<sup>56</sup> S. Owusu, *op cit*, p. 126.

<sup>57</sup> A. Brepong, *op cit*, p.25. See S. Owusu, *op cit*, p. 133.

<sup>58</sup> S. Owusu, *op cit*, p. 134.

<sup>59</sup> A. Brepong, *op cit*, p. 37.

<sup>60</sup> S. Owusu, *op cit*, p. viii.

Meanwhile, in February 1958 the Ministry of Local Government officially recognized the Kukuomhene as a paramount chief.<sup>61</sup> This restoration however, did not terminate the allegiance of the Kukuomhene to the Asantehene; neither did it subordinate the rest of the Ahafo Adikrofo to Kukuom as was done in 1896. This meant that the paramountcy was not independent of Kumasi, thus ensuring the continued influence of the Kumasis in Ahafo. The Kukuomhene, therefore, realized that the only way he and his small group of supporters could consolidate the independence of the New Ahafo State Council was to collaborate with the Brong chiefs to campaign for a new region which would divide the existing Ashanti Region into two. He hoped to use his membership of the proposed Brong Ahafo House of Chiefs to renounce any political bonds with Asante and to repudiate Kumasi demand for the allegiance of any Ahafo Odikro.<sup>62</sup>

The immediate reaction of the majority of Ahafo Adikrofo who were members of the opposition United Party was to vehemently oppose the elevation of Kukuom to paramountcy. The Minister of Local Government, on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1958, informed the Kukuomhene and seven other chiefs in Ashanti who were restored to paramount status to swear an oath of allegiance to the Asantehene as a prerequisite for their recognition by the Government as Amanhene.<sup>63</sup>

Yaw Frimpong, the new paramount chief of Kukuom, notified the Minister of Local Government through the Government Agent in Kumasi that at the time of his installation, in 1944, he swore the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene.<sup>64</sup> This explanation appears to have satisfied the Local Government Minister, who almost immediately sanctioned the inauguration of the newly created Kukuom Ahafo State Council. This was attended by eight Ahafo Adikrofo, namely, Dantano, Wamahinso, Etweneto, Ayomso, Sienna, Kenyasi II and the Regent of Acherensua. The Kukuomhene was elected as the President of the Council with the Vice President position going to Kwabena Nsia Ababio, Kenyasi II Odikro. T.N. Baidoo was appointed the secretary of the council. This was followed by the Government gazette listing the fourteen members of the State Council in June 1958.<sup>65</sup>

The pro-Asante Adikrofo who were not listed in the Government gazette reacted concertedly to the Government recognition of the Kukuom-Ahafo State Council. They constituted themselves into a loose association of Ahafo chiefs under the leadership of the Odikro of Mim. They attempted to persuade the Asantehene to establish an Ahafo Council of chiefs within the confederacy structure, but a lack of unity and political strength weakened their opposition to the Kukuomhene political aggrandizement.<sup>66</sup> As members of the opposition party, they were politically disadvantaged and their fortunes declined steadily.

However, they were able to rebuff an attempt by the Regional Commissioner to persuade them to join the Kukuom-Ahafo State Council by declaring: 'your proposition is unacceptable to us both morally and legally.'<sup>67</sup> They reminded the Regional Commissioner in their letter that Kukuom, like any town or village in Ahafo, was customarily an Odikro, and that they all served the Asantehene through their respective Kumasi Wing Chiefs and as such their

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<sup>61</sup> Dunn and Robertson, *op cit*, p. 250.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 252.

<sup>63</sup> PRAAD, Sunyani, RAO 2/83: from the Minister of Local Government, Accra to the Secretary to the Regional Commissioner, Kumasi, 10<sup>th</sup> February, 1958.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* from the Government Agent, Kumasi to the Regional Commissioner, Kumasi, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1958.

<sup>65</sup> Dunn and Robertson, *op cit*, p. 252.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* quotation adopted from Dunn and Robertson.

stools belonged to the Kumasi State Council.<sup>68</sup> The letter was signed by twelve chiefs who pronounced that 'Kukuom by customary law of Ashanti is not and never has been a state: and if a state we the undersigned and marked have never belonged to it and therefore [we] cannot belong [to] it.'<sup>69</sup>

The following year a similar letter was sent to the government and the press restating their opposition. Despite this, the government gazette of the Kukuom-Ahafo State Council strengthened the position of the Kukuomhene against the Asante loyalists. He resolved to remove them one after the other from their stools, and by the middle of the year their positions were in weakened state.<sup>70</sup> In 1959 the Kukuomhene capitalized on his association with the CPP and his status as the Omanhene of the new State Council to crackdown on the pro-Asante Adikrofo. He instigated the CPP youth of Hwidiem, Mim, Goaso, Noberkaw, Kwapon, Nkaseim, Kwaku Nyuma, Akrodie, Aweam, Asufufuo, Fawohoyeden, Gyedu, Mehame, Ntotroso, Pomaakrom and Sankore to destool their chiefs by bringing charges against them. In their place pro-CPP candidates were installed regardless of their family background. For example at Mim and Goaso non-royals were installed as chiefs.<sup>71</sup>

In addition to the dramatic destoolment, the Ahafo State Council passed a resolution requesting the government to send some of the ex-Adikrofo who were recalcitrant to detention by invoking the Preventive Detention Act passed in 1958.<sup>72</sup> To this end, on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1958 the Kukuomhene sent a list of names of the destooled pro-Asante Adikrofo to the government through the District Commissioner of Goaso. He explained that these 'constitutionally destooled chiefs in Kukuom State Council are very stubborn, they still style themselves as chiefs or still perform the function of chiefs in their respective towns.'<sup>73</sup> The State Council also recommended similar action for the most vocal supporters of the dissident Adikrofo. Consequently, a list of names and addresses were dispatched to the Regional Commissioner.<sup>74</sup>

As intimated earlier, in April 1959 the Brong Ahafo Region was created out of the Ashanti Region by the CPP government as a fulfillment of the promises it made to the Techimanhene, the Dormaahene and the Kukuom Odikro before the 1956 elections for supporting the party. This was followed by the establishment of the Regional House of Chiefs for the newly created region. The status of Kukuomhene as Omanhene qualified him as a member of the Regional House of Chiefs. The Kukuomhene, Yaw Frimpong, took advantage of his admission into the Regional House of Chiefs to rupture the last vestige of the Asante-Ahafo relations and consolidate the independence of his State Council.<sup>75</sup> He declared that Kukuom had been independent of Asante from time immemorial and refused to have any dealings with Kumasi administratively and traditionally.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., quotation adopted from Dunn and Robertson.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>71</sup> PRAAD, Sunyani, and RA02/82: Gazette Notice: Amendments of Gazette N.50 Kukuom State Council 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1958, see also Dunn and Robertson op cit, pp. 248 -259.

<sup>72</sup> Dunn and Robertson op cit, p. 257.

<sup>73</sup> PRAAD, Sunyani, RA02/86, from Nana Yaw Frimpong, President, Kukuom State Council, Kukuom to D.C, Goaso 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1959. The affected ex -Adikrofo were Kwadwo Baydu of Kwapon, Kwasi Basowa of Noberkaw, Kwaku Appiah of Mim, Kwaku Agyei of Ntotroso and Kwame Gyamfi of Mehame .

<sup>74</sup> Dunn and Robertson op cit, p. 257.

<sup>75</sup> A.F. Robertson, 'Histories and Political Opposition in Ahafo Ghana', *Africa*, xliii, (1973), p. 46. See also, J. Arthur, *Brong Ahafo Outlook*, (Brong Ahafo Publication, Sunyani, 1965), pp. 19-25.

It is clear that Yaw Frimpong, who was in 1944 installed as an Odikro (a small boy in the Akan chieftaincy hierarchy), had by 1959 succeeded in leading a band of small boys (the Adikrofo and CPP youth who supported his cause) to collaborate with the Dormaahene and the Techimanhene (big boys) to use partisanship in the fight for Ahafo and Brong autonomy from Asante. But the question is: how sustainable was this independence? Whereas the administrative independence had been successful; the traditional independence was fraught with difficulties, and had created chieftaincy conflicts between the Asantehene/Asanteman council and the Kukuomhene, as well as between the Asantehene and some of the prominent Brong chiefs like the Techimanhene, the Gyamanhene, the Dormaahene and the Attebubuhene over the question of allegiance.

In any case, the paramountcy of Kukuomhene was transient. In 1966 the CPP government was overthrown in a coup d'état by the National Liberation Council Government (NLC). The NLC government passed Decree 112 which abrogated the Kukuom Ahafo State Council, and all the Ahafo Adikrofo who had fallen victim to the unconstitutional destoolment were re-instated and their allegiance to the Golden Stool was restored. Accordingly, the Kukuomhene was demoted to his former status as an Odikro.<sup>76</sup>

## **Conclusion**

In sum, interference of governments in traditional institutions was undoubtedly responsible for the intractable chieftaincy, ethnic and land disputes that the country experienced. The genesis of the chieftaincy problems which ensued between the Kukuomhene and the Asantehene can be traced to the British colonial government's attempts to dismember Asante by granting autonomy to Asunafo-Ahafo paramountcy under the leadership of Kukuom. This is what encouraged the Kukuomhene, Yaw Frimpong to claim that Kukuom had been independent of Asante since time immemorial, and helped to nurse the desire for freedom from Asanteman. This desire culminated in the formation of intricate alliance with the Brong Kyempim and the CPP government for the creation of the Brong Ahafo Region. There is no denying the fact that the involvement of the CPP and the NLC governments in chieftaincy matters was responsible for the chieftaincy tension between the Asantehene and some of the Brong Ahafo chiefs.

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<sup>76</sup> Kwame Osei Kwarteng, 'A political History of Mim:1896-1966', a Long Essay submitted to History Department, UCC, Ghana, July, 1991, p53.

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## The 1958 Tour of the Moiseyev Dance Company: A Window into American Perception

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'We know there are some members of our State Department who feel that the President's Fund for Cultural Exchange is a gesture, nice, but unimportant. They are willing to go along with it, but not very far. We think they are wrong. It is extremely clear that a large part of the American public is enjoying, and being affected by, Russian propaganda currently here in the form of the Moiseyev Dance Company. Conversely, the companies we send abroad also make vivid, important impressions. They should be given every possible assistance, not only financially, but morally, too. If there must be a cold war, we think that the best possible weapons are those of the arts. We want our artists, and specifically our dancers, of whom we are very proud, to represent us abroad, with glory. For we know, first-hand, the pleasure and the enlightenment to be gained from such exchanges.'<sup>1</sup>

Beginning in April of 1958, as part of the Lacy-Zarbuin Agreement, the Moiseyev Dance Company visited the United States with performances in multiple cities including New York, Montreal, Toronto, Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cleveland, Washington, Boston and Philadelphia. The Moiseyev fascinated American audiences and Americans drew direct comparisons between themselves and their culture with that of the Soviet Union, as presented on stage by the Moiseyev dancers. The company evoked a multitude of responses ranging from protest and fear of cultural inferiority, to admiration and enthusiasm for the United States to send over its own cultural representatives to demonstrate American cultural excellence. Newspapers and magazines widely discussed how the group influenced political relations, whether writers felt the company demonstrated that cultural performance was a non-political space in which mutual respect between the two superpowers could be achieved or that it was pure propaganda, and possibly even dangerous propaganda at that (as suggested above). With regard to what the Moiseyev itself hoped to achieve, it is clear that the group wanted to depict a positive picture of a unified Soviet Union through the use of distilled folk dances from multiple cultures living within Soviet borders. With dances from the Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and other territories, as well as those from Soviet bloc countries like Poland and Hungary, an image of precisely executed, coordinated dances could be interpreted as

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<sup>1</sup> L. Joel, 'The Moiseyev Dance Company: What is it? What is its Appeal? What is its Lesson?' *Dance Magazine*, Vol 6 (June, 1958), p. 57.

representing a corresponding unified *esprit* amongst the different peoples living under direct and indirect Soviet control. The 1958 tour of the Moiseyev Dance Company in the United States can function as a window into the American mind in order to gauge perception of Soviet and American identity in this pivotal moment of Cold War relations. This commencement of cultural exchanges between the superpowers also marks a moment in which culture is privileged as both expressing a national and multi-ethnic identity and one way in which the United States and Soviet Union could 'fight' during the Cold War.

Recent scholarship highlights the role of culture in this conflict, such as the use of jazz as diplomacy. Accordingly, initiatives like Willis Conover's jazz programming on Voice of America can be viewed as tools or weapons in the Cold War and represented moments of negotiation of American identity and what it entailed. In Conover's obituary, this impact is very much emphasized: 'In the long struggle between the forces of Communism and democracy, Mr. Conover ... proved more effective than a fleet of B-29's. No wonder. Six nights a week he would take the A Train straight into the Communist heartland.'<sup>2</sup> Indeed, these scholars see jazz as both an effective and increasingly important tool in this conflict. As he greeted listeners with the 'A Train' at the start of each program, Willis Conover became a participant in the Cold War. Lisa Davenport, in her book *Jazz Diplomacy*, points to 'how American jazz as an instrument of global diplomacy dramatically transformed superpower relations in the Cold War era as jazz reshaped the American image worldwide.'<sup>3</sup> Jazz proved able to ease tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union even during crises, such as integration at Little Rock and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Jazz diplomacy, Davenport argues, is a unique tool of warfare. This is in part due to the many paradoxes of its usage, such as the fact that choosing jazz to represent American culture and democracy meant using black Americans, a group who faced persecution and discrimination at home, as the face of America.<sup>4</sup>

Jazz itself represented an intersection of conceptions of America national identity, political ideologies, and race. As mentioned above, black jazz musicians came to be used not just due to the popularity and alleged universal accessibility of jazz, but also to try to combat the image of a racist America (which the Soviet Union tried to highlight with news of racial incidents or civil rights protests). Davenport convincingly argues that studying the intersection of the issues of race and culture during the Cold War is essential to understanding that time period and that the U.S. government used jazz to try to combat this very visible contradiction in the American image of liberty and ever present domestic racism. Davenport points out that the U.S. government was very conscious of how the international audience viewed American racism, such as the international controversy created in 1955 when a 14-year-old black boy named Emmett Till was murdered for flirting with a white woman.<sup>5</sup>

In a similar way, the Moiseyev Dance Company represented the intersection of conceptions of American national identity and of nationalities of the Soviet Union, political ideologies, gender and race. As will be discussed below, while on the surface the tours of the Company are a cultural and entertainment phenomenon, an analytical lens conscious of this intersection can yield larger conclusions beyond reception. In the same manner as jazz

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<sup>2</sup> R. McG. Thomas Jr., 'Willis Conover is Dead at 75; Aimed Jazz at the Soviet Bloc,' *The New York Times*, (19 May 1996).

<sup>3</sup> L. E. Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era*, Jackson (MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

diplomacy, the Moiseyev Dance Company hoped to represent the races and nations living within its borders in a harmonious fashion.

As with jazz, recent scholarship also highlights the use of dance in cultural exchange. In *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War*, Naima Prevots offers a perspective on the American side of the use of dance in the Cold War.<sup>6</sup> In addressing the Moiseyev Dance Company and its impact, particularly on its first tour to the United States in 1958, she argues that the company proved able to win over even those critics and Americans who were not enthusiastic about this step toward greater cultural exchange.<sup>7</sup> Authors such as Prevots discuss the positive reception of the group among American audiences and points to how these audiences celebrated the company's dancers. This project picks up on Prevots findings and adds an ethnicity, gender and multicultural perspective. Anthony Shay sheds light on the importance of groups like the Moiseyev Company in *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power*. Shay notes how 'these cultural representations [like those of the Moiseyev Dance Company] are in fact multilayered political and ethnographic statements designed to form positive images of their respective nation-states.'<sup>8</sup>

While this project focuses on American reception to the Moiseyev, it is useful to discuss, albeit briefly, the goal behind the group and the impetus for its formation. In Soviet discourse prior to the 1917 Revolution, both Lenin and Stalin argued for recognition of nationalism and self-determination, especially where it thrived in resistance to empire. In *Marxism and the National Question* published in 1913, Joseph Stalin defined a nation as 'a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture'.<sup>9</sup> Along with this definition came the belief that nationalism was an 'historic phase' which, once passed through, would lead to socialist internationalism. Once in place, the Bolshevik regime put these ideas into practice and encouraged nationalism among the peoples living within what was now the former Russian empire.<sup>10</sup> Thus in 1923, the Soviet regime issued resolutions marking official recognition of nationalism that 'did not conflict with a unitary central state.' In practice, the resolutions meant supporting national languages and elites and support of the development of national cultures in a policy of *korenizatsiia* or indigenization. This policy would furthermore make Soviet power 'seem 'native', 'intimate', 'popular', 'comprehensible'...'.<sup>11</sup> According to this policy, the Soviet regime would stress and even form national identities in its various territories. This meant drawing borders if necessary, supporting natives to join the Communist party to hold important positions within the government and use of native national languages. Languages sometimes needed to be standardized and adjusted in order to be used and preserved and this approach

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<sup>6</sup> E. Foner, 'Introduction', in N. Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> N. Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998), p. 72.

<sup>8</sup> A. Shay, *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2002), p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> As quoted M. Rouland, 'A Nation on Stage: Music and the 1936 Festival of Kazak Arts,' in, N. Edmunds (ed.), *Soviet Music and Society Under Lenin and Stalin: The Baton and Sickle* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), p. 183.

<sup>10</sup> M. Rouland 'A Nation on Stage', p. 183.

<sup>11</sup> T. Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 12.

continued in terms of preserving national cultures and history.<sup>12</sup> Lenin and Stalin consciously wanted to avoid being labeled as an empire despite the vast territory and variety of peoples living with Soviet borders.<sup>13</sup>

The cultural policy enacted in the 1920s mirrored that of the nationalities policy outlined above. With regard to music as one area of a nation's culture, the policy consisted mainly of 'the idea that each nation had its own music that would be systematically collected, studied and used as a basis for composition,' and that the music of different nations should be celebrated and disseminated as part of this policy. Similar to the general nationalities policy, Moscow believed that promoting national music idioms was a stepping stone toward an eventual all-encompassing musical institution promoting a universal view of music in which there would be no distinction between nationalities.<sup>14</sup> In Armenia, this cultural policy meant institutionalizing folk orchestras and selecting the best known Armenian folk instrumentalists to be a part of these orchestras. This often meant combining folk instruments that previously had not been played together and bringing together more instruments than ensembles usually consisted of. Finally, a conductor became a part of folk orchestras, which was a completely new addition.<sup>15</sup> This change in composition of folk ensembles and the institutionalization of folk orchestras in turn led to an emphasis on musicians learning notation and writing music down so that by the 1950s, all members of folk orchestras could read musical notation.

This initial policy regarding nationalities shifted from the mid-1930s until Stalin's death. Different cultures and nationalisms, rather than being celebrated and even created, became feared and condemned. This change became most notable leading up to and during WWII when the question of loyalty to the Soviet regime became ever more important. Stalin defined this new policy as part of a speech about the Friendship of the Peoples in December of 1935.<sup>16</sup> He proclaimed that the distrust between the different peoples of the USSR was now replaced with friendship and a 'complete mutual trust.'<sup>17</sup> As part of the Friendship of the Peoples, Russian identity and culture, which had been pushed aside as part of Lenin and Stalin's early nationalities policy, came to the forefront once more since Stalin's rhetoric claimed the various Soviet peoples now trusted Russia and saw Russia as a friend.<sup>18</sup> This is perhaps best highlighted by a *Pravda* article of 1 February 1936 which claimed '...the first among equals is the Russian people, the Russian workers, the Russian toilers, whose role in the entire Great Proletarian Revolution, from the first victory to today's brilliant period of its development, has been exclusively great.'<sup>19</sup> Even with this introduction to the change in policy, a festival took place in 1936 in which peoples of all different nationalities came and showed off their culture, including dance. Shortly after this festival, many of the dancers and dances were brought together under the leader, director and choreographer, Igor Moiseyev, in the State Academic Ensemble of Folk Dances of the Peoples of the USSR, more popularly known as the Moiseyev Dance Company or just the Moiseyev. Besides the dancers and dances present at the Moscow

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>14</sup> A. Nercessian, 'National Identity, cultural policy and the Soviet Folk Ensemble in Armenia,' in N. Edmunds (ed.), *Soviet Music and Society Under Lenin and Stalin: The Baton and Sickle*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), p. 152.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 154-5.

<sup>16</sup> Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, p. 432.

<sup>17</sup> As quoted in Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, p. 439.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 451.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 452.

festival, *Dance Magazine* reported that he 'has traveled throughout the Soviet Union studying local dance traditions and has endeavored to preserve the most vital and typical elements in the dances he has arranged for his company.'<sup>20</sup> When the Moiseyev came to the United States, it was described in similar terms and as being representative of 'authentic' folk dances and character.

Though the nationalities policy changed, the Moiseyev survived this shift. Indeed, the Company exists today, after the fall of the Soviet Union, and while the regime was still in place, toured within and without the Soviet Union extensively, earning a world renowned reputation. With smiling faces, colorful costumes and stylized folk dances representing the different cultures of the USSR, the Moiseyev danced its way across the Soviet Union and across the world. Again, though the official government policy changed, the Dance Company maintained the spirit of the original policy. According to Moiseyev, 'the Soviet Union is a multi-national country, extremely rich in folklore...The folk art of the many ethnic groups of the Soviet Union is our richest source; it unfolds before us the most diverse aspects of people, who differ so greatly in their character, temperament, customs, cultural development, methods of expression...'<sup>21</sup> Moiseyev hoped to share the folk dances of these different peoples (though usually in a synthesized or distilled version) to demonstrate how peoples in the Soviet Union lived and expressed themselves, but always in an affirmative way that did not criticize the Soviet regime. The Moiseyev Dance Company promoted a multicultural vision of the Soviet Union and projected this view both domestically and abroad.

The Moiseyev got the chance to share this message with the United States in 1958, when it first visited. Much has been written about the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement of 1958, but it serves here to just touch on the fact that this agreement was negotiated at the highest levels of government and was intended to promote exchange between the two superpowers, though strictly regulated and monitored exchanges. Included in the agreement were stipulations regarding the 'Exchange of Theatrical, Choral and Choreographic Groups, Symphony Orchestras and Artistic Performers.'<sup>22</sup> This section of the agreement promised that the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra would visit the Soviet Union and that the Moiseyev and Bolshoi Ballets would visit the United States. The Moiseyev, aided by the lobbying and arrangements of the impresario Sol Hurok, became the first of the groups to come to the United States, and indeed was noted as 'the first time that a major Soviet company will have toured the United States and Canada...' and with over one hundred dancers, the 'largest dance troupe ever to visit this country from abroad.'<sup>23</sup> In this initial tour beginning in April of 1958, the Moiseyev visited multiple cities across North America, including New York, Montreal, Toronto, Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cleveland, Washington, Boston and Philadelphia. In his statement after the signing of the agreement, President Eisenhower noted that 'I sincerely trust that through such agreements a better understanding will result between the people of the United States and the Soviet Union.'<sup>24</sup> It is with these highly publicized negotiations and news reporting that Americans anticipated the arrival of the Moiseyev Dance Company.

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<sup>20</sup> M. Clarke, 'Moiseyev Dancers from Moscow' *Dance Magazine*, Vol. 2 (February 1956), p. 20.

<sup>21</sup> I. Moiseyev, 'Folk Art: A Living, Moving Process,' *Boston Globe*, (30 May 1965), p. 14.

<sup>22</sup> 'Exchange Agreement Signed: N.Y. Awaits Moiseyev Group,' *Dance News* Vol. 32, No. 3 (March 1958), p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

The initial response to the Moiseyev by American audiences was one of wild enthusiasm. The first performances in New York sold out, and after the initial performances in April at the Metropolitan Opera, Hurok further arranged for four more days of performances in late June at the larger venue of Madison Square Garden since 'New Yorkers can't get enough of the Moiseyev Dance Company.'<sup>25</sup> The Company experienced similar success in ticket sales and reception throughout the country (though it should be noted that while the performances encountered no real difficulty in finding an excited audience, there were often protests at Moiseyev performances as well by those who disliked the nature of the cultural exchange program and wanted a more hard line stance towards the Soviet Union). Across local New York and other American papers it was unanimous that the debut of the Moiseyev Dance Company was a huge success:

'The Metropolitan Opera House nearly burst its aging seams last Monday when the Moiseyev Dance Company from Moscow made its American debut. On stage, approximately one hundred dancers performed with explosive exuberance and stunning virtuosity while on the other side of the footlights, the audience exploded with applause and cheers... At the close, every one applauded everyone else and a fine Russian-American rapport was achieved as the result of the new cultural exchange agreement which made it possible for S. Hurok, the indefatigable impresario, to present the Moiseyev dancers in America.'<sup>26</sup>

The fervor of the American welcome to the company is ever-present in contemporary reviews, as is the sense that the Moiseyev dancers expressed the same eagerness in the meeting.

Politics were often in mind, though, in press coverage of the Moiseyev. For instance, Drew Pearson of the *New York Mirror* touted that: 'events which five years ago would have been considered unbelievable occurred in Moscow and New York this week, illustrating the new look in American-Russian relations.'<sup>27</sup> Assessment of the dancers' abilities and the performances themselves played on Cold War discourse and events, such as 'if Russia soon puts a man into space it is quite likely to be one of the agile, gravity-defying artists of the Moiseyev Dance Company... and one of these fellows would need no rocket or missile propulsion – just his own.'<sup>28</sup> In a similar vein, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported that, 'there were times in the Civic Opera House last night when so much rocket power exploded on stage that I suspected those sputniks had been launched by especially selected Moiseyevs.'<sup>29</sup> The Moiseyev dancers' bodies frequently became described in mechanical or aerospace terms and adjectives – the persistent association of the space and arms races with the Soviet Union is quite clear.

While positive, there were those who viewed the abilities and popularity of the Moiseyev Dance Company as a challenge that the United States would have to meet when deciding who or what to send to the Soviet Union in order to best demonstrate the merits of American culture. Critic Walter Terry pointed to how the Soviet Union had made a smart choice in sending the Moiseyev and had left the United States with the question of who they could send to compete on the international level with the skill and artistry of the Moiseyev. Terry pointed

<sup>25</sup> 'Still More Moiseyev Performances,' *Dance Magazine* Vol 6 (June 1958), p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> W. Terry, *New York Herald Tribune*, (20 April, 1958).

<sup>27</sup> D. Pearson, 'Cultural Exchanges: Keeping the Peace??' *New York Mirror*, (20 April, 1958).

<sup>28</sup> P. R. Allerup, 'Russian Dancers Surprise New York,' *L A Examiner* (16 April 1958), p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> C. Cassidy, 'On the Aisle: Something New in Russian Virtuosi: the Combustible Moiseyevs,' *Chicago Daily Tribune*, (17 May 1958).

to how American folk dance would simply not be able to contend with the folk dance of the Soviet Union – ‘For the truth of the matter is that America’s folk dance heritage is barely three centuries old (with the exception of the ceremonial dances of the American Indian), while the Russian folk dance draws from many nationalities and many centuries of accomplishment.’<sup>30</sup> These dances, furthermore, were not often performed or cultivated by professional dancers. Terry instead suggested that dance as envisioned by the likes of Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins and Martha Graham would be far more effective in cultural exchange to demonstrate how American culture translated into dance.<sup>31</sup> However, some critics claimed ‘the reception given by the American people to the Moiseyev Dance Company is a sensational one... completely ignoring the political implications, the U.S. public has lovingly accepted the dancers from Soviet Russia.’<sup>32</sup> Though of course, articles such as this had to first mention the political in order to then claim it did not influence Americans.

In addition to this spirited welcome by the American audience, Americans were also interested in the dancers as people. Indeed, for Americans in 1958, the tour offered a chance to see what people from the Soviet Union actually looked like, eliciting ‘the indisputable excitement that comes of seeing Russians – real people – laughing, dancing, waving.’<sup>33</sup> The American perception of people living in the Soviet Union prior to the tour was not a particularly nuanced one; Americans did not necessarily understand that all people living in the Soviet Union were not Russians or that they did not fit the negative stereotype of Communists as put forth by American media, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), and Senator Joseph McCarthy.<sup>34</sup> The Moiseyev, as the first major group to come from the Soviet Union in decades, represented a crucial moment in American-Soviet relations, especially since Americans had ‘known Soviet citizens only by hearsay.’<sup>35</sup>

Moiseyev himself voices some of these concerns about whether cultural understanding and appreciation can be achieved through the tour given the lack of recent personal contact between the superpowers. He noted: ‘our first performance at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York was an experience no member of our dance company is ever likely to forget. It was our first introduction to an American audience, and a more enthusiastic, more exciting one it would be hard to imagine...’ This was a pleasant surprise since, according to Moiseyev, ‘we had come to dance for American audiences with some misgivings. We really had no idea of what we could expect. We were afraid, for one thing, that Americans would not understand our dancing and perhaps might not take to it.’ These concerns were deemed justified because it had been so long since there had been any real, meaningful direct contact between the cultures. The company therefore had some doubts about whether or not Americans ‘would or would not understand our national art.’ Luckily ‘it was an unexpected and happy surprise for us to find how much American audiences had in common with the Soviet people. We found the same warmth, the same openness and expansiveness, the same feeling for humor. It was a constant astonishment to us to see how similar the reactions were.’ Indeed Moiseyev pointed out that the Company did not have to change or adjust any of its dances in order to foster understanding;

<sup>30</sup> Terry, *New York Herald Tribune*, 20 April 1958.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> L. Joel, ‘The Moiseyev Dance Company: What is it? What is its Appeal? What is its Lesson?’ *Dance Magazine*, Vol. 6 (June 1958), p. 30.

<sup>33</sup> Joel, ‘The Moiseyev Dance Company’, p. 30.

<sup>34</sup> A. Shay, *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2002), p. 59.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

instead Americans 'got it.' In the *City Quadrille* dance, which pokes fun at pre-revolutionary Russia, Moiseyev and the company 'evoked the same spontaneous laughter in America as it would in any Soviet city.'<sup>36</sup> Much of the press reaction to the dancers included simply recognizing the similarity between Russians and Americans, as Moiseyev himself pointed out. This is the multicultural message of the Moiseyev Dance Company: beyond showing mutual appreciation and validity among the different nationalities of the Soviet Union, here it also attempts to show equal validity of American and Soviet culture and society.

Moiseyev saw this new understanding going both ways. He pointed to how one could read about America and Americans but this did not give a full 'picture of American life' – direct contact was necessary to achieve this. Moiseyev furthermore played on American fears of cultural inferiority, noting how in Europe he was told that the U.S. was lacking in a theater scene and focused too much on films instead. Moiseyev allays these fears by pointing out that he himself attended performances of productions like *West Side Story*, *My Fair Lady*, and *The Diary of Anne Frank*, all of which he found well done and enjoyable.<sup>37</sup>

While overall the press coverage focuses on the performances themselves, there are also numerous articles that try to highlight members of the dance company as people, and people Americans can relate to. For instance, the *New York Herald Tribune* related an anecdote about one member of the company, Lydia Skiabina, who, like any tourist to New York, saw a stuffed bear 'which operated on batteries, poured water from a bottle held in one paw into a cup held in the other and proceeded to drink' at a store on seventh avenue and forty-sixth. Lydia 'screamed through her fingers, then doubled in delight. The seven girls crowded round the counter...[with] paroxysms of laughter' to inquire how much the bear cost. However, the five dollar price was too much for Lydia, and she left the store empty-handed. The *Herald Tribune* reporter could not let this stand and bought the bear. Upon bringing it to Lydia's hotel, she claimed she could not accept it, saying 'Nyet' repeatedly and 'making it clear Mother Russia does not permit her daughters to accept gifts from Americans.' However, upon further offerings, Lydia said 'Nyet' again, but this time with a smile, 'as if it was ... her mother's advice against accepting gifts from strange men.'<sup>38</sup> After further negotiations, mostly through hand gestures, Lydia agreed to accept the gift, as long as it was a personal gift and nothing more. The reporter had the bellboy bring the gift to her room, and reported back that 'he had put the box on her dressing table next to a picture, two feet high, of her son in Moscow.' While certainly the political under and over tones are present in this anecdote, in the end Lydia is like any mother visiting a new place who wishes to bring a toy back to her child and she goes from listening to 'Mother Russia' to her own mother. Such details about the dancers' experiences outside of performances were common filler in articles about the Moiseyev. Indeed, there appeared to be an American obsession with the Moiseyev dancers, their likes and dislikes, what they ate (especially if was pie), where they shopped, what they wore, etc.

Reporters, furthermore, wanted to prove the success of American culture abroad and that certain American symbols were universal. When questioned by *The Detroit Times* about their musical tastes, an article claimed that 'Russian girls like Elvis Presley too – for his 'good guitar playing.' Apparently his 'gyrations' and performance style were not as well received, being "too crude" with Bing Crosby touted by the dancers as better than Elvis. Indeed in the

<sup>36</sup> I. Moiseyev, 'We Meet America,' *Dance Magazine* (10 Oct 1958), p. 26.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> D. Hogan, 'Soviet Chorus Girl Gets Toy Bear She Admired: Cautious About Accepting Gift,' *New York Herald Tribune*, (12 April 1958).

lunch conversation between four of the dancers and the reporter, the conversation was not political but rather more about fashion and the girls' likes and dislikes. The reporter claimed that 'they live with their respective families in Moscow, and fill in spare hours just as American girls do – by dating boys.' There is a note of a more conservative outlook though – when dancer Valentina noted that 'we are whistled at' and 'this whistling we don't understand. Is it a compliment? It seems cheap.' They had to be assured that this was indeed 'high flattery' to which the 'four Soviet girls beamed, giggled and blushed.'<sup>39</sup> Once more, though differences are noticed in mannerisms and humorous depictions of a cultural disconnect displayed, it is done so in a very human, sympathetic manner.

It is noteworthy, that many of these anecdotes are related to consumerism and shopping. There were multiple articles across American newspapers, for instance, covering a shopping trip made up of a few female dancers, Mrs. Moiseyev and accompanying reporters. Across the board, press coverage emphasized the fact that Russian women loved to shop just as much as American women. For instance, the *New York Journal-American* entitled its article 'Communist or Capitalist...Girls will be Girls Russian Dancers See, Sigh and Buy in N.Y. Shops.'<sup>40</sup> The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* claimed that when 'Russian Women [were] on [an] American Shopping Spree... You Can't Tell Them from Capitalists.' The reporters and dancers exchanged cigarettes and songs, like 'You Are My Sunshine' and 'Moscow Is Smiling at Me,' described as 'a snappy ditty with lots of hand-waving.'<sup>41</sup> The press reported that 'they're just as bargain-minded as any American housewife.'<sup>42</sup> The dancers sighed over American film stars, like Tyrone Power and Robert Taylor. Indeed, reporters described the dancers' enthusiasm for shopping and how they tried to buy almost everything that was 'made-in-U.S.A.' including Tryone Power, though unfortunately Power 'isn't on sale.'<sup>43</sup> It seems that the American media felt Americans would be better able to relate to and understand the dancers by situating them within an American context and participating in an American practice, shopping.

The Moiseyev Dance Company represents more than a view of Russo-American relations and notions of American and Soviet culture. The company and its reception demonstrate American notions of gender and ethnicity as the Moiseyev presented dances meant to put heterosexuality and national identities on display. Notions of sexuality and gender played a major role in American self-identity and concern during the Cold War, with those men having Communist leanings or more liberal ideas often being depicted as more effeminate, and more conservative figures in society being depicted in culture as more masculine. Indeed, in David K. Johnson's *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government*, it discusses how hand-in-hand with the persecution of potential communists, the McCarthy investigations sought out potential homosexuals within the State Department.<sup>44</sup> K.A. Cuordileone goes on to describe how American Democrats struggled to move away from effeminate images associated with liberal ideas and that John F. Kennedy Jr. carefully constructed a masculine image for himself in order to make being a Democrat and liberal

<sup>39</sup> O. Curtis, 'Red Ballerinas Dig Elvis,' *The Detroit Times*, (April 1958), p. 10.

<sup>40</sup> 'Communist or Capitalist...Girls will be Girls Russian Dancers See, Sigh and Buy in N.Y. Shops,' *New York Journal-American* (25 April 1958), p. 17.

<sup>41</sup> 'Russian Women on American Shopping Spree: Dancers Have Gay Time in New York Stores – And You Can't Tell Them from Capitalists,' *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (29 April 1958), p. 2D.

<sup>42</sup> 'Communist or Capitalist...Girls will be Girls Russian Dancers See, Sigh and Buy in N.Y. Shops,' *New York Journal-American* (25 April 1958), p. 17.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> D. K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 1.

appropriately masculine. Kennedy made being a liberal Democrat, a wealthy background, and an Ivy League education into markers of refinement rather than 'softness' or femininity. Kennedy was able to do this in part by coveting a virile and womanizer image as well as a competitive edge through rumors of affairs and general admiration for women and athleticism. He used his history of childhood illness and then succeeding in joining the military and acquitting himself admirably to further his masculine image.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, the reception to the Moiseyev Dance Company reflected American conceptions of sexuality. In its dances, the company acted out 'traditional' relationships (including several dances that involved courtship), displaying their bodies in heteronormative interactions on stage. For instance, in the Spring Dance from the Ukraine Suite, the story of a male and female lover is told. At first, the 'girls of the village' are sad, 'they step slowly across the stage, in simple but continually changing groups and formations, conveying by the inclination of their heads and bodies as well as by facial expression, a mood of gentle melancholy.' However, after the male dancers have entered and the lovers reunited, 'the entire company launch into a Hopak which is full of life and joy.'<sup>46</sup> It is only after the male dancers enter that the female dancers depict fulfillment and happiness. The dances suited American conceptions of sexuality as supposedly expressed in folk cultures within the Soviet Union according to the figures on stage.

Similarly, American critics and audiences became fascinated by Soviet bodies. Newspaper articles and other reactions emphasize over and over again the incredible athleticism and the toned muscles of the male dancers: 'The men, with their breathtaking leaps, seem a mixture of rubber and steel. They can kick up their legs from almost a floor squat without moving their upper torsos. It looks fantastic.'<sup>47</sup> While the male members of the Company remained firmly masculine and athletic in descriptions throughout the 1958 and later tours, reactions to the female dancers varied. Some described the girls and women as 'pretty' and 'feminine'<sup>48</sup> while others likened them more to their male counterparts and as far too muscular: 'Girls in the company are pretty but heavy of hip and thigh. Hair is frizzy and they could learn precision from the Rockettes.'<sup>49</sup> As discussed above, reactions to the Moiseyev often played into American discourse of fear of cultural and general inferiority vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, and the way in which Soviet bodies on stage are discussed by reporters reflects this.

The Moiseyev Dance Company represents a window into the American mind during the Cold War and American constructions of gender and the body, race and both Soviet and American identity. Representing a pivotal moment in Cold War history – the same year as events such as the launch of the American Explorer satellite to try to help the US compete in the Space Race and American troops sent into Lebanon, this research adds to the very healthy scholarship on the role of culture in the Cold War and adds new layers of understanding to such terms as understood in this time period. Americans saw, read and talked about the dancers in the Moiseyev Dance Company and these dancers became humanized through such exposure. While for many Americans, this was the first time to see a 'genuine Soviet' and the political aspects of this exposure were never far from mind, in the end the dancers not only came across as very likeable and worthy of admiration but also as people Americans could relate to and get along with in everyday life. The reaction to the Company on the part of Americans demonstrates that rather than a view of the world divided between Soviet and American, the American audience and the members of the dance company demonstrated a somewhat more nuanced understanding and appreciation between American and Soviet societies.

<sup>45</sup> K.A. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), p. 170.

<sup>46</sup> M. Clarke, 'Moiseyev Dancers from Moscow,' *Dance Magazine*, Vol. 2. (February, 1956), p. 20.

<sup>47</sup> F. Herridge, 'Russian Dance Troupe Cheered at Metropolitan,' *New York Post*, (15 April 1958), p. 45.

<sup>48</sup> C. Manos, 'A Moscow Girl in Detroit: Dancing, Kissing, Pie,' *Detroit Times*, (14 May, 1958).

<sup>49</sup> F Quinn, 'Soviet Dance Troupe is Breath-Taking,' *New York Mirror* (15 April 1958).

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**Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil** by Timothy Mitchell. Verso, November 2011, 288 pages. ISBN: 978-1844677450, Hardcover, £16.99

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The modern world was built and shaped by the consumption of fossil fuels as sources of energy; today our global systems of agriculture, transport and industry all presuppose a constant supply of crude oil. Concerns over 'peak oil' are thus increasingly prevalent, as a seemingly inevitable decline in the rate of petroleum extraction implies drastic changes for contemporary technological society and global human culture<sup>1</sup>.

Timothy Mitchell's latest book is therefore a timely contribution. Mitchell offers an alternative history of modern democracy which directly links the production of energy to the emergence of democratic politics, arguing that the two have been 'interwoven from the start' (p.8). The increasing concentration of coal from the nineteenth century onwards made mass politics possible, as the threat or act of interrupting energy flows (through large-scale strikes and widespread mobilisations of labour) could be used to advance democratic claims (p.27).

Mitchell emphasises that it was the socio-technical systems erected around carbon (rather than simply the resource itself) which permitted this agency (p.42). He thus contributes to a growing literature on 'technopolitics' - recently defined as 'the strategic practice of designing or using technology to enact political goals'<sup>2</sup> - which examines how power can be derived from the control of technical knowledge and practices<sup>3</sup>.

Despite opening with the case of coal, *Carbon Democracy* is primarily concerned with the construction and development of a global energy order based on oil during the twentieth century. To do so involves complex interdisciplinary scholarship, drawing heavily from postcolonial studies and science and technology studies (STS), with a thoroughly historical approach - as a succession of familiar narratives are revised with the production and distribution of oil located as a central actor.

The First World War is presented as a struggle for resources. The 'liberal internationalism' which followed the conflict (embodied in Wilsonian ideals of self-

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<sup>1</sup> Such concerns have become more populist during the last decade, see for instance: R. Heinberg, *Party's Over: Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies* (Forest Row: Clairview, 2005); P. Roberts, *The End of Oil: The Decline of the Petroleum Economy and the Rise of a New Energy Order* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004); D. Strahan, *The Last Oil Shock: A Survival Guide to the Imminent Extinction of Petroleum Man* (London: John Murray, 2007)

<sup>2</sup> G. Hecht & P. N. Edwards, 'The Technopolitics of Cold War: Toward a Transregional Perspective', in M. Adas (ed.), *Essays on Twentieth-Century History* (Philadelphia, PN: Temple University Press, 2010), pp. 271-314, quote at p.274

<sup>3</sup> For examples of recent literature on technopolitics, see: M. Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); N. Cullather, 'Miracles of Modernization: The Green Revolution and the Apotheosis of Technology', *Diplomatic History* 28:2 (April 2004, pp.227-254); G. Hecht (ed.), *Entangled Geographies: Empire and Technopolitics in the Global Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011)

determination) functioned as a method for maintaining imperial rule, securing control of Middle Eastern oil for a handful of major international oil companies, including Shell, the Rockefeller Standard Oil firms and Anglo-Persian Oil (the future BP). These organisations subsequently delayed the emergence of an 'oil industry' in the region during the interwar years, to protect their monopolistic control of world oil. Such a narrative, while problematic, represents a clear departure from conventional histories of swashbuckling 'oil pioneers'<sup>4</sup>.

The establishment of a new world order after 1945 also heralded the construction of new energy networks, which replaced coal with oil. By approaching oil as a strategic resource and investing heavily in reconstructing Europe's financial system around petroleum, the United States secured oil's global predominance. Mitchell again emphasises the political implications of particular socio-technical systems, suggesting that new networks weakened Europe's political Left, as oilfields, pipelines, refineries and pumping stations could not be paralysed by organised labour as effectively as the systems which had governed the extraction and distribution of coal (p.108).

Mitchell's account of the rise of oil is multi-layered and sophisticated. A particularly impressive strand of analysis covers how rapidly increasing oil production fostered the now-familiar belief in 'unlimited economic growth', which in turn permitted new forms of democratic governance. Innovations in calculation methods and statistical analysis made it possible to construct the abstract 'economy' as a new object of politics in the mid-twentieth century (building on theories Mitchell has advanced in his previous publications)<sup>5</sup>. This object could then be deployed by experts to displace democratic debate and set limits to egalitarian demands (p.143). Mitchell thus also depicts the socio-technical systems of petroleum as key actors in the evolution of the disciplines of economics and political theory.

Mitchell's expertise on the Middle East is clear throughout, and the chapters which address this region are particularly strong. The rise of oil is linked to how political struggles in the Middle East were transformed into struggles with oil companies over the control of resources. The establishment of OPEC in 1960 reflected a shift from international firms to oil-producing states in regulating and restricting the supply of oil, culminating in the 1973 'oil crisis', of which Mitchell offers a fascinating revisionist account. Indeed, Mitchell argues that the very description of a 'crisis' simplifies complex transformations in governance, finance, energy flows and national economies into a single event - therefore failing to capture how oil networks became a 'political instrument' in bringing about the demise of the post-war Keynesian financial system (pp.198-199).

The collapse of the post-1945 system placed the weakened carbon democracies of the West into a new relationship with the oil states of the Middle East, while motivating the political right to promote the 'market' as an alternative technology of rule. Mitchell's relatively straightforward account of how the vulnerabilities of coal production related to democratic claims is heavily contrasted with the complex networks of oil, as the post-crisis 'neoliberal laws of market' also weakened the powers of labour by further 'placing parts of the world beyond the reach of democratic contestation' (p.173).

The rise of Political Islam in the Middle East following the 1970s crisis is another broad area of history which does escape Mitchell's revisionism. Conventional accounts have tended to

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<sup>4</sup> For a classic example of this approach, see: D. Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991)

<sup>5</sup> T. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Los Angeles, CA: California University Press, 2002)

portray Islamist movements as the product of conflict between tribal religious forces and globalising capital ('Jihad vs. McWorld'<sup>6</sup>). Mitchell instead argues that Political Islam was co-opted into maintaining the political order constructed around oil, as the oil industry was obliged to collaborate with other social and political forces (primarily American military power and Islamic domestic politics) to guarantee its own survival (p.226). Mitchell cites Saudi Arabia as proof; as the pivotal actor in maintaining oil scarcity (with the overt support of the United States) all oil profits have depended on working with forces which could guarantee control of Arabia. In practice this has been the House of Saud, in alliance with the ultra-conservative Wahhabi branch of Islam (p.213). While Mitchell may push this concept of 'McJihad' too far, it provides an effective platform to reconceptualise globalisation and religion in the Middle East as inseparable from technological and political power.

*Carbon Democracy* is a meticulously researched and highly sophisticated multidisciplinary account of modern political and economic history, with challenging implications. It is not without limitations; the insistence on treating oil as a central actor can lead Mitchell to frame vast swathes of events and phenomena in terms of energy production, producing a number of contestable historical interpretations which specialists will take issue with. For instance, Mitchell's account of the 1973 oil crisis can seem overly-teleological, imposing a coherence on the period which it does not possess. This critique can also be applied to his treatment of the major twentieth- century conflicts (both 'hot' and 'cold'). The consistent emphasis throughout on technopolitics, while enlightening, can also appear reductionist; excluding a matrix of cultural interactions in the process.

Nonetheless, this is an important and original contribution which deserves to be read and discussed by a wide audience. The entirety of Mitchell's analysis is linked to explaining the contemporary limits of carbon democracy, as the era of abundant, low-cost carbon energy draws to an end and existing forms of democratic government appear incapable of protecting the long-term future of the planet. *Carbon Democracy* ultimately warns that new sets of 'political tools' will be required if we are to address the expiration of fossil fuels and construct stable, democratic futures.

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<sup>6</sup> B. R. Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World* (NY: Ballantine, 1995)

**Holocaust Impiety in Literature, Popular Culture and Film** by Matthew Boswell.

Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 221 pages. ISBN-10: 0230231950, Hardcover, £40

Diana Popescu\*

University of Southampton

'One of a new generation of Holocaust scholars'<sup>1</sup>; Matthew Boswell is probing the so-called limits of Holocaust representation by providing an intellectually stimulating and provocative analysis of a largely under-researched topic. This book is concerned with the literary, filming and musical narratives that make use of 'aesthetic shock to induce deeper ethical engagements' with the subject of the Holocaust (p. 6). Through close readings of Sylvia Plath's and S.D. Snodgrass' Holocaust poetry, British (post)punk music, and films such as Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*, Boswell reveals the presence, and more importantly, the relevance of 'Holocaust impiety'. Inspired by Gillian Rose's critique of 'Holocaust piety' – a mode of artistic engagement which argues for the ineffability of the Holocaust – Boswell echoes Rose that 'to argue for non-representability of the Holocaust is to mystify something we dare not understand, because we fear that it may be all too understandable, all too continuous with what we are – human, all too human'.<sup>2</sup> The author contends that works of Holocaust impiety which run against the ineffability argument are worthy of consideration, if not for their aesthetic value then for their potential to make us realise that 'on some level, we [could have been] *the monsters*' (p. 146).

As one may expect, Holocaust impiety is situated at the opposite end of 'piety'. Unlike the latter, it does not avoid ethical engagement, nor does it hold 'prohibitive tenets' (p. 8). The author defines Holocaust impiety as referring to 'works that reject redemptive interpretations of genocide and the claims of historical ineffability... [they] deliberately engineer a sense of crisis in readers, viewers or listeners by attacking the cognitive and cultural mechanisms that keep our understanding of the Holocaust at a safe distance from our own understanding' (p. 3). Hence, their objective is deliberately transformational, as they rely on the ability to shock the audience into adopting a new point of view.

To a certain degree, Boswell's explanation of this category lacks consistency. This is made apparent when the author argues that Lanzmann, even though a defendant of Holocaust piety, employs an 'impious' interviewing methodology. One also wonders why Roberto Benigni's *Life is Beautiful*, mentioned alongside the acclaimed *Schindler's List*, is deemed an example of Holocaust piety – given that it has been thoroughly criticized by Elie Wiesel, who viewed it as a crass example of Holocaust desecration and hence, impiety. Yet, we can also learn from Boswell's inconsistency as it raises the question of whether works of art can fall into two opposing categories - 'piety' as well as of 'impiety'. Tackling such issues also draws attention to the inherent ambiguity of the concept of Holocaust impiety.

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by scholar Robert Eaglestone, retrieved on <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=419158&sectioncode=26> (accessed on 23.4. 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Rose quoted by Boswell on p. 2.

Certainly this criticism does not detract from Boswell's insightful account of works that span a range of media. In the book's first section, Boswell challenges the claim that Plath identified too easily with the Holocaust victims, arguing that the narrator of *Daddy* and *Lady Lazarus* builds a tenuous relationship with Jewish victimisation 'by showing lack of knowledge of the historical experiences, traditions and religion of the Jews' (p. 45). The author shows eloquence in his interpretation of W.D. Snodgrass' dramatic monologues of Nazi leaders included in the cycle of poems *The Fuehrer Bunker* (1977), especially when he observes the performative aspect of Snodgrass' poetry produced through the use of 'formal and linguistic experimentation'. This encourages readers to engage with the text in a way which foregrounds their own potential culpability (pp. 63, 91).

With the exception of Jon Stratton's research, the impact of the Holocaust on punk movements has drawn little scholarly interest, which makes this author's engagement with this phenomenon a real contribution. Through his analysis of song lyrics, band biographies and of public performances, Boswell suggests that far from adopting the Nazi swastika and other symbols for their shock value, leading band members of *Sex Pistols* were in fact mocking Nazism, in the same way in which they would be mocking the hypocrisy, complacency and passivity of their parents' generation. His reading of *Joy Division's* album *Closer* points to the transformational role of music, as listeners are drawn by both sound and word into a 'dark internal space of the mind' where they can confront, by means of imagination, not only an atrocious history but also themselves as being a part of it (p. 123). The nihilism which hovered over this band's songs and personal lives surfaces with greater force in the songs of *Manic Street Preachers*. Through their engagement with the monstrosity of history and of humanity, this band has in fact lost the belief in the worth of any kind of human value system.

Boswell is interested in how filmmakers use the camera as an 'active agent [...] that implicates the viewer through association' (p. 135). He observes how the camera positions the viewer as a victim or as a perpetrator, but also how it has the power to inflict violence. The latter is especially apparent in Lanzmann's filming of former SS officer Franz Suchomel, where his purpose was to 'kill him with the camera'. It also appears in *Inglourious Basterds*, where the *enfant terrible* of the Hollywood film wants to believe that 'it's the power of cinema that fights the Nazis' (p. 135). While he recognizes *Shoah* as a valuable 'document of Nazi crimes and the experiences and attitudes that shaped those crimes' (p. 158), Boswell criticizes Lanzmann for his refusal to see any human continuity between Nazi criminals and our lives in the present, making his work a counter-example of Holocaust impiety.

Tim Nelson's *The Grey Zone* is pitted against the repertoire of pious works which propose non-representability of the Holocaust, as his intention is to 'show everything' (p. 164). The book ends with an engaging interpretation of *Inglourious Basterds*. Boswell identifies, with a great deal of mastery, the film's subtle reliance of cinematic references, and its central metaphor of cinema as a weapon which can refashion history (p. 177).

This book is highly recommended for those interested in the most recent developments in the discussion about Holocaust representability. The thesis of Holocaust impiety proposed by Boswell brings an important contribution to the field of Holocaust memory and representation, and situates this author within a new generation of scholars who are unafraid to pose challenging and worthwhile questions.

***Revolution and the Republic: A History of Political Thought in France since the Eighteenth Century*** by Jeremy Jennings. Oxford, 2011, 560 pages. ISBN: 978-0-19-820313-1, Hardback, £100.00

Eric Brandom\*  
Duke University

Jeremy Jennings has written the history of modern French political thought in large measure as a history of disagreements over what the Revolution meant and might continue to mean. Cultivating the tone of commentary, Jennings eschews “resounding and forthright conclusions,” preferring that readers bring their full attention and active participation to what he characterizes as “a broad conspectus of the French political tradition as it has evolved over the past two hundred years and more” (p.28). To attempt a strictly chronological narrative of the conflicting traditions of French political thought on such a scale would mean either sharply reducing the complexity of each moment of contingent political crisis, or losing the continuity of ideas over time. Jennings wants to foreground both. He is able to thread the needle by dividing *Revolution in the Republic* into ten chapters, each of which is its own chronological narrative built around a cluster such as “Rights, Liberty, and Equality,” “Universalism, the Nation, and Defeat,” or “France, Intellectuals, and Engagement.” People and events recur, but there is nonetheless a progression in the temporal center of gravity of the chapters—although not a quick one, since the 18<sup>th</sup> century is only really left behind in the eighth chapter. As Jennings himself suggests, these chapters need not be read in the given order. The arguments of each, often implied in the triadic titles, stand on their own.

Yet this is a whole book, not a collection of essays, and if its scale precludes reduction to one or several slogans, a synthetic perspective does emerge. Perhaps most important is the demonstration that the tensions left unresolved by the Revolution, above all around the meaning of the Republic, have been productive rather than debilitating. Jennings emphasizes this characteristic of French political thought even in areas often regarded as having been sterilized by the Jacobin legacy. Particularly striking is the positive attention given to religion and attempts to manage religious diversity. *Revolution in the Republic* is in a sense a triumphal synthesis of the historiographic recovery of French political liberalism that has taken place since the early 1980s on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>1</sup> Indeed *Revolution and the Republic* may be the first genuinely post-Jacobin—rather than pro- or anti-Jacobin—general history of French political thought. Jennings is optimistic about the adaptive capacity of the republican tradition even in the face of today’s European and global problems, ending the book with the declaration that “it still moves” (p.529)—although the echo of Galileo is not comforting. He is thus in company with other exciting historically-minded scholars such as Cécile Laborde in taking the history of political thought as a resource for the contemporary world.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jennings is very much part of the wave of scholarship collected into a major recent edited volume, which includes essays from his own pen: E. Berenson, V. Duclert, and C. Prochasson, eds., *The French Republic: History, Values, Debates* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> C. Laborde, *Critical republicanism : The Hijab Controversy and Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Jennings builds his chapters out of well-crafted syntheses of original texts, debates, and philosophies. His range is wide, so that canonical figures such as the abbé Sieyès, Germaine de Staël, Alexis de Tocqueville, or Albert Camus share the page with uncommonly sensitive examinations of, for instance, the systematic monarchism of the Vicomte de Bonald or the romantic nationalism of Armand Carrel. Familiar figures and themes appear in new light: Camus through his early reading of Henri Bergson or committed literature as an interwar invention of Paul Nizan, to speak only of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Given the range and depth Jennings has achieved, one hesitates to complain about what is left out. Yet it is telling that the problematic of colonies and Empire really arrives only with Frantz Fanon. The Haitian revolution does not appear in this book. Despite occasional references to slavery or Algeria, Jennings implicitly rejects the perspective of a growing body of scholarship that assigns colonial and imperial experiences fundamental importance across the political spectrum within metropolitan France. This includes the bold claims of historians of the Haitian Revolution running from C.L.R. James to Laurent Dubois,<sup>3</sup> but also the less radical insistence of historians such as Alice Conklin on the powerful links between Empire and Republicanism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>4</sup> Jennings is sensitive to the significance of attitudes toward the "Anglo-Saxon" world—this is in fact a major theme of the book—and later on to the impact of the Russian Revolution (p.433ff), but otherwise Jennings' France stands alone. Even in what is explicitly a national history, the absence of these transnational perspectives is to be regretted.

This is perhaps an effect of the way in which Jennings approaches texts. Although his opinion about those opinions he reconstructs is generally clear, the scale of the project undertaken in *Revolution and the Republic* does not permit its author to confront its various characters except with their own political enemies or descendants. Jennings can highlight the fact that a Kantian Republican like Charles Renouvier preferred to solve unemployment through colonization than through changed property relations in France because Renouvier wrote about it (p.60). But he has no space to confront a discourse from beyond the limits placed on it by its own context. *Revolution and the Republic* is a reminder that a real difference exists between the history of political thought and intellectual history focused on politics. The latter could not do without such contextualization and therefore cannot be written with the same sweep and inclusiveness as the former. Such limits in *Revolution and the Republic*, therefore, are often not faults but virtues consequent on a major achievement.

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<sup>3</sup> C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963). L. Dubois, 'An enslaved Enlightenment: rethinking the intellectual history of the French Atlantic', *Social History*, 31, no. 1 (2006).

<sup>4</sup> A. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize : The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

**Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria: A History of the Arrival of Islam in Igboland** by  
Egodi Uchendu. Klaus Schwarz Publishers, 2011, 284 pages. ISBN: 978-3879973835,  
Paperback, €45.00.

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Egodi Uchendu's *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria: A History of the Arrival of Islam in Igboland* attempts to account for the arrival of Islam in Igboland (Nigeria's 'Christian heartland') at the beginning of the twentieth century, and its survival and modest growth from that time onwards. As Uchendu writes, she wants to know how and why a region known to be opposed to Islam has accommodated Islam for a century (p.15).

Uchendu has had to overcome a number of considerable obstacles. First, there is the availability of sources. Uchendu acknowledges that there are limited sources concerning Islam's arrival in Igboland even from the British colonial era. As a result she has had to rely on a substantial number of interviews or oral histories. Uchendu is aware that people's memories are not always objective, however she has no other serious alternative (p.13). The problems are only compounded for Uchendu as at times the interviews involved three or four languages.

A second obstacle is the criticism that the research project is not worthwhile. Uchendu writes that during a preliminary discussion of her work at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, she was questioned as to the small ratio of Igbo Muslims to Igbo non-Muslims in eastern Nigeria, with some figures counting one Igbo Muslim for every one thousand Igbo non-Muslims. Uchendu points out that the limited number of Igbo Muslims is not a disqualification for the research (p.38). She is right in thinking this as there would be innumerable scholarly works in anthropology for example, which focussed on even smaller social groups.

Uchendu is able to create a history of Islam's arrival in Igboland prior to 1950 by integrating the few existing records from the British colonial era with oral evidence from some of the oldest Muslims in Igboland. This information is then contrasted to the earlier work of Abdurrahman Doi, with Uchendu exposing serious flaws in Doi's history of Islam and the Igbo.

Uchendu's pioneering use of oral history enables her to paint a portrait of both the great difficulties undergone and successes achieved by Igbo Muslims. In addition, she draws insights into the contributing factors to a number of religious riots in Nigeria in the 2000s. Uchendu shows that the religious and ethnic fabric in Nigeria can be immensely complex at times.

In the second half of the book, Uchendu changes focus slightly and explores the reasons people gave for their conversion to Islam (Uchendu addresses the conversion-reversion debate early on in the book, as well as explaining Igbo social structure and beliefs). Such reasons vary from marrying a Muslim to attempting to find employment or gain a promotion, since society is divided into religious groupings which tend to hire or promote from within the same group an individual belongs to.

There are some criticisms that can be made concerning Uchendu's book. It seems as if the book is written more for a Nigerian audience since someone with a limited understanding of Nigeria can expect some frustrations. The first of these is that few of the maps in the book have a legend or a key. As a result, the reader does not know how far one location is from another.

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When various locations are mentioned in the text, the same problem arises. Better maps would overcome this problem.

A brief explanation of Igbo society at the beginning of the book would have also been useful. This could then have been expanded (as it is indeed explained at greater length) in the second half of the book. One interesting oversight of the book was that there was no explanation of the traditional Igbo religion. This is strange considering that the book is about the arrival of Islam in Nigeria's 'Christian heartland', yet Uchendu acknowledges that there is still a considerable portion of the population that hold on to traditional Igbo beliefs. What are these beliefs in short? Presumably they are animist in nature, like most other traditional African belief systems.

One part of the conclusion seems odd. In suggesting possibilities for peace considering Islam's presence in Igboland and Igbo claims that it threatens Christianity, Uchendu posits the idea that the free market principle should be allowed to work so that all groups may showcase their beliefs and people be free to choose among them (p.261). While a good idea in theory, there seems to be little hope of it seeing fruition in Nigeria, especially when the previous chapter detailed (partially) religiously motivated conflicts in the north of the country. Perhaps it should be recognised that Nigeria is not fertile ground for the free market of religions.

These criticisms of Uchendu's book should not distract from her achievement nor the worthwhile nature of the project. The book is to be recommended for those researching religion in Nigeria but also ethnic conflicts, not only in Nigeria or Africa, but anywhere since the case of the Igbo Muslims provides an excellent case study.

**German Colonialism: A Short History** by Sebastian Conrad. Cambridge University Press, December 2011, 233 pages. ISBN: 978-1107400474, Paperback, £17.99

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Tallinn University

Sebastian Conrad's *German Colonialism: A Short History* provides a much needed discussion and analysis of the German colonial adventure that spanned a mere thirty years and ended with the First World War. The momentous events of the twentieth century have obscured Germany's role as a colonial power, a role which is revealing in light of what followed. Conrad's small but dense book provides a useful and illuminating interpretation of German dreams and the practical realities of administrating empire in Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Germany's late arrival to the colonial game was a product of its political form; the area that would become Germany was for centuries a fragmented patchwork of small states. Not until the arrival of Bismarck and unification in 1871 was there a national state with which to pursue colonial aims. Still, Conrad demonstrates that 'Germans' had a more than passing interest in establishing a footprint abroad, from ill-fated settlements in Texas in the early nineteenth century, to the ultra-sophisticated mercantile networks scattered throughout the world under the auspices of the Hansaeatic League and its member cities (p.25).

Even with a unified Germany, a colonial empire was not a foregone conclusion; Bismarck was not especially keen to the idea. Nevertheless, the empire builders won the day, and here is where things get interesting. The vision laid out for foreign adventures never fails to highlight the national character and *zeitgeist*. The German case for empire was no exception. Looking to 'export social tensions', Bismarck could countenance empire, but only of the economic sort. His ideal empire furthered the goals of private German economic actors with minimal state support. He never envisioned large permanent settlements abroad (p.21). Bismarck was, despite his immense stature in Germany's political history, swept up by the momentum of other social, political and historical agencies. Conrad deftly navigates the complex influences and outcomes of German colonialism. Bismarck's commercial concerns are contrasted with those who had other visions and goals. German geographical societies caught the popular imagination with tales of adventurous travelers and chroniclers in the heroic age of European exploration and competition. National pride in these efforts fed calls for empire amidst Germany's rise to great power status. The chauvinism that is the starting point for any colonial exercise was also to be found in the German case. Missionaries informed the public, after their own fashion, of the exotic parts of the world and reinforced the notion that benighted peoples needed a helping hand on the road to progress (p. 23).

German chauvinism took on a sinister hue in its African possessions, notably South-West Africa, today's Namibia. The war of annihilation against the Herero people can be seen to prefigure Nazi Germany's policy of racial extermination in the occupied territories during World War Two. Though Conrad does not entirely support this historical corollary, there were disturbing similarities (p. 159). The idea of total war was manifested in the person of Lothar von Trotha, the general who directed the campaign against the Herero and who promised 'rivers of blood' (p.85). Von Trotha delivered on his oath but his methods found detractors in Berlin.

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Before being recalled, von Trotha led a brutal reaction to native unrest that led to women and children being targeted, the construction of prison camps and a massive reduction in the Herero and Nama (the other main native group) populations. After the war, a totalizing system was implemented that saw travel restrictions and official documentation and numbering with a metal identification mark of all native peoples over the age seven; a creepy foreshadowing of the number tattoos in Nazi concentration camps. The settlement in South-West Africa is the only German overseas possession that retains a German speaking population (p. 39).

Conrad also touches on the German commercial empire in China and its outposts in the Pacific, where permanent settlement was never envisaged. In Pacific colonies, like Samoa, German men frequently married locals, something forbidden in Africa, and later banned altogether. The politics of race figured prominently in the colonial imagination and in practice, reaching its zenith of suppression and persecution in South-West Africa and German East Africa. By contrast, the German imperial jackboot trod more lightly in its small possessions in Asia and the Pacific.

Alas, the German colonial world ground to sudden halt with defeat in the Great War. Or did it? One of Conrad's truly admirable efforts with *German Colonialism: A short History* is to show that the colonial project for Germany both predated and outlived its official temporality and stretched beyond its specific spatiality. A rigid definition of colonialism is insufficient to encompass the German experience. Conrad shows how the colonial idea lived in the imagination and in public discourse and thus how it is still in a sense a vectoring force in the political and social sphere (p. 186). Conrad has provided a thoroughly readable and nuanced account of a complex history.

**Pope Urban II's Council of Piacenza** by Robert Somerville. Oxford University Press, 2011, 160 pages. ISBN: 978-0-19-925859-8, Hardback, £55.00

Michael Tivey\*

The conciliar events of 1095 are well known to medievalists. It was during this year that Pope Urban II (1088-1099) convened the historic assembly at Clermont which prompted the First Crusade. The subject of the present text, however, is that other council of 1095; the synod which met in Piacenza from 1-7 March. In this latest instalment from Robert Somerville, a scholar whose career has been dedicated to the councils of the high medieval papacy, of prime concern are Piacenza's impact on the contemporary papal reform and its associated contribution to medieval canon law. Historiographically, this accords with the council's traditional significance as a political and canonical landmark, though Piacenza's commonly cited role in the beginning of the First Crusade is not similarly emphasised.<sup>1</sup>

The context for Piacenza was the so-called 'Gregorian' reform, a movement which both aimed to curb clerical immoralities and transform papal authority. By 1080 this had precipitated a papal schism with the installation of the Anti-pope Clement III. The themes of the reform are reflected in Piacenza's canons which, in large part, are occupied with simoniacal and schismatic ordinations, though nicolaitism and liturgical matters also figure. Of the sources available for Urban's pontificate, conciliar legislation is especially insightful. 'General' councils were indeed an important tool of authority for reformers, and reveal to historians the developing ideas of the 'Gregorian' cause.

This wider context is overviewed in the introductory chapter of the text. So too are details of the council itself such as its attendance and key judicial business. The second chapter then surveys the surviving sources for the *textus receptus* of the conciliar canons: that is, the group of decrees which, despite varying in number and appendages in different sources, is taken to constitute Piacenza's legislation. Here Somerville summarises the primary material, dividing his sources according to criteria including provenance and the number of canons contained in each. Included in this overview are canonical manuscripts, papal correspondence, narrative sources, and canon law collections such as Gratian's *Decretum*. This listing exercise is the necessary prelude to the analysis of the sources in the fourth chapter. The chapter is then appended by a translated excerpt from the *Chronicon* of Bernold of Constance. The third chapter, the shortest of the book, surveys the treatment of the primary literature at the hands of canonists, editors, and historians from the eleventh century onwards. Of particular interest here is the argument that a canon ascribed to Piacenza prohibiting lay investiture is not authentic, but is in fact an early-modern copyist's error. Furthermore, Somerville demonstrates the weaknesses of Ludwig Weiland's edition of 1893, thus adding weight to the case for a revised critical edition of the canons.

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<sup>1</sup> For details of the links between Piacenza and the First Crusade, see J. Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?* (4<sup>th</sup> edn., Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 12-13; C. Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (London: Penguin, 2007), pp. 61-62.

In the fourth chapter, Somerville analyses the transmission of Piacenza's canons, examining in turn the similarities and differences between groups of sources. The picture here is of the broad dissemination of the *textus receptus* in later canonical texts, though the supposed 'uniformity' of the canons' transmission is argued to have been in fact more 'variegated' (p.71). It must be said that the subheadings do become a little complex at this point. This is perhaps inevitable, however, given the nature of the source material and the need to impose a structure upon it.

Before presenting his edition, Somerville makes a point of justifying his methodology. The predicament he faces, as editor, is the multiplicity of surviving sources for the *textus receptus*: which should be trusted? Moreover, since no 'official' papal version survives, there is the need to approximate which of these 'private' sources is most similar to the chancery 'original' (pp.71, 102). Somerville is pragmatic in his solution, using one relatively reliable text, a manuscript of the *Polycarpus* supplement, as the basis for a critical edition while noting variations in other sources. The presentation of the edition is daunting at first sight, though the reader is guided through the technical notation and an English translation is provided.

Chapter five contextualises the canons within the politics of the papal reform and debates the conclusions to be drawn about Urban's policy. Somerville here analyses the core of the 1095 legislation: the seven canons dealing with manifestations of simony and the five which address schismatic ordinations. A discussion then follows of selected canons' emphasis on 'mercy': a feature which, for Somerville, demonstrates Urban's strategy to 'rehabilitate' schismatic clergy following his political upswing over Clement III (p.105). The commentary is helpfully accompanied here by frequent translation of the Latin text.

In the final chapter Somerville overviews the six subsequent councils celebrated by Urban. Of these assemblies, the canons of the 1099 Roman council receive the most discussion (seven pages). Clearly, this is a topic for future investigation. The text then concludes with a short postscript, with additional back matter including helpful indices of manuscripts and church councils.

Of the more general features of this book, the most striking are the following. *Piacenza* is above all a work of canonistic scholarship focusing on the historiography of canonical manuscripts. The character of Urban II, by contrast, is largely absent from the scene. The text also expertly demonstrates the skills of interpretation required to study the conciliar legislation of this period. As Somerville acknowledges, the need for conjecture here is a reminder that many questions about Piacenza remain ultimately insoluble. Furthermore, *Piacenza* is surely an example of history writing at the microscopic level, demonstrating the depth of research required to understand just one of Urban's councils.

*Piacenza* is certainly a challenging read and, as such, is not a beginner's book. The reader is presented with complex information throughout and, while notation and abbreviations are explained at every turn, the technicality of the text means it will be received best by a specialist readership.

Meticulously researched and highly detailed, this book will be an invaluable resource for researchers in the field. It should also be of interest to those curious about the challenges of interpreting the sources for this period of church history.

***Britain's Experience of the Empire in the Twentieth Century***, by Andrew Thompson (ed.) Oxford University Press, 2011, 368 pages. ISBN: 978-0-19-923658-9, Hardback, £35

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Over the past thirty years the study of the British Empire has risen to the forefront of British historical study. Students of modern and contemporary history are now confronted with a vast array of 'new imperial histories'. Foremost amongst the literature is the schism between 'minimalist' 'Porterans' and 'maximalist' 'MacKenzieites'<sup>1</sup> who continue to dispute the true nature of 'popular imperialism' in Britain (p.21). Recently, the empire has experienced a revival amongst the wider public imagination – led by politicians, journalists and historians alike. A glut in television documentaries and popular histories - often sentimental, oversimplified or apologist accounts – can make the topic seem tired and over-scrutinized.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, there is undisputable merit in the continued investigation into the impact of empire upon British culture, past and the present. But any new history must seek to provide an innovative approach to avoid falling into the same theoretical dead ends.

Andrew Thompson aims to achieve this in a number of ways. The dearth in focus of the mid-twentieth century amongst works of historians embracing the cultural turn and 'new imperial history' is rightly addressed here (p.5). Methodologically, Thompson and his contributors take a pluralistic and malleable theoretical stance: that international, domestic and imperial events and influences are intrinsically imbricated with one another and that the empire's 'impact upon Britain was pervasive, but Britain's embrace of that empire more tentative' (p.31). Thompson stresses the difficulty of making generalisations when faced with this 'bewildering variety of influences', and growing pluralism in British society (pp.24-31). Evident throughout are a variety of underlying themes: the intricacy of the ties and inseparability of Britain from its empire during the twentieth century; the way that the empire acted as a lens through which policy-makers and the populace as a whole viewed the world; the role of the 'special relationship' with the United States and Britain's unravelling 'world powerdom'; and the withering of the definition and perceptions of 'empire' through the twentieth century (p.14). In sum, the British people were influenced by their empire, whether they liked it or not.

A cadre of experts in the history of politics, economics, religion, international relations, race, gender, identity and popular culture, join Thompson in providing 'a detailed focus upon the ways in which the empire was experienced in Britain'. Philip Murphy opens with an account

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<sup>1</sup> For a summary of the debate see: Porter, B. "Empire, What Empire?" Or, Why 80% of Early- and Mid-Victorians Were Deliberately Kept in Ignorance of It," *Victorian Studies*, Winter (2004): 256-263; MacKenzie, J.M. "Comfort" and Conviction: A Response to Bernard Porter', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36: 4, (2008) pp. 659-668.

<sup>2</sup> See Jackson, W. 'Review of *The British Empire Debate*', <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1216> Date accessed: 04.04.2012; and Conrad, P. 'Toeing the Empire line: Niall Ferguson's vision of the British Empire as a 'Good Thing' fails to address the perils of possession' *The Observer*, 05.01.2003.

of Britain's changing role as a global power which emphasises the exploitation of the Anglo-American 'special relationship' in retaining a 'place at the top table' (p.33). The metropolitan-colonial entanglement in religious thought and practice, and British political thinking are explored in chapters by Jeffrey Cox and Richard Whiting respectively, while economic historian Jim Tomlinson emphasises the longevity of the idea of the empire as 'privileged economic space' and argues for the centrality of the British Empire in the development of globalization (p.212).<sup>3</sup>

Wendy Webster writes an excellent article showing how pre-1945 anti-alienism directed towards white European immigrants was substituted for racism directed at post-WW2 Commonwealth immigrants. Until the recent resurgence in anti-European white-racism, white European and Commonwealth immigrants were largely invisible after 1945 (p.129). The post-war arrival of a large influx of Caribbean and South Asian immigrants was greeted with a surge of racism and xenophobia which conveniently disremembered the 'war-debt' Britain owed to the peoples of its empire (pp.125-126). Webster shows that British negative attitudes towards immigration were by no means monolithic: Britain's self-image in this period as a liberal nation was often contrasted with South African Apartheid and Southern American institutional racism. This prided libertarianism, though, rarely stretched to embracing multiculturalism in the 1960s and 1970s. Finally, Webster also looks at the role that this 'reversal of the colonial encounter' (p.125) had in its effect upon 'policy, attitudes, and experiences' in a profound manner – in particular in popular media such as film and literature (p.127).

Thompson's own chapter argues once more for the significant role of the empire in British popular imagination. Much of the research in this essay draws from his seminal *Empire Strikes Back?* (2005) but it still provides a detailed and revealing discussion of the complexities of the colony-metropole relation. Perhaps of greatest interest is the 'Legacies' section, which investigates the period of decolonisation and its pervasive impact upon British psychology and mentality. In particular Thompson cites returning groupings, such as civil servants and the ex-military carrying empire home with them, and the role of comedy and satire in expressing a general disillusionment with the constructs of imperial culture: "duty", "loyalty", "hierarchy", and "authority" (p.291). The true merit in Thompson's approach is his tendency towards a more inclusive and open understanding of the diverse and multifarious routes through which empire impacted upon the British metropole. His other major contention is that the British still experience 'a living relationship to their imperial past' and research into the British Empire should continue with vigour as long as "new" empires and imperialisms' exist (p.296).

In the finest chapter of the book, Krishnan Kumar examines the relation between the 'Britannic' identity of the empire and the national identities of the constituents of the United Kingdom. Kumar posits that as the 'outer empire' – the overseas territories – collapsed, the 'inner empire' of the United Kingdom's 'glue has begun to melt' (p.324). To counter the prominence granted to class divisions in the 'minimalist' theses of Porter and Cannadine,<sup>4</sup> Kumar claims that rather than isolating the majority of the population from empire, they 'shared a vision of British society as ordered, graded, and hierarchical' both 'shaped the empire...in the image of the home society' and encouraged popular interaction with it (p.303). This convincing reappraisal is perhaps one of the most impressive sections of the book. Furthermore, Kumar's concept of a 'banal imperialism' – the everyday 'infusion' of empire, regardless of active awareness – provides a fruitful new construct for historians to address issues of 'popular

<sup>3</sup> A line of argument expanded upon in: Thompson, A.S. & Magee, G.B. *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850–1914*, (Cambridge, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Cannadine, D. *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford, 2001).

imperialism' (p.301). Kumar's essay concludes with an assessment of the various present day British national identities. Of particular pertinence is the assertion of the lack of a distinctive 'English' identity as a direct result of the previous role of England as the dominant party in both British empires (pp.325-328).

Thompson concludes that for the British 'the legacies of their empire are not only still with them, they may yet have fully to unfold' (p.345). This has doubtless never been truer, with economic and diplomatic uncertainty of the UK.<sup>5</sup> Historians and students in a variety of fields will unquestionably benefit from a thorough reading of this volume. The book's more pluralistic and 'open' understanding of imperial connectedness is a welcome addition to the 'popular imperialism' debate, if not a revolutionary one. These authors ably situate cultural, economic, political and social developments within the wider history of Britain. Furthermore, like the 'Studies in Imperialism' scholars before them, they successfully exhibit some of the ways that the many parts of an imperial and post-imperial society interacted with one-another, and with the rest of the world. This volume has responses and provisos powdered and readied for the 'minimalist' imperial historians - though it offers nothing novel enough to satiate their numerous reservations and misgivings. An *addition* rather than a *revolution* in thinking, such an historical exploration of the empire and its legacies can reveal much about our contemporary world and should be amply commended.

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<sup>5</sup> See for example Gott, R. 'Let's end the myths of Britain's imperial past', 19.10.2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2011/oct/19/end-myths-britains-imperial-past>; Accessed: 04/04/2012 15:00: David Cameron: 'Britannia didn't rule the waves with her armbands on'.

**Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and India** by Nico Slate. Harvard University Press, 2012, 344 pages. ISBN: 9780674059672, Hardback, \$39.95

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Lala Lajpat Rai, Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya, and Vithalbhai Patel are not names one readily associates with the United States Civil Rights Movement. In fact, the influence of Indian activists and the Indian independence movement as a whole on the struggle to dismantle Jim Crow in the United States remains a largely unexplored area of historical inquiry. As a result, the efforts of United States civil rights activists in the fight to overthrow the British Raj have also been neglected. In *Colored Cosmopolitanism* Nico Slate seeks to uncover these connections. He examines how historical figures in both countries bridged “differences and...achieve[d] transnational solidarities” by utilizing shared definitions of words such as “freedom” and “colored” to create a “colored cosmopolitanism” that helped topple the British Raj in India, dismantle Jim Crow in the United States, and bring an end to the “white racialized global order.”(pp.2-4)

Slate argues that imperialistic expansion and immigration during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century enabled American and Indian citizens to communicate with greater ease and allowed for wider dissemination of works by anti-colonial critics including Henry David Thoreau, Mohandas Gandhi, and Swami Vivekananda. By the 1920s, civil rights leaders including W.E.B. Dubois and Cedric Dover began invoking a “colored world” philosophy in their speeches and writings, which Slate effectively argues, bonded oppressed peoples in the two regions together. (p.66) Newly created organizations such as the Pan-African Congress and the International Council of Women of Darker Races arose during this time using this philosophy to fight colored oppression worldwide. Slate further points out that Mohandas Gandhi also used this philosophy to solidify ties between the regions, regularly corresponding with civil rights activists in the United States and by keeping American missionaries Charles Freer Andrews and Robert Gregg as advisors. According to Slate, Gandhi’s use of American advisors gave his non-violent philosophy credibility with United States audiences and also allowed the Mahatma to perceive similarities between subjugation in India and Jim Crow racism in the United States. (p.97)

Slate’s examination of the early Cold War period provides one of his most intriguing arguments. He asserts that after India achieved independence, United States foreign policy advisors viewed the nation as a possible Democratic stronghold in the Middle-East. (p.162) Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru used India’s “middle of the road” position between Communism and Democracy as a bargaining chip to pressure the United States government to take a more active role in civil rights issues. Even though Slate successfully restores India’s significance back into the Cold War narrative, his argument on its connections to American civil rights leaders could have been strengthened with a more substantive discussion on the details of how India gained independence. By detailing how quickly United States civil rights leaders

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used Indian independence to pressure their own government for civil rights reform, Slate could have provided further examples of the bonds the two regions shared.

Visits made to India by noted civil rights leaders Martin Luther King Jr. and Edith Sampson in the post-independence period highlight the increasingly tenuous relationship the two regions maintained in the latter-half of the twentieth century. Indian officials assailed the visitors for continued racial injustices in America, and American civil rights leaders, eager to defend their country, attacked India's caste system. Slate, however, could have further illuminated facets of these tensions through an analysis of the trips taken to the Middle-East by Malcolm X in the early 1960s which would have provided a window into how the Black Power philosophy was received in the region. A mention of these trips could have also explained why the formation of the Dalit Panthers, a paramilitary group of low-caste Indians organized around the same principles as the Black Panther Party of Oakland, became a necessary group for low-caste Indians in the late 1960s.

At first glance, one might view Slate's reliance on personal journals and correspondence from elite persons of color as problematic. Upon closer examination, however, one can see that Slate artfully mined these sources to uncover the names and actions of grassroots activists when their voices could otherwise scarcely be found in the historical record. Moreover, his careful use of newspapers from both the United States and India and his incredible ability to connect events in both regions with literary works, give one the feeling that his source selection is not as much of a problem as it is exemplary of the author's commitment to producing thorough research of the highest caliber.

*Colored Cosmopolitanism* showcases Slate's incredible ability to draw connections between two seemingly disparate regions of the globe and bring to light vitally important, but forgotten actors in the transnational struggle for civil rights in the twentieth century. Slate's work outshines previous scholarship on the relationship between the global Cold War and the American Civil Rights Movement, and expands on its closest comparator, Gerald Horne's *End of Empires*, in both scope and content.<sup>1</sup> Unlike its predecessors, Slate's work gives a clearer view of how Indian intellectuals and activists shaped the American Civil Rights Movement, and effectively evidences the reciprocal nature of international communication. For these reasons, *Colored Cosmopolitanism* deserves a place in any classroom discussion on twentieth century history for its interdisciplinary and global approach that sets a high standard for future scholars.

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Gerald Horne, *The End of Empires: African Americans and India* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008); Jonathan Rosenberg, *How Far the Promised Land: World Affairs and the American Civil Rights Movement from the First World War to Vietnam* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).