Of Life and History
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*Of Life and History* is a student-run undergraduate history journal published annually at the College of the Holy Cross. The journal seeks to showcase a diverse range of exemplary historical scholarship conducted by Holy Cross students. *Of Life and History* is committed to providing Holy Cross students with experiential learning opportunities through participation in the scholarly process and encouraging them to engage in critical dialogues about the meanings of the past.

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Editorial Board

Cover Art
Christian Lenape (Delaware) Interpreter
Ada Liu ’20

Introduction: Finding Meaning in Life and History
Michael T. DeSantis ’18

ARTICLES

Dimitri Savidis ’18

Zycie w Ameryce: Life in America—Polish-American Cultural Resilience and Adaptation in the Face of Americanization
Brett A. Cotter ’19

Between Piety and Polity: The American Catholic Response to the First Atomic Bombs
Emma Catherine Scally ’18

Une Crise d’Identité: The Use of Institutional Systems to Build Nationalism in Alsace and Lorraine following the First World War, 1918-1925
Catherine B. Griffin ’18

The Broadway of War: How Theater Remembers the American Revolution
Campbell Loeber ’18

SPECIAL FEATURES

The 2018 Edward F. Wall, Jr. Prize Essay
Manufacturing Progress, Prosperity, and Pride: The Social Construction of Worcester’s Industrial Identity, 1850-1910
Michael T. DeSantis ’18
Dialogue
Bringing History into the Daily Conversation:  
An Interview with Professor Edward T. O’Donnell
Brett A. Cotter ’19

Meet Our Contributors
Native American interpreters played a crucial role during the treaty-making process between colonies and Native American tribes. Many of them were bilingual converted Christians and friends with white settlers. During the treaty councils, they translated conversations between European settlers and native tribes and gathered information for each side. As more immigrants arrived in the American colonies, they occupied more lands which were home to many native tribes. Frontier conflicts between settlers and Indians were frequent, and many of them became open warfare.

Disputes between Lenape Indians and Pennsylvanians over land ownership were part of the French-Indian war from 1754-1763. During a treaty council in Easton in 1758, Lenape Indians wanted to break away from Iroquois homogeneity and regain sovereignty of the west bank of Delaware River, their homeland which was lost in the 1737 Walking Purchase. But the landowners from the powerful Penn family wanted to hold on the lands for profits which they purchased from Iroquois nations, and there were other Pennsylvania settlers and Indians who wanted to continue the war and to seek revenge for the loss of their families. The hostile and divided situation put this Christian Lenape Interpreter in desperate personal circumstances. On the one hand, he wanted to keep good personal relations with white settlers, who were his neighbors and church members; on the other hand, he did not wish Lenape kin to lose their home again and again. He believed peace was the best outcome for himself, the white settlers and the Lenape people, but it was also the hardest one to achieve.

I was inspired to create this work after taking “Native American History I” (before Manifest Destiny) with Professor Gwenn Miller in the Fall 2017 semester. In the class, we engaged in a multi-week game that mimicked a colonial frontier treaty council. Everyone played roles based on actual historical figures. My character was a Christian Lenape (Delaware) Interpreter who tried to achieve peace and accomplish some of his own goals. The game helped me realize how much personal struggle a cross-cultural historical minority group had to go through to survive. And how much the mainstream narrative on Native American had neglected their stories. So, I wanted to use the opportunity of my Life Drawing class, a studio art course taught
by Professor Susan Schmidt, to create a portrait of Christian Lenape. I wanted to commemorate his crucial role as interpreter who facilitated communication between Indians and white settlers. But, I also wanted to present the hidden struggles that many cross-cultural Natives Americans went through, and their expectations about the future of both natives and Euro-Americans.
Introduction
Finding Meaning in Life and History

The Mission Statement of the College of the Holy Cross stipulates that “To participate in the life of Holy Cross is to accept an invitation to join in dialogue about basic human questions.” One of the core questions that the Mission Statement asks all members of the College community to consider is: “How do we find meaning in life and history?” This question is particularly relevant for those of us at Holy Cross who devote our time to the study of the past. As the name of this journal suggests, Of Life and History seeks to create a scholarly platform that allows students to more deeply engage in dialogues about the past. It invites members of the College community to participate in important intellectual discussions on the meanings and significance of prior human experiences.

For several years, Holy Cross History faculty and students have envisioned a journal such as Of Life and History as a forum for showcasing the diverse range of sophisticated historical research conducted by students at the College. The geographical and topical diversity of the essays in this inaugural issue represent a sample of the kind of historical scholarship conducted by Holy Cross students. Brett Cotter’s essay, for example, emerged from his work in the Weiss Summer Research Program, which enables students in all disciplines to engage in full-time independent research on self-designed projects. Catherine Griffin’s piece was inspired by her experience of living and studying in Strasbourg, France, through Holy Cross’ extensive yearlong study abroad program. My own essay represents the culmination of my research at the renowned American Antiquarian Society through Holy Cross’ collaboration with the Society and other area colleges for an annual American Studies Seminar. The remaining essays were written for upper-level seminar courses in the History Department. Beyond the scholarly ventures reflected within this issue, there are several additional and exciting historical projects underway within the History Department and at Holy Cross at large. Some of these include senior honors theses written by several students through the History Department’s rigorously structured Honors Program, research on the College’s own history through the Department’s recently founded History Lab, and the continuing expansion of the Digital Transgender Archive created by K.J. Rawson, Associate Professor of English. In future volumes of the journal, we hope to showcase these works as part of our goal to further expand the content of the Of Life and History.

Of Life and History has been some time in the making. Several years ago, Jessica Cormier ’16 and Professor Mary Conley (current History Department Chair) worked diligently to start a student-run journal. That inspiration, although it did not materialize at the time, reinvigorated our desire to produce a journal this year. Much of the credit for the existence of Of Life and History goes to Professor Sanjog
Rupakheti, who took a keen interest in reviving the project and subsequently shepherded it after he joined the Department in the fall of 2017. Professor Rupakheti has also served as a supportive and insightful advisor, helping to shape much of the journal’s form and vision. Professor Conley and the rest of the History Department have also provided tremendous support for the journal by identifying and communicating with potential student contributors, graciously allowing us to publish the annual Wall Prize Essay, and funding the publication of this inaugural issue. The Department’s Administrative Assistant, Yolanda Youtsey, has been incredibly helpful in coordinating the logistical aspects of the journal such as advertising and printing. We would like to extend special thanks to Lisa Villa ’90, Digital Scholarship Librarian at Holy Cross, for helping us build the online presence for *Of Life and History* in the College’s online repository.

Finally, and most importantly, *Of Life and History* was made possible through a great deal of interest and effort on the part of Holy Cross students. The journal would not have seen the light of the day without the generous and tireless work of its founding Editorial Board—Brett Cotter ’19, Gabriella Grilla ’19, Campbell Loeber ’18, Julia Palmerino ’18, and Emma Scally ’18. They spent countless hours shaping a vision for the journal, reading through many submissions, and helping the authors revise their manuscripts. I am deeply indebted to each of them for their eagerness to work on the project and for their patience as we crafted and refined our operating procedures through much trial and error. We would also like to thank all those Holy Cross students who submitted their work for this year’s issue. The large volume of submissions provided us with a sufficient pool of high-quality papers from which to select the essays printed on the following pages as well as the issue’s beautiful artwork. We look forward to seeing similar enthusiasm for *Of Life and History* in the years to come.

Each of the essays in this inaugural issue of *Of Life and History* revolve around the themes of nationalism and national identity. Historical explorations of these issues raise crucial questions about the way nationalism shapes individual identity. As Catherine Griffin asks in her essay on nationalism in Alsace and Lorraine, “Who has the right to define national identity, citizenship, and who can identify who is a citizen and who is not, on what criteria?” The essays in the volume address these questions from different historical periods, places and paradigms. In the context of the rising tide of nationalism and national identity in our contemporary global political landscape, a nuanced and historical understanding of nationalism and national identity can enable us to both appreciate their community building power and trace their recently modern genesis.

By interrogating the constructed nature of all national identities and demystifying the naturalness often assigned to them, the essays in the volume help to reveal the dynamic, flexible, and often contradictory character of nationalism and
national identity. Ada Liu’s cover art, for example, challenges the conventional narrative of colonial America that depicts Native Americans and European settlers as two rigidly separated groups divided by language, religion, and location. She instead shows a Christian Delaware interpreter whose identity incorporated aspects of both Delaware and European traditions. Similarly, Dimitri Savidis’ essay explores the complex ways in which Palestinian Jews reconciled Zionist and Ottomanist identities in the early twentieth century. Likewise, Brett Cotter examines the ways in which Polish-American immigrants in a Northeastern American city negotiated their ethnic identity in their new home by preserving many traditional Polish practices and selectively incorporating new American ones. Emma Scally’s essay delineates the evolution of Catholic Americans’ responses to the first atomic bombs from initially divided opinions of the bomb itself to a more uniform anti-Communist stance.

Griffin’s and Campbell Loeber’s essays analyze the ways in which both individual and institutional actors have sought to control and employ nationalism to further specific political agendas. Griffin’s essay assesses the French government’s use of institutional systems to promote nationalism in Alsace and Lorraine following World War I. Loeber’s piece focuses on the interplay between nationalism and historical memory, specifically the role artistic renderings of historical events have in the construction of national identity. She traces several portrayals of the American Revolution in Broadway plays over the course of the twentieth century to underscore the role of artwork and media in the dissemination of particular memory about the past. My own essay recounts the ways in which newspaper writers, business people, advertisers, and other commentators in one nineteenth American city managed local anxieties about the transition towards an urbanized industrial society by constructing an industrial identity for the city that aligned with the evolving American vision of the republican nation.

Taken together, these essays reveal both the newness of nationalism and its saliency in the formation of individual and community identity. In doing so, the essays in this volume demonstrate that an engaged study of the past helps us to remind ourselves of the uses, strengths, and limitations of nationalism and national identity.

Michael T. DeSantis ’18
College of the Holy Cross
Founding Editor-In-Chief, Of Life and History
Zionism, Ottomanism, and the Young Turk Revolution

What Palestinian Jewish Identity Says About Zionist Political Separatism in 1908-1912

Dimitri Savidis ’18

I. Introduction

The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 led to Sultan Abdul Hamid II restoring the Ottoman constitution of 1876, announcing elections to a new Ottoman Parliament, and promising political and social reforms, which included individual freedoms for Ottoman citizens and regulation of all government bodies. Like communities in other parts of the empire, the ethno-religious communities in Palestine – which included Muslims, Christians, and Jews – greeted these political changes and promises for social reform with enthusiasm as they believed the revolution would bring about an era of equality, protection, and cultural and economic prosperity for all of the empire’s citizens.

In fact, the notion of Ottoman citizenship took on a more significant meaning in the aftermath of the revolution. The empire’s previously subjugated communities saw the emergence of representative national politics as an opportunity to reclaim their strength to not only rejuvenate their people, but to also contribute positively to the progress of the Ottoman nation. Central to this idea of imperial citizenship was an emerging sentiment of comradery or “love and brotherhood” amongst Ottomans that was meant to transcend the borders of the millet system – the network of ethno-religious confessional communities that traditionally dominated local social and political life in the empire. Within this context, the revolution of 1908 inspired optimism for “liberty, fraternity [and] justice” throughout the empire, resulting, at least temporarily, in the hope for a shared pan-imperial, national identity termed “Ottomanism.”

The development of the Zionist project in Palestine had the potential to run up against the emergence of the idea of Ottomanism in the immediate post-revolutionary period. As described by historian Walter Laqueur, Zionism, by the turn of the century, could be best characterized as a project focused on creating a particular society in the land of Israel – one that was undoubtedly nationalistic but

Author’s note: This paper was originally submitted in fulfillment of the History Major Capstone requirement in the seminar course “Palestinian-Israeli Conflict” led by Professor Sahar Bazzaz. I thank Professor Bazzaz for introducing me to the fascinating world of Ottoman history as an underclassman some years ago, guiding me through its intricacies, and advising me throughout this project.
concentrated on the benefits of redeeming the Jewish people through labor. Taking this basic characterization of the Zionist movement at the time into account, there is potential for both the compatibility and complete incompatibility of Zionism and Ottomanism from what defined such a national Jewish project. More specifically, the question of compatibility lies on whether or not such a national plan predominantly embodied separatist political goals and aspirations.

Michelle Campos is an influential scholar of Ottomanism and the Jewish experience in Palestine in the immediate post-1908 period. She views the relationship between Ottoman Palestinian Jews and European Jewish settlers as one of dichotomy. The former were steadfast in their beliefs of a Jewish nation in Palestine with political separatism as their ultimate goal, whereas the latter were devoid of political separatist aspirations and saw a Jewish national movement as being solely a Jewish cultural revival project while maintaining their Ottoman identity. However, such a dichotomy may not have existed as distinctively as Campos may perceive. Arieh Saposnik proposes an array of ideas that question (1) the political separatist aims that Campos attributes to European Jewish settlers, (2) the tension between Ottoman Jews and European Jewish immigrants over the adoption of Ottomanism, and (3) the potential that – if political separatist aims were predominant in European Zionist thought within Palestine – the Ottoman Jews did not seek to use Ottomanism in the same practical fashion in which Campos claims the European Jewish settlers had done.

I aim to present the divergent perspectives in the narrow and unique historiography of Palestinian Jewry and Ottomanism to provide validity to the distinct conclusions that Campos and Saposnik make in their analyses of Zionism in the immediate post-1908 period. In doing so, I wish to answer the question of whether political aspirations were a predominant part of the Jewish national project at this time within Palestine by analyzing how various Palestinian Jewish groups identified themselves against both their fellow co-religionist and their Ottoman brother. In other words, I aim to answer whether the aspirations to establish an independent, sovereign Jewish homeland can be taken for granted in the post-1908 period from the perspective of the various groups of Jews in Palestine.

To achieve this end, I plan to first define Ottomanism within the context of the promises for social and political reform ushered by the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. Next, I will present Campos’s view on the relationship between Ottomanism, Zionism, and the various Jewish groups in Palestine to establish a perspective on what is traditionally defined as Zionism and Ottomanism to Palestinian Jewry in this

II. Understanding Ottomanism – Hurriyya, Citizenship, and Brotherhood

The political and social reforms and promises for equality amongst all Ottoman citizens that arose from the success of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 descended from a liberal sentiment that first materialized in the mid-1800s through the Tanzimat Reforms. These reforms were significant in introducing the idea of nationhood, which was at the core of the Ottomanist ideology after the 1908 revolution. Recognizing the demise of the empire, Ottoman subjects were able to instill checks on the absolutism of the sultan’s power, invoking traditional Islamic thought on justice, public good, and consultation while emphasizing the “will of the people-nation.” With the suspension of the parliament and constitution in the late 19th century, the return of these checks on power also represented the arrival of a nation to its people. It represented an essential step in the transition from empire to a republic.

In her work on the relationship between the Sephardim, the Ashkenazim, and Ottomanism, Campos quotes a prominent Zionist radical in Palestine on the Ottoman Jews’ affinity with the idea of Ottoman brotherhood as a “tendency to be more Marxist than Marx.” However, this commentator underestimated the significance of the revolution and the Ottomans’ appreciation for their newfound liberty, or hurriyya (Ara.). Official celebration ceremonies were scheduled throughout

4 Hereafter, I will refer to European Jewish settlers in Palestine as the Ashkenazim, native Ottoman Jewish citizens as the Sephardim, and the collective of Jews in Palestine (Ashkenazim and Sephardim collectively) as Palestinian Jewry.

Palestine in the aftermath of the revolution, and unofficial parades and celebrations erupted for weeks throughout the region. One observer in Jerusalem noted, “Cries of ‘Liberty, equality, fraternity!’ [were] heard from thousands of people, and ‘love and brotherhood’ sang between all the sons of the different communities in Jerusalem.”

The future Christian parliamentary candidate of Beirut, Suleiman al-Bustani, waxed lyrically, “If you had seen them on the day of the constitution the imam and the priest and the rabbi – all were united with tears of joy.” Another article noted that “the Muslim shook hands with the Christian, and the Kurd reconciled with the Armenian, and the Turk hugged the Arab.”

The Jerusalem crowd, which most likely contained only a minimal amount of Ottoman Turkish speakers, only positively reacted to the Ottoman governor’s proclamation of the reforms when he mentioned hürriyet (Ott. Turk.). When Jerusalem notable Sa’id al-Husayni translated the declaration into Arabic, he linked – as did others – the imminent political changes with the economic revival and social renewal that was expected to follow throughout the empire. Some of these were envisioned in the form of new schools, increased commerce, and improved public works projects among others.

In this way, newfound liberty not only meant equality among Ottoman citizens but also the expectation of tangible improvements within the empire – a responsibility held not only by the state but also by Ottoman citizens. Campos succinctly explains:

The theater of revolutionary brotherhood was premised on the expectation that all Ottomans would share not only rights, but also obligations, and that all communities – being recast as Ottoman first and foremost – would work for the public good in a republican spirit of shared citizenship.

This spirit of shared citizenship ultimately led to a sense of comradery among Ottoman citizens as they believed that they were handed the keys to the imperial shackles with which the sultan had once restrained them. The term Ottoman, rather than being used to identify the imperial bureaucratic ruling class, now became a self-identifier for Ottoman citizens because of their shared experiences under a corrupt, unjust, and unchecked dynasty and their commitment to improving their homeland through the newly-acquired political powers.

Recognizing the underlining unifying force of Ottomanism in this way is important because it emphasizes the civic nature of Ottoman brotherhood that developed through the liberation of the 1908 revolution. This imperial collective recalled its base in political membership and citizenship rights.

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7 Ibid., 75.
8 Ibid., 31.
9 Ibid., 82.
10 Ibid., 75.
11 Ibid., 77.
brotherhood that had been born of the revolution – through the constitution and obligations of citizenship. David Yellin, a Jewish celebrant in Jerusalem, later explained:

[The revolution] caused the whole nation to be brothers in one endeavor – the success of the homeland and its people and the pride of membership in one family: the Ottoman family. And who among us does not remember how the fire of brotherhood was kindled suddenly in the hearts of all the Ottomans, and how the whole nation experienced in one stroke...the feeling of unity to endeavor for the good of the country and the success of the state.12

The Jerusalem-based Muslim lawyer Ragheb al-Imam reiterated the civic-based nature of Ottoman brotherhood, explaining, “The Ottoman races who were of different nations entered through the melting pot of the constitution and came out as one bullion of pure gold which is Ottomanism, which unites the hearts of the umma and brings together their souls.”13

III. Ottomanism and Palestinian Jewry

A. Realities of Ottomanism

While the civic nature of Ottomanism is a near certainty, Campos presents three different facts of Ottomanism that existed at the same time and that have far-reaching implications for how Palestinian Jewry would come to compromise their Zionist and Ottomanist sentiments. The first reality is the Ottomanism that has political roots but also attempts to take the place of the ethno-religious identities that had defined Ottoman subjects for centuries. This form of Ottomanism was most prevalent in the very aftermath of the revolution, and perhaps was a result of overjoy and unrealistic expectations for the extent of social and economic progress. For example, in the wake of the revolution, the American consul in Beirut reported:

Moslems and Christians publicly embrace each other, protesting that henceforth they are brethren, that there are Christians, Moslems, Jews, Mitwalehs, etc., no more, only loyal Ottoman subjects standing shoulder to shoulder prepared to fight for the liberties granted by the Sultan, long live the Sultan!14

Such an interpretation may be viewed as extreme, as it was formulated mainly during times of high spirits and ignored the realities of the impermeable millet system on which the second and third facts of Ottomanism are based. Nonetheless, the emergence of such a sentiment – even if only temporary – is telling of the vigor of revolution in creating a shared Ottomanist sentiment.

The second and third realities of Ottomanism were unable to deconstruct the various ethno-religious identities of the empire, but instead, function in tandem with them. In this sense, Ottomanism takes on a wholly civil and political meaning but

12 Campos (2011), 78.
14 Campos (2011), 76.
still serves as a national identity. Christian Arab writer Adib Ishaq articulated Ottomanism at the time in neither lingual, religious, nor ethnic terms but rather as a collective agreement of belonging to one nation. In his words, “The ‘Ottoman nationality’ covers all the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, in Europe as well as in Asia, whether they be, by origin, Turks, Arabs, or Tartars.” In comparing the Ottomans’ nationalization and liberalization project with that of the ethnically, religiously, and linguistically French nation, Rashid Rida, editor of *al-Manar*, reiterated this reality of Ottomanism at the time:

But we, the Ottomans, have already united from the different nationalities in a way that has not yet happened in any other kingdom. We are different in race, descent, language, religion, sect, education, and culture...but despite that we demand equality and celebrate its granting in a general covenant and in the places of worship and no doubt in this magazine.16

For Rida and his audience, the emergence of Ottomanism was the conscious adoption of a political project of an empire that was to be united while maintaining its ethno-religious and linguistic heterogeneity. This understanding was echoed by early twentieth century Ottoman dictionaries which emphasized the distinction between the term *millet* to denote the empire’s religious communities and the terms *ümmet* or *kavim* to denote the Ottoman nation. A dictionary at the time noted that “it is absurd to speak of an Ottoman *millet*. Rather it is correct to speak of an Ottoman *ümmet*. Because the different nations and peoples form a single *ümmet* called Ottoman.” These commentaries make clear the compatibility of *millet* identity with Ottomanism and the acknowledgment of the coexistence of different ethno-religious identities within Ottoman nationalism.

Finally, the third reality of Ottomanism is best characterized as the demise of the previous two facts by the increasing empowerment and rigidity of the *millet* system. This intensified intercommunal conflicts within the national political project. Such strife arose in parliamentary elections and appeals to Ottoman officials. Religious communities attempted to secure an influential position of power in the new political order to provide greater rights and benefits for themselves in the name of equality. As Campos explains, “Rights and privileges were measured not only against absolute standards of Ottomanist civic identity but also, more important, against those enjoyed by the other ethnic and religious groups in the empire.” Therefore, this period provided an opportunity for ethno-religious groups to quickly mobilize and strategize to assure that their communities received fair share of the benefits promised by the revolution.

In the wake of the revolution, the young Jewish journalist Avraham Elmaliach

17 Campos (2011), 145.
perfectly captured this reality of Ottomanism when he wrote, “Our homeland has returned to rebirth…and therefore our brothers the Jewish people, residents of Turkey, will endeavor through the freedoms given to us to bring closer all that is good and useful for our homeland.” In this he reiterated the need to “redeem the Jews’ honor” by electing Jews to Ottoman parliament. A writer for the Hebrew newspaper *Paradise* echoed this sentiment by explaining that the reason for this demand, he wrote, was “so that we will not be considered less than the Christians…Forward, brothers, a little bit of force and everything can be accomplished. In order to save our honor before everything!” By 1912, such community-centric sentiment was also shared by the empire’s Arab-speaking peoples who envisioned a united, yet highly decentralized empire. While Ottomanism manifested in specific instances as optimistic cooperation between all peoples of the empire, its downfall was the reality that it could not deter the exclusionary forces of the existing millet system.

B. Campos’s Viewpoint and Saposnik’s Critique

Understanding these differing realities of Ottomanism is vital to Campos’s analysis of the way the different ethnic groups within Palestinian Jewry struggled with Zionism and Ottomanism. Campos divides Palestinian Jewry between the immigrating Ashkenazim and the Sephardim, the native Ottoman Jewish population. Campos claims that for the Ashkenazim of the “New *Yishuv*”:

Participation in the new Ottoman political system was a good strategy, but it was devoid of any inherent value. In this utilitarian approach, the political enfranchisement of Palestinian Jews would allow them to push for separatist Zionist aims within the framework of the expected proto-nationalistic campaigns for decentralization.

According to Campos, the Ashkenazim in Palestine were committed mainly to separatist political aims and accepted Ottomanism nominally only as a means to a separatist political end. On the other end, Campos divides the Sephardim into two camps: Ottomanist who viewed any national Jewish project as incompatible with Ottomanism and Ottoman Zionists who are characterized by their commitment to Cultural Hebraism within the Ottoman political and civic framework. In this view, the Sephardic camps follow the first and second realities of Ottomanism, respectively, set out in the previous section. As the Ottomanist poet Reuben Qattan wrote to readers of Ladino newspaper *El Liberal*:

Before everything we should live Ottoman lives, cultivate the language of the Ottomans, form an integral part of the Ottoman nation, and sincerely love the Ottoman patria. We

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18 Campos (2011), 145.
19 Ibid., 147.
20 I am using the term “ethnic” here to mean Ashkenazi or Sephardic.
21 Campos (2005), 466.
are Ottomans and nothing else...To work and to die for Turkey – that should be our only and sacred duty.\textsuperscript{22}

In response to Qattan, Ottoman Zionist writer Yehuta Burla reassured, “In short, it will become clear to us how we must be Ottomans and something else in addition.”\textsuperscript{23}

Burla, like his other co-Ottoman Zionists, was committed to Ottomanism as a civic and political project and believed it to be in line with the aim of rejuvenating the Jewish people. Campos coined the term \textit{cultural Hebraism} in describing this unique mix of ideologies. Cultural Hebraism was a response to perceived communal stagnation, calling to modernize the Jewish community while incorporating an authentic element of Jewish culture and identity that harkened back to the Jewish people’s Hebraic roots. Burla and other Ottoman Zionists believed that “the rebirth of the Jewish people in its cultural, social, and economic dimensions would work to the benefit of the empire at large,” touching upon an Ottomanist obligation to assist in improving the empire.\textsuperscript{24}

In \textit{Becoming Hebrew: The Creation of a Jewish National Culture in Ottoman Palestine}, Arieh Saposnik does not substantially challenge, but only puts into question the stark dichotomy that Campos presents. First, Saposnik questions the purely political separatist aims that Campos attributes to Ashkenazim, by stating:

Most of Palestine’s Zionists – whether they were focused principally on the production of a new national music or art, on the Hebrew language, or on ‘Hebrew labor’ – were only remotely concerned during these years with the kinds of political objectives that might have exercised Zionists in Cologne and Berlin.\textsuperscript{25}

Saposnik further asserts that, instead of political separatist ambitions, the Ashkenazim were focused on cultural Hebraism just as much as the Sephardim:

The Zionism of Palestine’s Ashkenazi nationalizing elite – no less than that of their Ottoman Sephardic counterparts – was often aimed principally at precisely the kind of ‘cultural Hebraism’ Campos presents as a unique feature of the Sephardim.\textsuperscript{26}

Finally, Saposnik proposes that – contrary to Campos’s claim on the authenticity of the Sephardim’s attraction to Ottomanism – there is little reason to believe that Ottoman Zionists were not consciously hiding political separatist ambitions themselves:

While there were undoubtedly tactical reasons for the choice of such language by European Zionists, there is little reason to suppose that such tactical considerations were entirely absent when pro-Zionist Ottoman supporters denied that Zionism had any anti-Ottoman aims or repercussions.\textsuperscript{27}

I do not intend on answering Saposnik’s questions and doubts directly. Instead, I aim

\textsuperscript{22} Campos (2005), 471.  
\textsuperscript{23} Campos (2005), 472.  
\textsuperscript{24} Campos (2005), 470.  
\textsuperscript{25} Saposnik, 179.  
\textsuperscript{26} Saposnik, 179.  
\textsuperscript{27} Saposnik, 179.
to present unique historiography on the intersection between Zionism and Ottomanism that diverts from Campos’s traditional views, to shed light on the issue of separatist political aspirations of Palestinian Jewry that is apparent in the different perspectives offered by Campos’s work and Saposnik’s questions.

IV. A Unique Historiography

A. “Impossible Is Not Ottoman” – An Ashkenazi Ottomanist

Samuel Dolbee and Shay Hazkani, in their article “‘Impossible Is Not Ottoman’: Menashe Meirovitch, ‘Isa al-‘Isa, and Imperial Citizenship In Palestine,” explore a covert partnership between a prominent Zionist agronomist, Menash Meirovitch, and the Christian Arab editor of the newspaper Filastin, ‘Isa al-‘Isa, a founding father of Palestinian nationalism. Under the literary guise of an Arab Muslim peasant called Abu Ibrahim, the two men produced a series of Arabic-language columns in 1911–1912 that exhibited Campos’s exact definition of Ottoman citizenship – an effort to spur infrastructure and public works improvements through an open dialogue and pressure in the press, in the name of equality for all Ottoman citizens. More importantly, it sheds light on the Ottomanist aspirations of an Ashkenazi Jew, Menashe Meirovitch, and the motivations for an Arab Christian to collaborate with a potential Zionist.

Under the guise of Abu Ibrahim, the Russian-born Ashkenazi Jew Menashe Meirovitch presents himself as a Muslim Arab peasant and focuses his literary advocacy on improving the lives of the peasants. He calls for better roads, well-trained veterinarians, modern agricultural machinery, and state-sponsored forestry in the name of strengthening the Ottoman Empire.28 Both men were committed to the goal of improving the standard of living in Palestine through modernization. In Meirovitch, al-‘Isa found an expert in agronomy that would be able to make salient and knowledgeable arguments for the improvement of the land. When al-‘Isa initially approached Meirovitch about the partnership, he reportedly admitted, “You know the nature of the land, the conditions of its inhabitants.” In al-‘Isa, Meirovitch found a public platform to voice his expertise. He responded, “But, you know, first of all, I live in a colony, far from politics…And third, as a Jew, it would be impossible for me not to touch upon our conditions and what we were able to do in this land for the thirty years of our existence.”29 As for the necessity of the guise of Abu Ibrahim, both men understood that Palestine’s population of majority Muslim peasants would not be receptive to the advocacy of an Arab Christian and Ashkenazi Jew.

The divergence from Campos’s traditional Ashkenazi-Anti-Ottomanist narrative is evident: an Ashkenazi Jew using a literary guise to make claims upon the

29 Dolbee and Hazkani, 249.
Zionism, Ottomanism & Political Separatism

Ottoman government and call for unity among the empire’s different communities through the freedom of the press to improve his new homeland’s condition. However, Dolbee and Hazkani’s analysis gives us the opportunity to dive deeper. As Campos characterizes Ottoman brotherhood as a theatrical outwardly performance, Dolbee and Hazkani point out that:

Our Ottoman brothers did almost the opposite. They revised and published articles collaboratively while erasing any evidence of personal connection. The product of their imperial citizenship – the columns – may have been public, but its input – their brotherhood – was private.30

One could argue that Meirovitch’s “obedience” to Ottomanism could have been a matter of practical strategy to achieve Zionist political goals. In response, Dolbee and Hazkani would argue against such a claim because “their partnership involved not the betrayal of a sacred national cause but rather the mutual pursuit of modernist goals”31 – an aim that is wholly Ottomanist by Campos’s definition. Also, Dolbee and Hazkani note that Meirovitch received no funding from Zionist organizations to plant stories of unity in Filastin to curb emerging anti-Semitic sentiment. This undermines the possibility that Meirovitch’s actions were motivated by pragmatism to achieve alleged Zionist separatist aims.

Finally, Dolbee and Hazkani profile al-‘Isa as having close relations to the Decentralization Party, which the authors claim “viewed the Zionists as comrades due to what they saw as the region’s need for the ‘capital and energy’ that Jewish immigrants could provide.”32 This affiliation was given greater credibility when al-‘Isa complained in his memoir that the exodus of the Jews from Jaffa immediately after World War I had decimated the local economy. This is significant because it reveals that Arabs of the Decentralization Party – a party that itself was on the cusp of betraying Ottoman political rule but still viewed its political future under the Ottoman rule – saw their interests at least somewhat aligned with those of the Zionists. I would conclude that for this alignment to be a reality, Zionist separatist aims must not have yet been as apparent as traditionally believed.

B. “Rethinking the Yishuv and Ottomanization” – Ottomanism as an End for the Yishuv

In his article “Rethinking the Concept of Ottomanization: The Yishuv in the Aftermath of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908,” Yuval Ben-Bassat argues that the pursuit of Jewish nationalism within the Ottoman framework was largely accepted among wide segments of the yishuv, the body of Jews living in the land of Israel. More importantly, he asserts that support for Ottomanization in the Hebrew press “represented a genuine feeling which prevailed in the yishuv at the time, and was

30 Dolbee and Hazkani, 244.
31 Dolbee and Hazkani, 247.
32 Dolbee and Hazkani, 248.
a far cry from being merely a tactical stance or an effort to temporarily conceal the true aims of Zionism in order to appease the Ottoman government.” His argument is based on the rhetoric of four major newspapers that represent the main segments of the yishuv: conservative Ashkenazi newspaper Havatelet, Eliezer Ben-Yehudah’s ba-Tsvi which enjoyed a large audience from the colonizers and supporters of the first aliya, the first wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine, the second aliya’s ba-Po’el ba-Tsa’ir, and the Sephardic Ha-Herut.

In the wake of the 1908 revolution, the question of Ottomanization for immigrating Jewish settlers dominated most Zionist conversations. Ben-Yehuda’s Ashkenazi-backed ba-Tsvi ignited a pro-Ottomanization discourse that not only diverged from the traditional Ashkenazi-Anti-Ottomanist narrative as proposed by Campos, but also persuaded other segments of the yishuv to follow its lead toward Ottomanization. Ben-Yehuda called for Ottomanization to “convince the government that the members of the yishuv were loyal citizens, and allow them to take an active part in political processes in the Empire, influence the future of Palestine, and freely pursue their national project.”

Ben-Yehuda recognized the ethno-religious heterogeneity of the empire and found it a suitable framework for pursuing the Jewish national goals. He saw no contradiction between supporting Jewish nationalism and remaining loyal to the empire because he perceived nationalist aims within a future federal Ottoman political framework. He argued that Jews living in Ottoman Palestine would be able to retain their Jewish identity and support the federal system just like Jewish Americans had done in the United States. He proclaimed:

The call to accept Ottoman citizenship does not mean assimilation…What is the meaning of the term Ottoman? It is not the name for a nationality, a race, or a nation in the natural sense of the word…It is a political term, no more…Jews, be Ottoman! Be the subjects of the Ottoman Empire, so you can be Hebrew in the land of your forefathers.

According to Ben-Yehuda, the Ottoman Empire was to become a mosaic of different nations under Ottoman political authority, giving the Jewish people the opportunity to revive Jewish nationalism in their ancient homeland. Here, the term “nationalism” is used by Ben-Yehuda in a cultural, social, and economic context, devoid of irredentist political sentiment.

Ben-Bassat claims that, following ba-Tsvi’s example, the Ashkenazi newspaper Havatelet stated that under the post-revolutionary regime it was “possible to pursue
the Jewish national revival in *Eretz Yisrael* and concomitantly preserve the religious character of the *yishuv*.” Ben-Bassat concludes this is a clear representation of the “old yishuv’s” belief in the possibility of implementing the Jewish national project within the new political reality of the post-revolutionary period.

Finally, Ben-Bassat argues that, although hesitant at first, the Ashkenazi *ha-Po’el ha-Tsa’ir* accepted Ottomanization after the revolution because it believed that the future of politics in the empire rested in a decentralized federal system similar to what Ben-Yehuda and the Arabs’ Decentralization Party had envisioned at the time. However, unlike *ha-Tsiwi*’s emphasis on cooperating with the current Ottoman officials, *ha-Po’el ha-Tsa’ir* found it more practical to cooperate with their Palestinian neighbors with whom they would be sharing national borders within the broader empire. Naturally, the Sephardic *Ha-Herut* was inclined to support Ottomanization without Ben-Yehuda’s persuasion.

### C. Zionism as told by Rashid Rida

In his article “Zionism as told by Rashid Rida,” Uriya Shavit examines and explains Muhammad Rashid Rida’s radical shifts in views on Zionism from admiration in the late 19th century to revulsion by the end of the post-revolutionary period. The prominent Ottoman Muslim thinker and *al-Manar* editor underwent a transformation in thought that does not align with trends in popular Arab thinking of Zionism. Similarly, the accuracy with which he predicts the future of Zionism in Palestine begs the question if the factors of pre-destined Zionist sovereignty were in place in Palestine by the 1908 revolution.

Shavit’s analysis shows that by 1902, Rida had recognized the cultural and educational strides Jews had made in Europe, had defined the Jewish people as a “mighty nation,” and “underlined the plausibility of the plan to take over Palestine.” In the wake of the 1908 revolution, Rida was convinced that the Jews had orchestrated the movement, had plans to take over al-Aqsa mosque as their first step in eradicating Muslims and Christians from Palestine and wielded unmatched influence in the Committee of Union and Progress.

It is important to remember that during this period, the sentiments of Ottomanist brotherhood and shared citizenship were running high. Therefore, I present this article of Rida’s transformation not as a gauge for popular opinion in the empire on what Zionism represented. But rather as a counterweight or reminder that although the post-revolutionary period may have masked Zionist separatist aspirations, hints of political aims in general Zionist thought did exist. Compared to Dolbee and Hazkani and Ben-Bassat, Rida appears as a paranoid conspiracy theorist.

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37 Ben-Bassat, 467.
38 Ben-Bassat, 468.
40 Shavit, 30.
However, as Rida’s fears of a Zionist rule in Palestine became a reality in the aftermath of the empire’s fall, his paranoia certainly sheds light on the validity of Campos’s claims of a continued existence of separatist aims throughout the post-revolutionary period.

V. Conclusion

Given the benefit of hindsight, historians today are naturally inclined to view the Zionist project in Palestine as having a continuous stream of separatist thought and sentiment, even throughout the post-revolutionary period. For the same reason, historians may also be inclined to disprove such a sentiment for the sake of providing an alternate viewpoint of a narrative that is often taken for granted. My aim in this essay was to investigate this dilemma and present the traditional views through Campos’s work along with differing or unique perspectives on the issue of how Palestinian Jewry reconciled Zionist and Ottomanist identities and what this reconciliation said about the existence of separatist political aims in Zionist thought.

The evidence provided by Campos’s dissenters did not satisfy the need to prove intent – a near impossibility for any historical account. Although the dissenters indeed confirmed that the Ashkenazi were at least publicly willing to support Ottomanism and express an authentic belief in the alignment of Jewish nationalism and Ottomanism, the fact that separatist political aims eventually superseded other political ties or affinities naturally puts into question the real intent of Zionists in the post-revolutionary period. Certainly, the question of separatist political aims of Palestinian Jewry in the post-revolutionary period is an area that has been underdeveloped and warrants additional examination to track Zionism’s development in such a unique, optimistic and yet disappointing period in Ottoman history.
Zycie w Ameryce: Life in America
Polish-American Cultural Resilience and Adaptation in the Face of Americanization
Brett A. Cotter ’19

Worcester, Massachusetts is often described as a “mosaic” of ethnic communities. Indeed, some of its most distinctive landmarks, particularly the many steeples that rise above into the skyline, were built by the hands of immigrants. Its industrial factories, once forming the most important part of Worcester’s economic life from the nineteenth into the latter half of the twentieth century, provided most early immigrant laborers with a livelihood. These workers returned home at the end of the day to vibrant ethnic neighborhoods speaking a wide variety of tongues, brought over from the old country. Alongside the factories, local churches, schools, and an assortment of clubs tethered these people to their respective ethnic enclaves and established a vibrant community atmosphere in which everyone seemed to know one another.

The local parish church is undoubtedly one of the most significant institutions around which a community can grow and, as can be observed in the case of Worcester, ethnic immigrant communities very often had such a religious establishment at their center from relatively early on. Today, however, many of the ethnic communities that once composed Worcester no longer exist as they did in the 1900s. Neighborhoods that were once culturally and even physically centered on a church have changed drastically for a variety of reasons. For example, Lithuanian-American families no longer walk to Saint Casimir’s parish church on Providence Street for Sunday mass, for now, it is a Pentecostal church. On the other side of Vernon Hill, the formerly-Lithuanian parish church of Worcester, Our Lady of Vilna, has adopted a Vietnamese Catholic community as its flock. Our Lady of Mount Carmel, once home to a lively Italian parish, stands empty with a thin cloth cover

Author's note: This essay on the Polish-American community of Worcester means more to me than any other paper I have written. It was in this neighborhood that my mother’s family lived and grew, and it was in its church that I was baptized and my parents married, and countless Polish masses celebrated. The process of research brought me all over Worcester, into its public archives and schools as well as the homes of Worcester residents. It is a remarkable city of remarkable people, a city steeped in a history of which Poles are a small though no less vital part.

Not by myself could I ever have completed this research on the history of the Polish-American community of Worcester. I would like to thank the George I. Alden Trust for financial support through the Charles Weiss Summer Research Program at Holy Cross. I would also like to thank Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish and its school, Saint Mary’s, along with each of their faculties and staffs, for allowing me to access their records. I am indebted to the dozen interviewees, for whom I am genuinely thankful, whose recollections brought life to the final project. It is also essential for me to thank the Worcester Historical Museum and the Worcester Public Library for access to their historical documents. Finally, I express my most profound gratitude to my advisor for this project, Professor Stephanie Yuhl, whose guidance was indispensable. And, of course, none of this would have come to fruition if not for my parents, who gave me the idea for this project and constant encouragement throughout the process.
hanging over its front façade. Some congregations such as Our Lady of Vilna have survived the trials of the late twentieth century with remarkable adaptability. Many, such as historic Saint John’s church which used to have a primarily Irish body of parishioners, have become more universal, “territorial” parishes to use Gerald Gamm’s terminology. Others, like Our Lady of Mount Carmel, have been displaced.

Our Lady of Czestochowa on Ward Street, founded in 1903 as a Polish parish, has also been forced to adapt to life in America, yet it has shown remarkable resilience in the face of change. Whereas some Catholic ethnic churches have undergone dramatic changes in ethnicity or religious denomination, Our Lady of Czestochowa has remained since its inception a Polish Catholic church right up to the present day. Masses are celebrated in the mother tongue twice on Sundays alongside an English ceremony. A sizable population of first-generation Polish immigrants remains active in the community. Numerous organizations, such as the Polish Naturalization Independent Club and the Quo Vadis Club, provide services for the Polish-American community. Despite the ascendancy of English, a literal halving of the community by the construction of an interstate highway, and increasing suburbanization as part of the broader trend of Americanization, the Polish-American community centered on Our Lady of Czestochowa has adapted while preserving much of its ethnic identity.

Compared to the much larger Polish-American communities in Chicago and Milwaukee, little has been written on Worcester's Polonia (the term for the Polish diaspora and Polish communities outside Poland) except for a valuable few books and locally-distributed articles. Worcester remains a vital part of the story of all Polish-Americans. Our Lady of Czestochowa peers over I-290, nestled between Endicott and what remains of Taylor St, and the historically Polish-American neighborhood that extends from the highway up the side of Vernon Hill exists quietly, hidden from the average Worcesterite. It was from this neighborhood that many young Polish-Americans left to pursue opportunities that would promise them and their children better lives. But unlike urban migrants from other Worcester parishes, many of these Polish-Americans did not forget their roots.

In this essay, I will define “Polish-American identity”, what it means to members of Worcester’s Polonia, and how Polish-Americans have carried that identity in the post-World War II era. I suggest the ways in which the community resisted Americanization, how it adapted where it did not resist, and ultimately how it has been able to preserve its distinctive culture. For the sake of clarity, I use the term “Americanization” to refer to the general process that breaks down the borders of ethnic cultures and their communities to integrate them into mainstream American society. This is realized through suburbanization, the general pursuit of social mobility, and the decline of traditional cultural practices from special holidays to everyday language.
Nowy świat - A new world

An accurate understanding of Polish-American identity is incomplete without understanding the world that Polish immigrants left behind and how Worcester’s first Poles constructed their new home. Between 1772 and 1795, three partitions conducted by the comparatively centralized monarchies of Prussia, Russia, and Austria resulted in the effective elimination of a Polish polity until 1918. Under the government of these three empires, Polish culture was suppressed in the name of national unity.

Scholars of Polish history most often point to Bismarck’s *Kulturkampf* beginning in the late 1870s as a particularly aggressive attempt to suppress Polish culture. According to Stefan Kieniewicz, the German government sought to turn their partition of Poland into “Germany’s granary” through large-scale commercial agriculture.\(^1\) As stated in John Bukowczyk’s history of Polish-Americans, many Poles were peasant laborers; mechanization under this new German economy would render them superfluous, and this meant German oppression very explicitly had an economic component.\(^2\) Additionally, as Anthony Kuzniewski explained, German was to become the official language, and Polish Catholicism was suppressed.\(^3\) In Russia, too, (the partition from which most of Worcester’s Poles would ultimately originate) there were similar attempts at de-Polonization and restricting education.\(^4\)

Poles from Austrian-controlled Galicia, from which a significant number of Worcester’s Poles came, were not as explicitly oppressed as in Germany or Russia, but tensions between the peasant and landowning class exacerbated by Austrian policies obstructed Polish nationalism and proved particularly disastrous for the peasant class on a material basis.\(^5\) Due to both cultural and economic oppression, it became necessary for many peasants to find a way to meet their needs and American industry was hiring.

It is tempting to assume that Poles who migrated from Europe to the United States came with the intention of constructing permanent communities. Bukowcyk shows that from the late 19\(^{th}\) century, many Poles thought that they would return to Poland and that their emigration to America was a temporary sojourn to help the family’s financial status.\(^6\) According to data supplied by Helen Lopata, the majority

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5 Bukowczyk, 8.
6 Ibid., 16.
of the seventy-seven thousand Polish immigrants who came to the United States in 1909 were males between the age of fourteen and forty-four, and only three percent of that total had more than $50 in their pocket as they entered the country; their families usually came later, if at all, once the initial migrant accumulated enough money.\textsuperscript{7} For the most part, these migrants worked as laborers. In the specific case of Worcester, Polish immigrants found employment in factories owned by American Steel & Wire, Reed & Prentice Companies, as well as Crompton & Knowles Loom Works.\textsuperscript{8}

John T. McGreevy’s research into how Catholic institutions considered the question of race in the cities of the American north concludes, among other things, that the presence of a parish signifies permanence of whichever community it serves. Despite the fact that Polish immigrants did not initially intend to make their home in this new world as shown by Bukowczyk and Lopata, the eventual establishment of a permanent parish in many American cities, facilitated by the importation of Polish ecclesiastical figures, signified permanence in America.\textsuperscript{9} In the case of Worcester, Saint Casimir’s Catholic parish was founded late in the year of 1894 as a joint Lithuanian and Polish parish. The strong ethnic traditions upheld by Saint Casimir’s and, later, Our Lady of Czestochowa, meant that these parishioners had made their home here, at least for the time being, and would be unlikely to leave the neighborhood unless joining another parish of the same ethnicity.

Early on, Worcester’s Poles and Lithuanians shared a parish at Saint Casimir’s. Disputes between Poland and Lithuania between the world wars, notably stemming from the former’s territorial claims to the Vilnius region, has marked twentieth-century relations between these two ethnic groups with controversy.\textsuperscript{10} From this it is fair to assume that it was an uneasy existence at Saint Casimir’s, but it is important to note that Worcester Poles and Lithuanians from 1894 to the turn of the century coexisted with relative ease. According to William Wolkovich-Valkavicius, the Lithuanian pastor at Saint Casimir’s, Rev. Joseph Jakstys, became wrapped up in controversy after numerous allegations of misconduct and misappropriation of parish funds.\textsuperscript{11} Wolkovich-Valkavicius blames this scandalous and dubious story as the reason for the Polish departure from Saint Casimir’s, but it is more likely that Poles just wanted their church and the liberty to celebrate in their distinctive tradition. In a short parish history detailing the earliest years of Our Lady of

\textsuperscript{7} Lopata, 40, 66.


Czestochowa parish, the Catholic American Press paints a more industrious picture of Father Jakstys as someone who “fused” the Lithuanians and Poles together. In histories made by the Polish parish itself, no scandal is mentioned and it would appear that mutual understanding was reached at the separation of the parish. Simply for reasons of divergent (but not hostile) tradition and culture as well as a growing population, the church for Our Lady of Czestochowa parish was finished in 1906 on Richland Street, just south of Kelley Square, and the Poles officially made it their home along with some Lithuanians, whose names appear as a significant minority in many parish records throughout its history.

To the members of this new parish, a separate church meant that they could organize and worship according to their own traditions. To them, a church of their own was not just a building, but it was the heart of their community, the soul of their Polonia. As every Pole in the community was Catholic, “parish” became synonymous with the community. So it was with the establishment of a permanent parish and in 1915 a parochial school that a firmly-rooted, dominantly Polish community had formed in Worcester. Soon to follow were organizations such as the Polish Naturalization Independent (PNI) Club, founded in 1906 and intended to help facilitate the transition from Polish to American life by procuring jobs and green cards as well as perpetuating Polish culture.

The early period of the parish’s history was marked by a series of short, disjointed pastorates. Its first pastor was Rev. Jan Moneta who during his short four-year term was remarkably active. He helped establish some organizations to enliven community life, from a chapter of the Polish National Alliance to the parish’s Rosary Society. Notably, he also supported the formation of a Polish Political Club, marking a desire to engage with the wider American world from an ethnic platform early on. He died at age forty-four due to cancer, and Rev. Peter Reding took over in 1907 until his death in 1911. He was followed by Rev. Joseph Tomikowski, who was transferred in 1913.

These short and disruptive pastorates were followed up by perhaps one of the most revered of pastors to have led Our Lady of Czestochowa parish, Father Boleslaw Bojanowski. Gerald Gamm’s research into the changing composition of Boston’s neighborhoods in the early twentieth century indicates that Catholics generally remained in the areas longer than non-Catholics due to the public presence of the parish. It was evident that most of the parishioners of Our Lady of Czestochowa were already there to stay by the beginning of World War I. Yet under Father Bojanowski’s pastorate they were further solidified. The parish school was

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13 Proko et al, 55
14 Ibid., 56.
built in 1915, which was expanded upon with a gymnasium and auditorium in 1926. The construction of the school was a clear sign that not only was the parish permanent but that a new generation was in need of fulfilling community life. Father Bojanowski was lifted to the status of Monsignor in 1935, the year after which Saint Mary’s High School had been finished as the only Polish secondary school in New England. The Monsignor retired in 1954 after having served for forty-one unparalleled years, to be succeeded by Rev. Chwalek.

Msgr. Bojanowski’s long pastorate is not unique when compared to other ethnic parishes. It seems as though some of the longest-lived parishes similarly have a long-lived parish priest relatively early on, as John Gurda’s study on late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century parishes in Milwaukee suggests. Saint Josaphat’s of Milwaukee, also a Polish parish, was blessed with a similarly devoted pastor in Rev. Felix Baran, whose ministry lasted from 1914 until 1942. Interestingly, Saint Josaphat’s was also founded by a particularly industrious and unfortunately short-lived pastor, who died five weeks after the construction of the parish’s beautiful basilica, making for a pastorate of only nine years plagued with difficulties. Saint Michael’s Parish, a German Milwaukee parish founded in 1883, enjoyed stability under Rev. Sebastian Bernard, who served from 1909 until 1948. A single, competent pastor meant stability and growth for a young immigrant parish.

It should be noted that the purpose of the parish school built by Msgr. Bojanowski was not merely to provide primary education but also to expand Polish culture. For this reason, public school, a formative education void of Polish-Catholic values, was viewed with aversion. The first-generation immigrants of Worcester’s Polonia raised their children in a deeply Polish neighborhood, and so it was easy and perhaps taken for granted that children spoke the mother tongue. But this generation also came from a socio-economic culture that of the broadly-termed Polish peasant class, that was generally anti-intellectual. Lopata describes the Polish peasant consciousness as regarding education and knowledge as traditionally “the province of the upper-class”. A laborer or farmer did not need an extravagant education, but only one that was grounded in the tenets of Catholicism and that taught the merits of the industry. Due to this anti-intellectualism, Saint Mary’s just needed to be a grade school. As this traditional anti-intellectualism decayed, the construction of a secondary school in 1936 suggests that Msgr. Bojanowski thought it prudent to build it for the sake of the parish youth’s social mobility.

Like other Catholic parishes throughout the United States, Our Lady of Czestochowa and its subsidiary institutions became a social structure protecting its parishioners against an unchecked market economy, an overreaching state, and more

16 Proko et al, 7, 57.
17 John Gurda, “The Church and the Neighborhood,” in Milwaukee Catholicism, ed. Steven M. Avella (Milwaukee: Knights of Columbus, 1991), 8-13, 3.
18 Lopata, 21.
generally but perhaps most importantly isolation from a native ethnic community. What could have been described as a self-made Polish colony in the United States had become a permanent, autonomous community. But with permanence came new challenges.

**Formation of Identity**

Since Poles began to migrate to the United States in large numbers, Polish identity was always implicitly equal parts Polish and Catholic. But once surrounded by “American” culture that identity was once again thrust into an unsympathetic environment, albeit not as explicitly or hostile as under the Kulturkampf but enough for Poles to feel a need to preserve their culture. A neighboring ethnic group, the Irish of Worcester, for example, had been well-acquainted with Worcester since the 1850s and was among some of its first industrial laborers. Driven to America after the infamous 1845 potato famine, the Irish had come to Worcester and settled in the area now known as Green Island. By 1855, the Irish made up one-third of Worcester’s population. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Poles would move into the same neighborhood, living among places bearing such names as Kelly and Brosnihan Square which indicate even today a deeply Irish heritage. Though early Irish immigrants to Worcester often spoke Gaelic, by the time Polish immigrants were moving in at the bottom of Vernon Hill, all but a tiny percentage of Worcester’s Irish spoke English. This and their earlier arrival to Worcester, enabling them to secure positions in both the diocesan hierarchy and local government, gave the Irish an advantage over the newcomers. Polish was an utterly alien tongue to an English-speaking city such as Worcester, and as this strange group with a particular tradition of Catholicism began to settle among them in numbers around the turn of the twentieth century antagonisms arose. How were Poles, even if they tended to their affairs within the boundaries of their fledgling community, to adapt to the pressures of Americanization?

Though Poles had generally been staunch Catholics for centuries, the widespread suppression of Polish culture and Roman Catholicism under the partitions’ governments in the late nineteenth century galvanized the bond between Polish nationalism and Catholicism to the point where the two became inextricable strands of the same culture. Polish-Catholic traditions, as well as the Polish language, held a particularly prominent place in the minds of Poles in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and those who emigrated from Europe to the United States due to economic and political hardship brought that deep respect

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21 Meagher, 26.
22 Kuzniewski, 7.
Polish-Catholics celebrated certain traditions that were different from the ones practiced by other Catholics in Worcester. For example, the Poles of Worcester decided to name their parish Our Lady of Czestochowa, named for the revered icon housed in the Jasna Góra Monastery in Czestochowa, Poland. Also known as the Black Madonna because of the skin color of Mary in the image (which has been attributed to multiple reasons by iconographers), She is revered as the Queen and Protectress of Poland as proclaimed by King Jan II Casimir Vasa in 1652. The icon is associated with some folklore that exhibit its power, for example, protecting the monastery in which it was housed during the Second Northern War in 1655 from a Swedish invasion. Pope John Paul II prayed before it on a visit in 1979. This particular icon holds a very central place for Polish-Catholics. In a symbolic sense, it could be said that Worcester’s Poles desired Her protection for their new parish in America by invoking the name of the Black Madonna.

A century later, Catholic holidays and festivals were the most outstanding examples of things that everyone in Polonia had in common. Worcester’s Poles continue to consider Catholicism as inextricable from their ethnic identity. When asked if they had celebrated Easter and Christmas growing up, one former member of the community replied, “Are we Polish?” Though these holidays are central to the broader Christian faith, Poles in particular celebrated traditions that differed even from other Catholics. John Bartosiewicz, a member of the community who grew up immersed in Polish language and culture in the 1960s, remembered the annual breaking of the beloved opłatek, the Christmas wafer. “We would say a Polish prayer before breakfast, before lunch, and before supper.” John recalled that Polish culture “was ingrained in us to keep it alive.” A non-Polish graduate of Saint Mary’s School offered an interesting perspective of the Christmas Mass held in Our Lady of Czestochowa when she described it as more packed than she had seen at her family’s previous church, with an atmosphere of particular reverence. Carol Fredette, a lay teacher who taught at Saint Mary’s in the 1970s, explained how “once a week, the entire school would walk down to the church for confession.” Polish traditions from Święconka, the Polish Easter Supper celebrated the week after Easter, to the practice of pisanka (egg-decorating) were held as cherished traditions that were particular to Polish Catholicism.

The Lithuanian ethnic parishes were buckling under the cultural pressures of Americanization, as revealed by a transition from ethnic-language masses to masses

27 Carol Fredette, interview by author, July 12, 2017.
conducted in English. By the 1950s, Lithuanian parishioners who were not members of Our Lady of Czestochowa were either in the old parish of Saint Casimir or of Our Lady of Vilna. By 1975, the latter had nearly done away with Lithuanian masses due to the paucity of the language. By contrast, Our Lady of Czestochowa had their first English sermon in 1954.\(^{28}\) All of their masses up until that point had been in Polish, a fact which speaks to the Polish community’s resilience to Americanization. Any outsider who attended such a mass might had thought that they had somehow ended up in Poland.

Polish remained the primary, distinctive language of the community even after the Second World War, and not only for celebrating mass which was principally recited in Latin. Interviews with former and current members of Our Lady of Czestochowa parish reveal difficulties in communicating with the outside world. Jayne Bausis remembers her grandmother relying on younger family members for just this purpose. “If someone came knocking on the door my grandmother would take whoever was the oldest [child] there to translate, and it would be that [a] five-year-old would be translating.” She recalled that for her grandparents, “to be in that community, in a Polish community, was very important to them.”\(^{29}\) As the years went on into the Cold War era, English became not only vital for interaction with the outside world but also for social mobility.\(^{30}\) Into the 1960s, children came to Saint Mary’s parish school without any knowledge of English and were required to learn (even some who were born in the United States did not know English, which speaks to the deep hesitation to conform). One Saint Mary’s graduate, who emigrated from Poland at eleven years of age knowing only Polish and was thrust into public school at the urging of then Msgr. Chwalek in the 1960s for a year, presumably to be wholly submerged in an English environment.\(^{31}\)

Most children of Worcester’s Polonia, however, did not have to endure such isolating experiences. English seems to have been realized as necessary for social mobility years before as the first generation of Polish-Americans was being born, both for interacting in the professional world with clarity and for the pursuit of higher education, the latter of which became increasingly frequent and a dominant trend sometime after 1950 (indicative of the sharp decline of anti-intellectualism).\(^{32}\) Although fewer parents taught Polish to their children out of concern for their future in America, knowledge of the Polish language by no means disappeared as can be indicated by the contemporary presence of Polish masses at Our Lady of Czestochowa. Basic Polish language classes remained compulsory at Saint Mary’s


\(^{29}\) Jayne Bausis, interview by author, June 29, 2017.

\(^{30}\) Proko et al, 102-103.


\(^{32}\) Saint Mary’s graduation records, 1940-1980.
since the school’s inception until the 1970s. A look at Saint Mary’s yearbooks from the 1950s shows that almost every faculty member (exclusively nuns and priests) could teach Polish. Even as late as the 1970s, a comparatively smaller body of faculty members were listed as able promulgators of Polish studies and language.\(^{33}\) Not only was Polish seen as a way to preserve their distinctiveness as an ethnic community, but it was also a practical matter of helping immigrants who continued to come to Worcester with integration and work.

While the desire to preserve the knowledge of the Polish language represents a way that full Americanization was resisted by the Polish community, as early as 1964 some traditional aspects of the Polish language were being discarded by Worcester’s Polonians. In general, Polish ceased to be the primary language of school culture. A look at Saint Mary’s records gives a valuable look at the diminishing practical role of Polish, but a quick explanation of Polish naming conventions is required to understand part of its value: many Polish surnames traditionally conform to a model that indicates a person’s gender. For example, “Lewandowski” would connote someone who was a man, and “Lewandowska” a woman. A look at Saint Mary’s graduation records shows a shift in which young women’s names gradually become recorded with the masculine ending (-ski, and not -ska) by the mid-1960s, thereby signifying a yield to Americanization and the English language.\(^{34}\) Though this might seem to be an inconsequential change, it is a definitive break from the tradition. Another, clearer sign is how grade school graduation records were recorded. These records not only show names, but qualities assigned by the students’ teachers that described their personalities. Until 1957 and then for a brief stint from 1960 to 1963, these records were written entirely in Polish, but the other years in English.\(^{35}\) Though this reflects both changing faculty, it also reflects the community’s lingual transition from a wholly Polish-speaking community to a more bilingual and ultimately English-dominant community.

Thus far, the only strands of what makes a Polish-American identity that has been discussed have been the Polish and Catholic aspects. What of the American element? Over the years, as the community grew and English-speakers and bilingual members became more numerous, so too grew American patriotism. As early as the 1920s, Poles attempted to align themselves with American giants. On October 13, 1929, a massive parade was held in honor of “Pulaski Day”. This parade was meant to commemorate Count Casimir Pulaski, an eighteenth-century Polish noble who fought to maintain Polish independence from Russia and, after he was exiled in defeat, fought and died for American independence during the American

\(^{33}\) Saint Mary’s yearbooks, 1952-1955.

\(^{34}\) Saint Mary’s graduation records, 1940-1980.

\(^{35}\) Ibid.
Revolution. Another familiar historical figure with which Polish-Americans align themselves is, surprisingly, Captain John Smith of Jamestown colony. Five craftsmen of Polish descent were brought over, according to a 1958 *Telegram* article, at the behest of John Smith to teach the English settlers some trades. While this is factual, an important detail is often left out, as it is in this article: the craftsmen were in all likelihood Protestant. This does not nullify a Polish connection with the founding of Jamestown and therefore in the foundation of the American mythology, but it is often left out because that would distance the predominantly Catholic Polonias of the United States from these fascinating figures.

Such attempts to connect Polish heroes with an American past represent both an earnest desire to be embraced into American culture as well as efforts to combat discrimination against Polish-Americans. Though admittedly not the most oppressed of America’s ethnic groups, prejudice against Polish-Americans and racial tension existed in cities like Worcester. Father Richard Lewandowski, who grew up in Worcester and attended Saint Mary’s in the 1950s and 60s, spoke of the generally negative stigma associated with being Polish. According to him so negative was this stigma that the sisters at Saint Mary’s told their students that “because we’re Polish, we would have to probably work twice as hard and perform twice as well in order to get half the credit for anything that we did.” A 1976 inquiry into Polish cultural identity provides a perspective on problems such as harmful stereotyping, bias in employment, infamous “Polish jokes,” and discriminatory attitudes. A predominantly Irish-American police force reportedly engaged in minor scuffles or at least disagreements with Polish-Americans during “rowdy” Polish weddings and celebrations. An extensive 1981 *Telegram* article offers Helen C. Czechowicz’s sentiment that “Poles were being cheated left and right” in the early twentieth century, a sentiment that inspired her to become a lawyer in order to combat such discrimination. To become “American”, Worcester’s Polish community had to combat this discrimination.

During the existence of an independent Poland in the interwar period, Polish-American communities were considered by nationally conscious Poles to compose the “fourth province of Poland”, i.e., *Polonia*. From the beginning of the First World War into the Cold War, Polonian parishes sent goods to the homeland in order to help their compatriots in their struggles first against foreign regimes and
then the oppressive hegemony of the USSR. When the Iron Curtain divided the world, Poland was more separated from Polonia than it had ever been. Communism’s rejection of religion naturally meant that Polish-Americans, staunchly Catholic as ever, became vehemently anti-communist. As the world progressed into the Cold War era, Polish-Americans came to embrace and celebrate their Polish, Catholic, and now American heritage, three strands which began to compose “Polish-American identity.”

Trials and Triumphs

A prevailing view of the Polish-American community of Worcester in recent years is one of decline. From an outside perspective, the community that surrounds Our Lady of Czestochowa no longer appears to be very Polish. In actuality, a very sizable, even vibrant Polish community remains. It is surprising and all the more revealing to examine some of the trials faced by Worcester’s Polonia during the Cold War era as events that might have rendered other communities beyond repair.

In 1959, near the beginning of the school year, Saint Mary’s School endured two fires. Though neither fire was large enough to destroy the school, the damage was extensive enough to warrant repairs. The community responded with an outpouring of support, and members of the parish pitched in to help. Between 1959 and 1965 under Msgr. Chwałek’s pastorate, $300,000 and $100,000 were raised from the community for the school and the church, respectively, in response to the fires for repairs and expansions of the community’s facilities. The total of $400,000, raised with the help of the Saint Mary’s Boosters Club, amounts to well over three million dollars when adjusted for inflation. Such a sum hardly suggests a declining community. Even more telling than the cold numbers, however, is that the community’s leadership and general populace desired to renovate and expand both the school and the church, not simply repair what was necessary.

The fires, however, might as well have been a prelude to a more grueling and traumatic trial for the community, one which had a more widespread effect on the cityscape of Worcester. In 1960, I-290, or what was at the time referred to as the Worcester Expressway, was completed. The Expressway cut right through Worcester, going north-south through the heart of the city, and it ran right past Our Lady of Czestochowa. The rectory was to be moved, numerous houses to be demolished and their inhabitants displaced, and many streets that once connected Vernon Hill to Green Island to be either completely removed or cut in half. Richland Street, for example, used to run from Vernon to Millbury Street and used to be the street on which Our Lady of Czestochowa was. The section of the road immediately in front of the church became a parking lot. Not only was the entire construction

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43 Lopata, 47.
process ‘traumatic’ as described by some former members of the community, but noise from the highway by parishioners made mass difficult for years afterward. It is quite reasonable to say that the construction of I-290 interrupted community life. The new highway not only isolated people on the west side of the interstate but also hurt Polish-run businesses, from Vernon Drug to the various markets. Some former and current members of the community claimed that it hurt theirs or their friends’ and family’s businesses. “[The expressway] didn’t do us any good”, remarked one longtime member of the neighborhood. As she remembered how she and her friends and family used to walk with ease from Millbury up to Ward on a variety of connecting streets, she spoke of certain isolation when she described to “all the streets that no longer go up to Ward Street”. John Bartosiewicz said that it created “a big divide”, reflecting on the fact that her grandmother’s house once stood where the highway bridge over Endicott Street now is. Once home to families, these streets were soon replaced with concrete. However, most other members did not seem to think that it had much of a long-term adverse effect at all besides some inconvenience. “My relatives would live on the [Green Island] side [of I-290], more towards Auburn, and they still participated, in fact, went to the school, so I don’t know if that really interfered with things.” Some even claimed that it helped their business, allowing quicker transportation all over the city. John Kraska Jr. reflected on how it helped his father’s auto business. “No one likes change but everyone adjusted.” Before the expressway came, “it took forever to get across town to deliver something, say, to Lincoln Street… what was once a twenty-minute drive was now a six or seven-minute drive”. Overall, it was an extraordinary change for the community that displaced and hurt some members, but it was far from a debilitating blow.

Surprisingly, one aspect of Americanization that did not necessarily spell the end of Worcester’s Polonia was suburbanization. One would think that suburbanization, by scattering the population away from the traditional community center would spell its quick decline. The advent of the interstate, however, meant that regular, long-distance travel was possible than before and that people could still go to school and attend parish functions even from nearby towns. Starting in 1960, students from Saint Mary’s increasingly listed their addresses as being outside of Worcester and in adjacent towns of Shrewsbury, including towns as distant as Clinton or Warren, the latter of which is even today a forty-minute drive. By 1972, the graduating class listed twenty-five members as living in other towns out of a total of sixty-nine classmates, or approximately 36% of students. These commuters were no doubt facilitated in

46 Bartosiewicz, interview.
47 Bausis, interview.
48 Kraska Jr., interview.
49 Saint Mary’s graduation records, 1940-1980
many cases by the new interstate. These commuting trends have continued until the present day. In an interview with Father Thaddeus Stachura, a longtime member of the community and pastor of Our Lady of Czestochowa between 1993 and 2014, he revealed that during his time as pastor, parishioners would travel from towns as nearby as Auburn (under six miles) and as far away as Leominster (over twenty miles) for weekly mass.\textsuperscript{50} Even former members of the community that had joined other parishes moved into the suburbs, and climbed into the middle class, insisted that significant life events such as baptisms and marriages be held at the historic parish in Worcester, as a cursory glance at the parish’s records indicates.\textsuperscript{51} Looked at in this light, it is possible that the Expressway, often assumed to be wholly detrimental to the Polish-American, actually helped to preserve the parish’s ethnic identity.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Chart 1:} Saint Mary’s High School graduates who had to commute to school from outside Worcester as compared to the total size of their graduating class.
\end{center}

However beneficial the expressway may have been in the long run, its construction undeniably left a mark in the minds of some members, for whom it had caused some disruption. Saint Mary’s High School basketball, however, may have buoyed the community’s spirits in a time when some members had to move around Vernon Hill in response to the massive construction project. Between 1959 and 1964, SMH’s boys’ basketball team did remarkably well especially for a relatively small parish school. The 1959-60 team went undefeated in the regular season as well as the postseason, finishing 24-0 and claiming the Class A championship at the Assumption College Invitational Tournament. Four years later in 1964, the team

\textsuperscript{50} Thaddeus Stachura, interview with author, June 22, 2017.

\textsuperscript{51} Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish records. 1950-1980.
handily won the New England championship against Malden High 77-65. An Evening Gazette sportswriter marveled at the team’s success two days after their impressive win, marveling at “Little St. Mary’s, a school of 288, including 133 boys, situated in the heart of the ‘Island District’ being the first Worcester school and also the only parochial school to annex this title in the 39 years of its history.” From an outside perspective, these sports victories might seem inconsequential to any big community change. However, they provided solace to Worcester’s Polish-Americans in a time when parts of the community were quite literally being uprooted. Even today, members of the community remember these triumphs with joy. John Kraska Jr. recalls how after winning the “last New England Championship that ever existed, […] the city came together and had a celebration for all of us team members at the Worcester auditorium [where] we received gifts from the city of Worcester.”

Another triumph for the community as well as Polonia as well occurred in the middle of the parish’s Diamond Jubilee (75th anniversary) celebrations in October 1978. These celebrations were marked by a forty-hour devotion, special masses for important past parishioners and of thanksgiving, and numerous dances held for the community. In the midst of all this, a groundbreaking event for Poles everywhere took place: Karol Wojtyła was elected to the papacy as Pope John Paul II. After centuries of Italian popes, this was a remarkable event, and even more so due to the political climate. In a time in which Catholicism was being suppressed in Poland, it was a bolstering event to have a Pole elected to the highest office in the Catholic hierarchy.

The excitement that resounded from the Polish-American community in Worcester was deafening. Former and current members of the parish tell stories of the day the announcement was made, conveying feelings of joy, disbelief, and perhaps most of all pride. “I remember exactly where I was”, began John Bartosiewicz when asked about his recollection of John Paul II’s election. As president of the PNI club, he shared how the club’s scholarship essay, in 2017, asked the question, “How did Pope John Paul II affect you and your family?”55 Father Lewandowski reminisced, “When I heard that [Karol Wojtyła] was named Pope, I got the chills.”56 “You had a great sense of pride to think one of your own was chosen”, remarked Mrs. Genevieve Dymek in a 1981 Telegram article, in which she and other Polish-Americans were asked about their feelings regarding his election.57 If there were any event that can be identified as responsible for Polish-Americans’ integration into mainstream American society, perhaps it would be Pope John Paul II’s election, which put a Pole at the head of this stalwart, anti-communist

52 Proko et al, 94-100
55 Bartosiewicz, interview.
56 Lewandowski, interview.
organization with which many other Americans could identify.

Epilogue

Beginning late in the year of 1988 in the town of Bridgeport, Connecticut, a schism developed in the Polish Catholic parish there under the leadership of Rev. John Bambol. Some parishioners expressed grievances at Father Bambol’s effort to open the church to non-Poles. Bad feelings grew until finally parishioners occupied the church, angry at Rev. Bambol for allegedly engineering their previous pastor’s removal, Rev. Palaszewski, for being “too active in the Polish community”. After occupying the church for a week, the police were summoned on February 18th, 1989 to evict the dissident parishioners from their church. Henry Chmiel, one of those parishioners, complained, “How can they tell me I was trespassing in my own church?” Parishioners continued to protest from outside the church until September when they decided to withhold financial support until their demands would be met. These parishioners’ efforts ultimately did not go to waste. The parish to this day retains a Polish character, as is evident from their weekly bulletins and website, written predominantly in Polish as well as English. Also, they still hold a Polish mass every weekday and two every Sunday.

Over twenty years later in Worcester, as recently as 2014, Father Thaddeus Stachura announced that he would be forced to close Saint Mary’s school. The school had served the community for nearly a century and though its composition had changed to include fewer Polish and more Hispanic and African-American students, Polish parishioners did not take kindly to the announcement. “A ground-swell of complaints and petitions” arose in opposition according to then-pastor Thaddeus Stachura. Donations came in from the community as part of a parish-wide effort to maintain the school, and in the final count, Father Stachura donated over $200,000 himself. The school stayed open and has grown since. Polish-Americans, even those who no longer lived in the neighborhood, regarded the school as a vital part of the community’s life and their identity.

These isolated events, separated by a period of well over two decades and in two different areas of New England, have much in common. Both speak to the fierce resilience of Polish-Americans against threats to their culture and their communal life. Both events also suggest that this vehement drive to preserve Polonian distinctiveness is something not unique to Our Lady of Czestochowa, but instead is something that can be applied to Polish-Americans throughout the United States.

61 Stachura, interview.
In our contemporary era, in which new immigrants from different ethnic groups are staking their claims in America with similar methods, facing similar challenges as did the immigrants of the last century, Worcester’s Polish-American community still stands when comparatively more Lithuanian-, Irish-, and French-Americans among others have receded into the suburbs. In the optimistic words of a current parishioner, a member of Our Lady of Czestochowa and resident of Vernon Hill for years, “we’ll have a basilica one day!”

In August of 1945 the United States dropped the “Little Boy” and the “Fat Man” on the respective cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, causing a combined death toll of at least 135,000. Although the atomic bombings in 1945 have not been excluded from the United States’ contemporary national narrative, one of the more underemphasized aspects of this history is the unsettling and often unclear relationship between Catholicism and American nuclear politics that began in 1945 and extended throughout the entire Cold War. Of the 135,000 Japanese who died from burns, radiation, and other atomic bomb-related injuries, at least 7,000 of those casualties were Japanese Catholics, though that estimate seems conservative when one remembers that the “Fat Man” was dropped in Japan’s most Christian-populated city and even landed next to the Urakami Catholic Cathedral. The Japanese Catholic victims of the “Fat Man,” however, were probably unaware that the weapon which would ultimately decimate a large proportion of their Catholic community was blessed by Father George Zabelka, a Catholic Chaplain in the U.S. Army, and dropped by Major Charles W. Sweeney, also an American Catholic in the military.

At first glance, one might interpret Zabelka and Sweeney’s involvement in the atomic bomb as isolated acts, as they appear in hindsight as blatantly contrary to the Catholic doctrines of peace. However, a closer examination reveals that American Catholics in 1945 were not uniformly against the United States’ use of the bomb. Instead they were divided on the subject. Given this divide, one might ask: How did the unclear relationship between Catholicism and the United States’ nuclear politics in 1945 transform into a unified anti-Communist partnership at the dawn of the Cold War in 1949? One way to explore that trajectory is through an examination of the historical records of 1945, 1946, and 1949, as these years demonstrate the most significant periods of change in the relationship between American Catholics and their nation’s nuclear politics. In the first frame, which is August 1945, American Catholics did not share a unified stance on their nation’s use of nuclear weapons in Japan. While some of the aforementioned population saw the atomic bomb as a viable tool to end Japan’s aggression in World War II, others believed the use of the

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weapon was unquestionably immoral. However, by 1946, when the patriotism of America’s victory had subsided, American Catholics were again divided on the issue of the atomic bomb, but for different reasons. In response to rumors of the Soviet proliferation of nuclear weaponry, American Catholics either condemned the bomb as dangerous to peace or perceived it as a legitimate means to curb Russia’s influence.

Nevertheless, American Catholics held a divided opinion on the bomb until 1949, when the U.S.S.R. detonated its first nuclear weapon, RDS-1. This test marked a significant change in American Catholic attitudes towards the Soviet Union because their earlier reactions in 1945 and 1946 were based on the assumption that while Soviet scientists were trying to develop their own bomb, they had not succeeded in it. However, now that the United States’ enemy (who also happened to be overtly anti-religion) possessed the ability to wage a nuclear warfare, most American Catholics changed their once divided beliefs and assumed a pro-bomb stance. That “pro-bomb stance,” however, was more of a position against Communism than support for the creation and use of atomic weapons. American Catholic support for the United States’ nuclear weaponry in the post-WWII era is, therefore, the forgotten roots of their later anti-Communist movement in the Cold War. It is thus essential to understand how American Catholics were divided on the subject of the atomic bomb until Russia tested its first atomic weapon in 1949, which was a pivotal turning point in the American Catholic support for nuclear weaponry as protection against Communism.

II. American Catholics Immediate Response to the Atomic Bomb (1945)

When the words “Atomic Bomb Hits Japan!” sprawled across headlines on August 7th and August 10th, the American Catholic community did not immediately produce a unified response to the news. While some cheered loudly for the United States’ impending victory, others voiced their concerns about the moral implications of such indiscriminate violence. Most, however, tended to take either an ambiguous stance to the use of the atomic bomb, as it seemed unclear if and how Catholicism could be reconciled with the United States’ decision to apply their nuclear abilities in Japan. Within the boarder context of the twentieth century, such a union between religion and politics was particularly important for many American Catholics, as the latter community were keenly aware of the rise in anti-Catholic sentiments as well as the increasing secularization of American society. Thus, in being dually Catholic and American, many struggled over which identity should be prioritized over the other. Although many were unwilling to completely abandon their religious principles, Catholics in the United States also did not want to appear unpatriotic to the nation. The defining question for such a community came down to whether they were first

Americans or first Catholics?

Examination of the public record suggests that many constituents of the Catholic lay community supported the United States decision to drop atomic bombs in 1945 because they viewed that as being loyal Americans. One explanation for this support is the place in which American Catholics were situated within the broader socio-political context of World War II’s end. Like their secular compatriots, ordinary American Catholics found it difficult to criticize the bomb, as they understood that the utilization of nuclear weaponry had led to Japan’s surrender, thereby saving the lives of American soldiers and ending the war on the Pacific front. Thus, in the days and weeks following the detonation of the atomic bombs, many Americans chose to celebrate the war’s end and ignore the devastation that their nation had inflicted on Japan. This was illustrated in American Catholics’ attendance at the so-called “Victory Masses” that were held in churches across the United States. For example, on August 20th of 1945, four thousand American Catholics gathered for a special service at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City to, “…join the nation in offering prayers for peace and its heroes.”

The large number of communicants present at these masses demonstrates that many Catholics in the United States were more inclined to participate in celebrations of World War II’s end, rather than discuss the means through which that end was achieved. Although not all members of the Catholic lay community were swept up in the tide of unquestioning patriotism, it is reasonable to conclude that political considerations were a significant reason behind ordinary American Catholics’ support of the bomb, even though the use of nuclear weapons against a civilian population could have been interpreted as contradictory to Catholic teaching and dogma.

The sermons of these “Victory Masses” also serve the purpose of demonstrating the ambiguous position of American priests in the days after the U.S. incinerated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While “peace” was an explicit theme during the masses, a collective examination of the public record reveals that many sermons lack a direct commentary on the atomic bomb and the implications of its use in Japan. The absence of these discussions on the morality or necessity of using nuclear weapons against civilians serves as a clear demonstration of the tension that existed between American Catholics and the national politics. Similar to their lay counterparts, ordained Catholic across the United States likely wanted to avoid criticizing Truman as Catholic priests were likely to have had friends, family members, and parishioners who were fighting in the war. Moreover, as leaders of their local Church communities, it seems that priests likely avoided making controversial statements on the use of nuclear weaponry because the atomic bomb was assumed to be an unfortunate but one-time tactic. In other words, many believed that no additional global power would engage in another nuclear operation, as it was widely accepted,

American Catholics & the Atomic Bomb

at least among the public, that the United States was the only nation equipped with the knowledge and resources to create an atomic bomb. Thus, if the incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were expected to be isolated incidents not to be repeated, priests could ignore the implications of the nuclear bombs by focusing instead on the United States’ victory in World War II, thereby avoiding altogether the American Catholic dilemma of having to pit religious teachings against the national nuclear politics.

Besides, the American Catholics who did worry that the bomb was an act contrary to their religion could be assuaged by political indoctrination that professed the bomb to be reconcilable with morality. Hours after the second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, President Truman gave a historic address to the American people on the Potsdam Conference. Towards the end of this widely broadcasted speech, however, Truman mentioned the United States’ use of atomic weaponry in Japan. He told his audience that, “...we thank God that [the atomic bomb] has come to us, instead of to our enemies; and we pray that He may guide us to use it in His ways and for His purposes.” Although Truman was not explicitly speaking to one religious community over another, the clear implication in the speech is that use of the atomic bomb could be morally justified, a message that would have been applicable to American Catholic listeners in the audience. However, beyond mere applicability, Truman’s rhetoric was likely even appealing to American Catholics. By including the phrases “His ways” and “His purposes,” which indicate that the United States’ attack on Japan was in accordance with God’s wishes, Truman was able to at least temporarily subdue the questions about the moral implications of nuclear warfare that American Catholics and other religious groups might have otherwise voiced.

In some sense, Truman’s union of God and the atomic bomb echoes the “Just War” theory, which some American Catholics used to legitimize their nation’s use of the atomic bomb in the days following the bombing of Japan. By definition, such a theory determines whether or not conduct in war could be characterized as just or moral. There are several ways to measure the justness of actions in war, the most common being proportionality, and military necessity. In the public record, the latter element of the “Just War” theory was frequently referenced by American Catholics as a justification for the United States’ use of the atomic bombs. This can be evidenced, for example, by the Catholic Laymen’s Association of Georgia dispatch in a newspaper called The Bulletin. Here, a Catholic priest by the name of Father Mecelwane is quoted as saying:

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5 Charles Guthrie, Just War: The Just War Tradition: Ethics in Modern Warfar (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC), 45, 52.
Modern warfare is an armed struggle between nations. The object of each side is to win the war, that is, to force the opposite side to surrender by making it difficult or impossible for it to wage further warfare. Provided the war is a just war, the choice of weapon is immaterial as far as morality is concerned. The quicker an attacking enemy is brought to his knees and forced to surrender, the better it is for all concerned.6

Although the United States citizenry was aware of the fact that the atomic bomb was directed at a civilian population and caused significant damage, Mcelwane’s quote draws from the military necessity aspect of the “Just War” theory. With the claim that the United States’ use of nuclear weapons was “necessary,” not merely sufficient, to end the war in the Pacific, American Catholics could consider the devastation and destruction of Japan as unfortunate collateral damage. Certainly, the proportionality and civilian elements of the “Just War” theory were also arguments that occasionally buttressed the claim that the bomb was unjust. However, since the majority of the 1945 publications examined for this historical investigation focus on how the “Just War” theory could support the atomic bomb, one can conclude that many American Catholics sought to reconcile their religion with their nation’s nuclear politics by arguing that the latter was morally permissible and justified.

Despite the widespread support of the U.S.’ decision to drop the atomic bomb, there still existed members of the Catholic community who outright opposed atomic bombs and their use. Those who spoke out against the bomb mostly were priests and ordained theologians, who identified as Catholic Americans and were not as integrated into the patriotic and pro-bomb tide as their lay counterparts. Many of these opponents of the atomic bomb raised questions of moral implications of U.S.’ aggression in Japan, which demonstrates that some American Catholics were cognizant and vocal about the quandary between the Catholic teachings of peace and America’s use of nuclear weapons. For example, the Arkansas Catholic quoted Father John K. Ryan, a professor at the Catholic University of America as saying that, “[t]he story of the atomic bomb should fill us with dismay.”7 Given that this publication was released on August 10th, 1945, a single day after the “Fat Man” incinerated Nagasaki, one can understand that there was not necessarily a broad pro-bomb consensus among Catholic Americans in August of 1945. Instead, those who did not participate in the wave of unquestioning patriotism believed that the United States’ incineration of Japan could not be reconciled with Catholic teaching on the sanctity of human life.

In many ways, one can better understand the uncertainty of the United States’ Catholic community through an examination of the Vatican’s own ambiguous and often contradictory position on nuclear weaponry, which influenced how American

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Catholics themselves interpreted the atomic bomb. As early as 1943, Pope Pius XII had spoken out in opposition to the use of nuclear weapons saying that, “…it should be of utmost importance that the energy originated should not be let loose to explode.” However, once the United States dropped the bombs on Japan, the Vatican’s seemingly clear position on nuclear weaponry became muddied by the Pope’s subsequent actions. Although the L’Osservatore Romano, Rome’s official newspaper, had published an editorial that harshly criticized President Truman’s decision to use the bomb, the Pontiff retracted similar statements that were published in the Stars and Stripes, a newspaper for soldiers, and classified them as “not authorized.” As commented on by the New York Times, Pope Pius XII’s decision to remain ambiguous on international affairs was unsurprising, as the Vatican, “…in general prefers to remain… ‘gray’ rather than taking a stand that would make it ‘black’ or ‘white’ on controversial issues.” Such vagueness serves to underscore the argument that tension existed between Catholicism and American politics, as the Vatican was careful to avoid offending American Catholic soldiers and criticizing President Truman’s political decisions. Rome’s decision to remain “gray” on the atomic bomb issue is a critical part in understanding the American Catholic community’s divided reactions over the bomb. The ambiguous stance did not guide American Catholics towards support of, or opposition to, the bomb but instead provided a milieu for a series of widely different interpretations on nuclear weaponry and the United States’ use of it to emerge.

III. American Catholic Opinions on the Atomic Bomb in the Post-War era (1946)

However, in the months following the detonation of the atomic bombs on Japan, the enthusiasm over the United States’ victory in both Japan and World War II began to lose its influence over the American citizenry. In turn, the spirit of once unquestioning patriotism was replaced by questions that explored the morality and necessity of the United States’ use of the atomic bomb. At that same historical moment, however, rumors of Russia’s ability to develop its own nuclear weapons also created a sense of fear in the national conscious, as the American citizenry worried that they be the victim of a future act of nuclear retaliation by a hostile nation. Thus, once the figurative dust from World War II had settled, the American Catholic community was once again divided over the atomic bomb, though for different reasons than in 1945.

Just as the early anti-bomb sentiments in 1945 had consisted mainly of American

9 “No Vatican Stand is Taken on Bomb.” New York Times, Aug, 8, 1945.
10 “No Vatican Stand is Taken on Bomb.”
Catholic priests, the ordained again formed the backbone of the United States’ anti-bomb movement in 1946. This was exemplified in priests’ sermons, which were used as outlets to express condemnations of the United States’ decision to decimate Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For example, on April 7th, 1946, several months after the bombings, Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen spoke to an audience at St. Patrick’s Cathedral on the immorality of nuclear weapons. He described the attack on Japan as an act contrary to the moral law, claiming that it “…[did] away with the moral distinction that must be made in every war—a distinction between civilians and the military.”

Sheen’s argument here draws from the “Just War” theory, as it emphasizes the “distinction” aspect, which claims that, for conduct in war to be considered just, it must not be directed at non-combatants. Given that the “Just War” theory was used earlier in 1945 to support the use of the atomic bomb, these mainstream publications demonstrate how the American public's perception had changed in the post-World War II era. With rumors spreading about the Soviet Union’s efforts to develop their own atomic bomb, people increasingly realized that the United States’ attack on Japan was not guaranteed to be the last display of nuclear force, which in turn promoted Catholics—especially the ordained—to discuss the moral implications of nuclear warfare.

However, while some American Catholics assumed a skeptical attitude towards the atomic bomb in 1946, the post-World War II era also saw an increase in anti-Communist sentiments. The rise of American Catholic anti-Communism primarily stemmed from the corresponding surge in rumors about the proliferation of Russia’s own nuclear capabilities. Since the Soviet Union was purported to be anti-religious and American Catholics were already concerned with the rising secularism of the United States, religious communities like the American Catholics perceived the U.S.S.R. as a threat. Thus, although the American Catholic population, especially the ordained, began to condemn the bomb as immoral in 1946, growing anti-Communism sentiments were starting to undermine that opposition to the bomb. These two responses to the political anxiety of 1946 would ultimately persist until 1949 when anti-Communism would prevail and subdue the anti-bomb voices.

Beginning in 1946, Catholic Americans, in response to the rumors of Russia gaining knowledge of the atomic technology began to push for a U.S. hegemony in atomic resources. These discussions about control started after the Franck Report was released to the public in 1946. This report was produced by several prominent American nuclear scientists in June of 1945, one month before the atomic bombs were dropped, and predicted that Russia could engineer their own atomic bomb by

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13 Guthrie, Just War: The Just War Tradition: Ethics in Modern Warfare.
1950. The committee of scientists also concluded that if the U.S. dropped the bombs on Japan, a nuclear arms race would ensue and could not be prevented, “…either by keeping secret from the competing nations the basic scientific facts of nuclear power or by cornering raw materials required for such a race.” From these findings, the scientists of the Franck Report advised the United States to adopt a policy of international control instead. Once this report was released to the public a year later, Catholic groups responded by arguing instead for the United States’ exclusive control of atomic weaponry, as they feared any augmentation of Russia’s power. This was on display, for example, at the annual convention for Catholic War Veterans of America, which took place on June 22nd of 1946. Here, the Catholic Veterans of World War II passed a resolution that demanded nuclear secrets be exclusively held by the United States and kept from Russia. Such a proposal thus demonstrates how Catholic Americans, especially the lay population, were beginning to see the bomb as a tool to curb Russia and its communist ideologies.

The questions over Russia’s development of nuclear weaponry and control of “atomic secrets” also extended to the Vatican, which slowly began to publicly support the atomic bomb as a tool to limit Russia’s international influence. For example, just two weeks after the annual convention for Catholic War Veterans of America, the New York Times published a translation of an article about the atomic control that was published in the L’Osservatore Romano on July 2nd of 1946. The newspaper report underscored that the U.S.’ recent atomic tests at Bikini were not as catastrophic as expected, saying that “…that there would be less danger of war if the statesmen charged with making peace knew that the threat of explosives infinitely more powerful than those use hitherto hung over their heads.” This implies, though not outwardly, the Vatican saw a U.S. hegemony in atomic knowledge as a way to maintain an international balance of power. In an ironic twist the same newspaper, which was now encouraging the use of the nuclear knowledge for peace had earlier published a scathing criticism of the United States’ use of the atom bomb in 1945. In effect, the Vatican’s approval of the U.S.’ tests at Bikini in 1946 undoubtedly reassured the American Catholic community that it was acceptable to support the atomic bomb when external factors (i.e., Russia’s “atheistic” Communism) posed an existential threat to their Catholic community.

IV. American Catholic Opinions at the Dawn of the Cold War (1949)

These anti-bomb and anti-Communism sentiments expressed by American Catholics in 1946 remained until the middle of 1949. However, the anti-bomb

position gradually disappeared after September 23rd. On that day President Truman announced to the American Public that an atomic explosion had occurred in the U.S.S.R. Just as this event can be identified as a turning point in the trajectory of the Cold War, as it was the most contributive factor in Truman’s decision to develop the H-bomb, the discovery of the Soviet’s nuclear developments was also transformative in American Catholics opinion on the atomic bomb. In effect, the discovery of Russia’s first atomic test led the American Catholic population to understand Russia’s nuclear capabilities as reality rather than rumor, which in turn prompted the American Catholic community to develop a broad consensus towards pro-bomb and anti-Communism.

The Soviet atomic test hardened ordinary American Catholics’ attitude towards Russia. Subsequently, a large proportion of them joined the ranks of the preexisting anti-Communism movement. Although the ordained population had largely been the driving force behind the exploration of the atomic bomb’s morality, any indifference or skepticism that the lay community might have harbored was eclipsed by the considerations of the future. This can be evidenced by the shift in the focus of Catholic newspapers in late 1949. Once the Soviet Union’s atomic test was discovered, many of the publications in the historical record began to increasingly emphasize a new moral quandary, which was the Soviet Union’s crimes against Catholic populations in Eastern Europe. For example, in the October 7th, 1949 edition of the *Arkansas Catholic*, one of the front-page stories was an article on Russia’s “war” on the Catholic Church in Hungary that helped spread of “anti-Communist” propaganda around the world. Although this newspaper and others similar to it do not explicitly express pro-bomb sentiments, the clear anti-Russian tone that developed in these sources after 1949 indicates a general shift in American Catholics’ thinking. From there onwards, instead of rehashing the incineration of Japan, Catholics in the United States increasingly directed their efforts on the ways in which they could prevent the spread of Russia’s “anti-religious” ideologies, an issue that lay organizations would later try and solve by proposing an expansion of the United States’ nuclear arsenal.

Perhaps the most surprising response to the Soviet Union’s first atomic test was that of American Catholic priests, who, according to the public record, mostly began to publicly support the bomb as a tool to restrain the power and international standing of Russia. One of the most notable examples of these pro-bomb priests is Father Edmund A. Walsh S.J., who served as President Truman’s “most trusted

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advisor” on Russian affairs. According to biographer Patrick McNamara, the aforementioned priest insisted that 1949 was an opportune time for, “...the nation to exercise its ‘destined mission’ of power,” and that such a mission should, “[include] the use of atomic power.” In other words, Walsh believed that although the decimation of innocent Russian civilians would be, in his own words, “a regrettable effect,” the United States should nevertheless attack Russia to curb its influence. Although one might dismiss the aforementioned priest and his views on atomic warfare as isolated, many religious leaders—including Fulton J. Sheen, who had characterized the bomb as immoral in 1946—felt an, “… increasing inclination to defend the moral legitimacy, under certain circumstances, of using atomic bombs.” This dramatic change in priests’ stances on the atomic bomb from 1945 and 1946 to 1949 demonstrates that the Soviet’s first atomic test was a pivotal point in American Catholics’ opinion on the atomic bomb. Although the subject of nuclear weapons had once divided Catholics in the United States, such gaps increasingly narrowed down as the Cold War became entrenched internationally.

V. Conclusion

By closely examining different historical records one can conclude that the American Catholic community held a multitude of positions on the atomic bomb in 1945 and 1946 and did not develop a broad consensus of either a pro-bomb or anti-Communism position until the Soviet Union tested their first atomic weapon in 1949. Although the time frame here is limited in the sense that it only focuses on three, not necessarily consecutive years, it nevertheless demonstrates how the interplay of local and international factors affected the relationship between Catholicism and American politics in the mid-twentieth century. Perhaps more importantly, the evolution American Catholics’ opinions on nuclear weapons in the early atomic age is a necessary foundation in understanding the role assumed them in the Cold War. In the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, a large proportion of the Catholic community in the United States saw themselves as “crusaders of the Cold War” and enthusiastically took part in anti-Communist campaigns. American Catholics consistently supported anti-Communist measures more than any other religious group in the United States. The years between 1945 to 1949 are crucial because they serve as the forgotten origins of the relationship between American Catholicism and the anti-Communism, a marriage that would ultimately leave a complicated but indelible legacy in the remaining decades of the Cold War and beyond.

20 Patrick J. McNamara, A Catholic Cold War, 171.
Une Crise d’Identité
The Use of Institutional Systems to Build Nationalism in Alsace and Lorraine following the First World War, 1918-1925
Catherine B. Griffin ’18

“Back to the Motherland: Behind our lines, all through reconquered Alsace… the joy of the people was profoundly impressive. They had gone back to the bosom of the motherland absolutely.”1

Over the last century, the regions of Alsace and Lorraine, on the eastern border of France, have witnessed a series of historic forces that have produced complex nationalist projects. First, Alsace and Lorraine underwent a tumultuous social-cultural change in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when Germany wrested their control away from France. The above quote, published in the London Times on November 14, 1918, symbolized the joy and the hope the people of the region had for the Alsatians return to the “motherland.” Little were they aware of the problems that awaited them in the impending transition. The governments of both France and Germany institutionally invested to promote their own brands of nationalism on the hesitant population. This essay explores the complex and competing forces of divergent national projects in Alsace and Lorraine. In doing so, it sheds light on key questions of nationality and citizenship. Who has the right to define national identity, citizenship and who can identify who is a citizen and who is not, on what criteria? In what ways can a state promote nationalism? What is a state’s reasoning behind implementing policies to enforce nationalism?

Alsace and Lorraine were historically under French control up until the end of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. As a part of the Treaty of Frankfurt in 1872, the local population was given a choice to immigrate to France or remain in the region but become German. These areas remained part of Germany until the end of World War I in 1918. Following the War, Alsace and Lorraine were returned to France. But after the rise of the Nazi regime in the 1930s, they again came under the German control. Finally, at the conclusion of World War II in 1945, the regions again became part of France and have remained since.2 This paper focuses primarily on the years

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following the First World War (1918-1925) and investigates the attempts by the French government to enforce uniform nationalism and allegiance to the French state.

It is important to consider nationalism and identity in the broader context of European society during this period. Fascism came to power in Italy and Germany around the same time when Alsace and Lorraine were in the process of being reintegrated back to France. Fascism stems from a multi-faceted form of government that revolves around one mass party government. Historian Cardoza writes that, “the Duce [Mussolini] emerged as the first of the twentieth-century dictators to rely not only on coercion, but also on new means of mass communications to consolidate his power and mobilize his people.” Just as Mussolini mobilized Italians under a Fascist regime, the French government employed methods of mass communication to mobilize the people of Alsace and Lorraine to re-identify with France, and eliminate those who were not French citizens. The main characteristics associated with Fascism—"antiliberal, anticommunist regime based on a single mass party that combined repression of democracy with nationalist mobilization and ambitious social welfare projects"—relate back to the core question of citizenship. Who is a citizen in a Fascist regime? What constitutes citizenship? Alsace and Lorraine struggled to find their own national identity in the midst of the rise of Fascist governments. The transition of Alsace and Lorraine, through the years of 1918-1925, offers glimpses into challenges these nations experienced in defining or redefining their national identity.

Rogers Brubaker, in *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, argues that the idea of citizenship dates back to the French Revolution in 1789. He categorizes “the invention of citizenship” emerging through four distinct but inter-related developments: a) the bourgeois revolution, b) the democratic revolution, c) the national revolution, and d) the bureaucratic, state-strengthening revolution. Brubaker argues that “the development of the modern institution of national citizenship is intimately bound up with the development of the modern nation-state. The French Revolution marked a crucial moment in both.” The French Revolution did not just change the way France defined citizenship, it redefined the idea of citizenship across Europe. The new idea of what constitutes citizenship, of how citizenship is defined, affected movements of populations and policies across the continent. For the French government, the chief question therefore was how to “Frenchify” a region that had been under German control for fifty years and promote French nationalism. For Alsatians, the question was how, or if, they could embrace

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4 Cardoza, 164.
6 Brubaker, 49.
French identity after all those years living under German control.

Interestingly, one of the biggest proponents of French nationalism was none other than the French fascists. There were a few different fascist parties in France in the 1920s and early 1930s. According to Goodfellow, “the Action Française [a French fascist party] played a significant role in shaping France’s view of Alsace and Lorraine.”7 The French fascist groups were active in both regions and offered a public face of assimilation in the Alsace region. The groups shared many of the same beliefs as pro-German autonomists, who eventually turned to the Nazi party. In 1926, the Action Française had between 2,000 and 2,500 members. Alsace and Lorraine had one of the strongest regional presences in the party. Extremist nationalist parties tended to succeed in Alsace because they tackled questions of identity. Goodfellow gives a new definition of fascism, writing that, “Fascism was not, as is often argued, simply hyper-nationalism, but instead it advocated integrally linking local, and even familial, identity and regional identity with national identity.”8 The support for Fascism in Alsace stemmed from the obvious need for belonging and community in the region. In the eyes of Alsatians, Alsace was at the core and Paris was at the periphery. Eventually, to move forward, the people in the region “had to accept the definition of itself having a dual identity.”9

The French government strategically utilized language, the education system and citizen classification to promote nationalism in the regions of Alsace and Lorraine following the First World War. The government used French language for all local matters with an explicit intent to override the German language and other regional dialects. Similarly, the French government took advantage of the public education system to instill unity and French allegiance amongst the youth. It classified the local population of the regions into various categories, to determine who was a truly born French person and who was a foreigner. This classification, complete with individual identity cards, led to various kinds of discrimination, elimination, and a form of modern-day “purging” in the region.10 The Catholic Church played an important role in the initial annexation of Alsace and Lorraine to Germany, as well as a loyal unit when the regions were eventually reallocated to France.

Methodology

There are many sources relevant to the issue of national identity in Alsace and Lorraine during this period. My research began with Stephen Harp’s work, *Learning to be Loyal: Primary Schooling as Nation Building in Alsace and Lorraine, 1850-1940*. Initially,

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8 Goodfellow, 151.
9 Goodfellow, 153.
my focus was on investigating the role of the education system during the transition. As the research progressed, I broadened the focus on the state institution as a whole, rather than just the education. The questions of language, religion, education, and categorization or “purging” appeared repeatedly in many secondary sources. I started to examine how these questions were connected.

Rogers Brubaker’s book has particularly helped to frame the scope of this essay by historicizing questions of nationalism and national identity. The most important contribution of Brubaker’s work, in the context of my essay, is his distinction between how the French and German definitions of citizenship. According to Brubaker, the French “understanding of nationhood has been state-centered and assimilationist, the German understanding has been Volk-centered and differentialist.”11 This interpretation helps to illuminate some of the key differences between the French and German processes of integration and assimilation in Alsace and Lorraine.

Primary sources were difficult to find but insightful to help understand the regional issues at the time. A few primary sources particularly relevant were news articles written in the *London Times* during the reintegration. These articles were able to provide a relatively unbiased perspective on the transition phase. A schoolteacher’s journal from 1918 was helpful in comprehending how the education system was designed. A photo of Alsatian children in traditional dress, while not necessarily directly relevant, offered interesting insights on the nationality of the region and the symbolic idea that Alsace and Lorraine had its own distinct regional identity. Similarly, a 1924 article about the national identification card policy in France was helpful in understanding some of the purging that took place in Alsace and Lorraine. While the policy was published slightly later and does not include anything on identification cards in Alsace in particular, I found it interesting to help frame the larger picture of how citizenship was perceived in France at the time.

The piece of the puzzle I was not entirely able to place together was how the Alsatians felt throughout this transition. Given the difficulty of finding primary sources that I could interpret, which was already a challenge as many were in French and German, it was difficult to find any sources on the feelings of those who were living through the transition. I wished I would have found a diary entry or had better access to a local newspaper. Unfortunately, given the resources and semester-long time constraint, I had to work primarily with Gallica for primary sources in French, which was tricky to navigate. My argument would have been more nuanced with personal testimonies and locally generated sources.

**Le français ou l’Allemand? The Question of Language**

An article published in the *London Times*, just one month after the end of the

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11 Brubaker, 1.
war, expressed the joy felt in Alsace to be French again: “In spite of the large number of German immigrants in Alsace and Lorraine, Lorraine and Metz and Strasbourg and Alsace are French to the core, and will never live happily under any other rule.”

While some people may have felt this feeling of relief and excitement, the evidence did not indicate that most residents of the region shared this sentiment. One of the most debated issues during the transition was the question and status of language.

Language historically united people of a nation-state. Alsace and Lorraine were no exception to this. After the French Revolution in 1789, the French government utilized the French language to promote nationalism in the region. By 1808, French was the primary language of instruction in high schools and local universities in Alsace. In the second part of the nineteenth century, also known as the Second Empire (1850-1870), “there was an intensive systematic propaganda campaign on behalf of the use of the French language.”

The French government pushed to intensify French instruction, “to the point of almost completely ousting German.” The churches wanted to keep German language instruction because they thought it was essential to the identity of the region. This offers a longer history of the use of language from earlier time periods.

Alsace and Lorraine came under German control after the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. However, the transition was not as drastic. While instruction in schools was in German in an attempt to assimilate, the change was slow and many schools in Alsace and Lorraine were able to keep much of their schooling in French for the first few years. The building of a German university in Strasbourg, the capital of the Alsace region, which created “the greatness and the superiority of German culture and scholarship…was also intended ‘to assimilate Alsace,’ an assimilation which appeared to progress steadily.” According to the regional censuses from 1900, 1905 and 1910, over ninety percent of the population identified the German language as their ‘mother tongue.’ Many people saw economic and cultural benefits of the German rule.

In summary, the slower transition turned out to be beneficial for the German government; there is evidence from the census just thirty short years later. This more gradual transition could be attributed to Germany’s definition of citizenship, outlined by Brubaker, that is Volk-centered and differentialist. The emphasis on the Volksgemeinschaft, or the people’s community, may be why the government was more lenient on language instruction from the beginning. It is clear that the people of the

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14 Bister-Broosen & Willemsy, 5.
15 Bister-Broosen & Willemsy, 5.
16 Bister-Broosen & Willemsy, 6.
regions were more receptive to a slower transition.17

On the other hand, when Alsace and Lorraine were returned to France after the Treaty of Versailles, the French government took a more interventionist approach with language to reintegrate them into France. In an article published in the *London Times*, Millerand highlighted that language was pivotal to the transition from the beginning. “She [France] finds this difference of language one of the greatest obstacles in the path of assimilation today.”18 The regions went through the process of “Frenchification” under harsh measures. Utilizing the education system as one of the primary means of reintegration, the French government initially developed strict policies, wherein “French was to be the sole language of instruction. Local teachers were forced to complete training periods in the ‘intérieur’ in order to obtain, or keep, their teaching license.”19 The ‘intérieur’ refers to the internal country of France. In addition, the French government implemented a ‘méthode directe,’ which essentially deemed the Alsatian students in the same position linguistically as the rest of France. Most of the local political parties opposed these harsh policies and did everything in their power to try to compromise with the French government. As a result of these developments, many felt a sense of linguistic insecurity in the region. “An Alsatian member of the French Senate described the situation in the following way: ‘the children are taught a language they don’t understand, and the language they do understand is not taught.’”20

Historian Alison Carrol has also highlighted the centrality of language in the French reintegration. Carrol emphasizes that under fifty years of German control, the Alsatians were educated primarily in German and spoke German or a dialect of German at home. People could not even read the French newspapers. Carrol writes, “political meetings were held in Alsatian; external speakers needed either to speak German or to have their speeches translated from French.”21 Carrol articulates that the SFIO, or Section Françoise de l’Internationale Ouvrière, wanted primary school lessons to be in German so that the students could understand the lesson, rather than suffer because they could not speak French. In addition, the students would learn French in school in a class for just a few hours a week, rather than exclusively being taught in French.22

Various linguistic policies were continuously implemented throughout the years of transition. However, there remained no official policies for preserving dialects, nor has there been policies to regulate the official language of the region in day-to-day operations.

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17 Brubaker, 1.
19 Bister-Broosen & Willemyns, 6.
20 Bister-Broosen & Willemyns, 6.
21 Carrol, 306.
22 Carrol, 309.
day life. Historian Grohmann writes, “indeed, both French and German administrations banned the use of the ‘other’ language in certain areas, but this never took the form of a blanket policy or law.”23 In fact, the linguistic policies contained a lot of loopholes. With all of the issues surrounding language, it is easier to understand why dialects fell through the cracks. Because the language remained such a national identifier, bilingualism was seen as “a means of watering down…their [France or Germany’s] respective national cultures, as well as weakening their overall control of the populations concerned.” 24 Overall, knowing the language of the country, in the circumstances after 1918, French, gave the citizen a power to prove their allegiance to France.

By 1920, the French government had enforced the French language to be instructed at all times in the Alsace and Lorraine schools. The students only received three hours of instruction in German per week, starting in the fourth grade. One exception to this method was religious education, which was permitted to be orally in German when students could not understand the French instruction. One historian argues that the majority of the population was educated in a foreign language. However, despite the discomfort felt by many Alsatians due to their lack of knowledge of French, there were benefits seen to teaching the whole population in one language. Samuel Huston Goodfellow writes that an adoption of a complete French instruction was probably the best method for the government to enforce the French language. The language was a major topic of debate through the transition, but ultimately the French method worked and within a decade, many people in the region were speaking French again.25

Les écoles primaires: A Vehicle for Reintegration

Alongside the issue of language was the topic of education. The Alsace and Lorraine school systems were the first logical place to start for reintegration in 1918. While Alsace and Lorraine were under the rule of the German government, France had fully adopted the principle of “la laïcité” or the absence of religion in government and public affairs. In the 1880’s, France adopted a policy-making primary education “free, secular and compulsory.”26 Carrol writes that the Alsatian education system, when returned to France, was very different from the rest of the country. As a result of the political and social elite retreating to France in 1871, “many priests took on a political role” to help in the transition.27 Fifty years later, when Alsace was returned

23 Grohmann, Carolyn, 126.
24 Grohmann, 129.
26 Carrol, 304.
27 Carrol, 305.
to France, the political and social elite at the time returned to Germany, leaving the region with no strong leadership. Carrol argues that the local socialist party, the SFIO, took a firm stance to eliminate religious education from school systems as a means towards reintegration. By transitioning to secular educational curriculum, the SFIO thought that the region would reintege quickly with the homeland.28

The other thought differently about the importance of secular education. The French government was more concerned about the French language and history at the time of the transition, rather than secularizing schools. Historian Stephen L. Harp writes that the two largest conflicts between the French government and the Alsace-Lorraine regions were religion and language. While France had secularized all schools in the early twentieth century, Alsace-Lorraine worked hard to keep religious education in the school system. Harp notes that the French government, “soon realized that the introduction of secular schools was, at least for the moment, far too ambitious.”29 After resistance from clerical leaders and untrained French teachers attempting to take on positions in the region, there was far too much opposition to secularize schools properly. Harp writes, “in a word, the divisive issue of confessional schools ran the risk of alienating Alsace-Lorraine from France. Long-term national integration was more important than immediate, absolute legislative assimilation.”30 The administration eventually decided that the integration of the French language in schools was a better way to spread French nationalism than implementing secular education immediately.31

Abandoning the initial idea to secularize schools in Alsace and Lorraine, the French government decided to focus on assimilation through the language and French history instead. Harp acknowledges that appointing French administrators and teachers who were loyal to France and had some knowledge of French history was important to this transition. The next portion of the process was to establish a base for the education system in the region, Strasbourg, and evaluate all of the schools to make sure they were up to government standards regarding curriculum. Harp writes that “in late 1918, the national and professional reliability of inspectors underwent close scrutiny… German inspectors were overwhelmingly Alsace-Lorrainers.”32 The government replaced all but five inspectors with Frenchmen. Due to the realities of the war and the French government’s desire to keep up with the school systems, most of the original teachers were able to keep their jobs from 1919-1920 in Alsace but were forbidden from teaching French history. Harp argues, “in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, all persons born to German parents and

28 Carrol, 299-306.
30 Harp, 194.
31 Harp, 195.
32 Harp, 187.
not Alsatians or Lorrainers, even if born in Alsace-Lorraine, did not receive French citizenship and were forced to emigrate.”  Many teachers eventually lost their jobs because of their identity and very few German citizens were permitted to naturalize as French citizens and keep their teaching positions.

Teacher’s salaries and benefits were another interesting component of the education system as a means of reintegration. Harp reveals that the teachers in Alsace and Lorraine received much higher wages, pensions, and promotions due to seniority versus their French counterparts. It was not until 1923 that, “the special status of Alsatian teachers guaranteed, and they continued to receive all of their pension and seniority rights. New teachers, those who began teaching after 1920, joined the French cadre.” The disparity in benefits created competition among teachers and it took years for the system to achieve equality in benefits between the Alsatian teachers and the French teachers.

Quelle lettre êtes-vous? The Local System of Classification

The question of language remained a challenge for years to come in the region, as well as the transition of the education system. In addition to these institutional systems, the French administration attempted to “purge” Germans from the region. The purging took place between the end of the war, November 1918, until the official enactment of the Treaty of Versailles at the beginning of 1920. French officials had a difficult time purging because it was hard to identify who was German versus who was a native Alsatian. The goal of the purging, or so the administration claims, was to eliminate Germans and those who were a threat to France to help facilitate the reintegration of the Alsace Lorrainers into France. The plan to remove foreigners from the populations in Alsace and Lorraine began very quickly after the end of the war. In an article published in the London Times on December 12, 1918, a reporter had already begun to describe how the administration was tackling foreigners, specifically Germans in the region. The article noted that children and grandchildren of French citizens would immediately be accorded French citizenship. German landowners and workers were instructed to return to Germany, for they were inherently German and now aliens.

Additionally, a categorization system was put into play as a method of organizing those who remained. Historian Boswell writes, “The purges were designed to

33 Harp, 188.
34 Harp, 186-188.
35 Harp, 191.
36 Harp, 192.
uncover those who had denounced ‘good Alsatians.’ Restoring the province to the patriotic purity so dear to the myth meant cleansing it of German influences and indigenous traitors.”

Due to fear, expulsion, or lost jobs, over 110,000 Germans returned to Germany between 1918 and 1920 and many of the Germans felt as though their Alsatian neighbors had turned on them. Boswell argues that for most Alsatians, turning on the Germans was easier than confronting the struggles of transition they were about to face.

In the midst of the purging, the new French administration in the region began to issue identity cards to “all Alsace and Lorraine residents over the age of fifteen.” The identity cards placed people in categories, A, B, C, or D. The categories mostly relied on the birthplace of the resident or their parentage. Prott writes, “‘A’ was for inhabitants who were born in Alsace-Lorraine before 1870, ‘B’ for offspring resulting from mixed marriages, ‘C’ for foreigners of neutral countries, and ‘D’ for enemy aliens, that is, Germans.” The category a person was given determined their eligibility for jobs; ability to move in and out of the region and the exchange rate one was given for the French franc. Prott details the statistics of how many people were placed in each category in the region and notes that over sixty percent of the population was considered to be class ‘A’ citizens. In addition, Prott notes that the classification system was variable and that the main goal of this categorization was to get rid of undesirable German ‘immigrants.’ Eventually, the identity cards became a hassle and sparked lots of confusion, so the administration did away with them just a short time.

While the cards were only a temporary way to distinguish people, and mostly a method of eliminating Germans, there were many negative feelings surrounding the cards. Card A was seen as the only legitimate card, making card B embarrassing for residents of that status. The identity cards sent a powerful message to residents about citizenship. Boswell writes, “the classification of the population was a divisive issue in the postwar years, because it was thought, not without reason, that identity cards would have a direct bearing on citizenship in the future.” The cards brought about a question: “What constituted Frenchness?” Nationality was more than just ethnicity in Alsace and Lorraine. Ultimately, the purges were seen as a failure, as Boswell notes, “sorting people on the basis of their national worthiness and their ethnicity—weakened social structures and severely compromised the inhabitants’ perception of

40 Boswell, 140-142.
41 Boswell, 142.
43 Prott, 154-156.
44 Boswell, 143.
the Republic.” The identity cards were intended to help, but instead divided residents of Alsace Lorraine into categories and created tensions between Alsace Lorraine and the established nationhood of France.

Another interesting component of this system of categorization was the self-run commissions de triage [triage commissions] led by the French military. These commissions were created to “sort through the local population to determine national loyalties and in some cases expel potential troublemakers.” Historian Fischer outlined the makeup of these commissions. Each was assigned two civilians and one military member, all who were supposed to know German and Alsace languages. Alsatians who chose to live in France covered the Alsace language component, or the ability for a member of the committee to speak Alsatian, of the commission; the German language piece was often overlooked. The commissions were flawed and aimed their focus on four main groups: German labor leaders, former civil servants or state employees, “cultural mediators” (teachers, religious leaders etc.,) and Alsatians who were tipped by other Alsatians. Fischer notes that over eleven thousand cases were heard between November 1918 and October 1919. The punishments ranged from local surveillance to expulsion, but “almost one-half of the cases were dismissed due to lack of evidence.” The actions of the commissions left adverse impact on the French economy. Most of the Alsatian industries, such as the railway systems and mines, fell under French control. In combination with the post-war slowdown, the economy took a hit, which increased the resentment towards the French and the transition itself.

Un Ami loyal: The Role of the Catholic Church in Alsace

In the midst of the turmoil resulting from transition, the Catholic Church became one of the most significant political actors in Alsace. The Catholic Church had played a crucial role in the region during the first transition in 1871. After Alsace and Lorraine were given to Germany, many key political figures returned to France. The Catholic Church and its leaders became a grounding force in the region. The church’s active influence made it difficult for many Alsatians to separate their faith from the regional identity. After over two decades in the German Reich, the region was losing hope of returning to France someday and started to accept their future in Germany. Historian Gaines writes, “the energies of regional politicians and activists, many of whom were Catholic priests, focused more and more upon attaining

45 Boswell, 158.
47 Fischer, 132.
48 Fischer, 132.
statehood for Alsace-Lorraine.” 49 The quest for statehood reinforced the region’s local identity and even promoted the Catholic religion. The Catholic Church continued to grow and connected people across Alsace and into Germany and Poland throughout the annexation. “The Centre, the national Catholic Party, had the singular capacity to create bridges between the German Catholic minority and the Catholic majorities of Poland and Alsace-Lorraine.” 50 The Centre maintained independence from the German Catholic party but remained involved in creating community in Alsace-Lorraine throughout the region’s time in Germany.

Religion had historically played a major role in the region. High proportions of the population in both Alsace and Lorraine unwaveringly practiced their faith, whether Catholic, Protestant or Jewish for the most part, in all areas of the region, rural and urban. Many say that the Catholic Church played a huge role not only in leadership and stability but a role in preserving the memory of France. The Church took on an important role during the 1918 transition. In 1918, the people were not immediately concerned with how the transition would take place with the Church into secular France. Many thought it would not change at all and became concerned with issues of language or education. The Concordat, the original 1801 agreement between Napoleon and the Catholic Church to preserve Catholicism in France, continued to regulate Church-state relations in Alsace, after the French government abolished the Concordat in 1905. The French government’s goal of assimilation immediately wanted to remove the Concordat, replacing it with the law of France “intérieur.” There was pushback from political parties in the region on the removal of the Concordat, so they postponed the issue. 51

When major political leaders came to Strasbourg in 1919 to discuss policies of the transition, the leaders realized the power of the clergy would be an obstacle in the transition. What would come to be known as the ‘the Alsatian malaise’ was first introduced in the regional Catholic press in January 1919. The French government’s desire for complete control over the reintegration of Alsace and Lorraine contributed to the “political disease.” “The malaise… was characterized by a pervasive sense of frustration and impotence among people who had only shortly before expected a partnership between Alsace and France, not a French annexation to replace the German one.” 52 The new French administration in the region became very unpopular and the fate of Alsatian Catholicism was brought into question. For the next five years, the Catholic party in Alsace wanted to win over the trust of the French government, without much regard to the other important issues of

50 Gaines, 209.
51 Grohmann, 130-133.
52 Gaines, 215.
bilingualism and the parochial schools. The five primary years of transition (1919-1924) were a challenge for all.\textsuperscript{53}

The initial postponement of the \textit{Concordat} returned in 1924 when the first official “direct attack on the religious status of the region was made.”\textsuperscript{54} After deliberation, disagreements between political parties in the region and pressure from the French government, the President of the French Council, Herriot, announced that the \textit{Concordat} would remain in place. This announcement was made in January of 1925. The proposal made by Herriot “triggered an outpouring of regionalist emotion, which drew attention to all areas of dissatisfaction felt among the population… as well as changes to legislation affecting the region.”\textsuperscript{55} To this day, policies from the \textit{Concordat} remain in place in Alsace and Lorraine. Because of the very active role of the Catholic Church, Alsace remains frozen in a system that is paradoxically more German than French.

\textbf{Conclusion}

While Alsace and Lorraine struggled to define their identity following the First World War, amidst outside influence from both France and Germany, they held to a strong regional character, particularly in Alsace. One historian writes that the “expression of ambivalence [toward France and Germany]… aptly characterizes Alsatian identity throughout the 1920s, 1930s, and into World War II.”\textsuperscript{56} France and Alsace and Lorraine had different expectations and hopes for the future of the region’s reunification. Millerand wrote in an article in the \textit{London Times}, “Alsatians and Lorrainers hold tenaciously to their customs… they are deeply attached to their own little country.”\textsuperscript{57} Many people identified as Alsatian, rather than explicitly French or German. Alsatian dialects across the region were common and preferred at home to whichever national language was spoken, German or French.\textsuperscript{58} The school systems attempted to remain religiously affiliated, even after the secular French government officially took over in 1919. Lastly, the regional classification system was illegitimate, and a questionable way of eliminating those who were not French. Alsace and Lorraine remain regions defined by their past, united by their language and identified by their unique architecture.\textsuperscript{59}

The four factors discussed in this essay—language, schools, categorization of citizenship, and Catholicism—heavily influenced subsequent nationalism in Alsace and Lorraine from 1918 to 1925. The language, seen as one of the most significant problem by most, connected to the language of instruction in school, or the age at

\textsuperscript{53} Gaines, 211-215.
\textsuperscript{54} Grohmann, 133.
\textsuperscript{55} Grohmann, 136.
\textsuperscript{56} Goodfellow, 132.
\textsuperscript{57} A. Millerand. “Alsace-Lorraine.”
\textsuperscript{58} Bister-Broosen & Willemyns, 3-17.
\textsuperscript{59} Carrol, 301.
which to start teaching of German or French. Alsatian Catholics were much concerned about preserving religious schools and maintaining a robust religious identity in the region. The categorization system affected employment, especially for schoolteachers, and relied on language proficiency. There were many ways that the French government worked to integrate French national ideals in the regions of Alsace and Lorraine. The government worked tirelessly to write and enforce policies to promote French allegiance. However, despite the French administration’s best efforts, Alsace and Lorraine remain, even today, are defined by their local identity and their past.
The Broadway of War
How Theater Remembers the American Revolution
Campbell Loeber ’18

Give My Regards to Broadway: An Introduction

“The Broadway musical defines our culture, and is in turn, defined by it,” wrote Laurence Maslon in the introduction to his book, Broadway: The American Musical. The author contends that Broadway plays (and to some extent musical theater in general) represent a uniquely American art, built on the backs of immigrants. Maslon further posits that American theater and American history have always been uniquely intertwined. Not only has the theater maintained a position of import in the stories of many national icons (Abraham Lincoln, for example) but it has also served as a platform for such stories. Broadway shows, in particular, have a certain aptitude for reflecting the “different social and political forces” that characterize specific generations. Due to this nature, productions can often become valuable primary sources, especially when they attempt to remember history. Such shows tend to reflect the time they were written in than the period they were intended to describe. Thus, Broadway productions can be used to assess both change and continuity in our nation’s history. Attempts to remember the American Revolution onstage are perhaps the most interesting applications of Broadway as a primary source. The plays aspire towards democratic ideals of the period, while also introducing contemporary issues such as women’s rights or foreign affairs. Productions such as Dearest Enemy, The Patriots, 1776, and Hamilton (written in respective decades of the twentieth century) thus witness a distinctly American art form collide with the defining moments of American history. As such sources offer unique insight into two time periods at once, scholars should better recognize theater as a unique tool for the historian’s craft.

Literary Liberty: The Unlikely Origins of American Drama

The origins of American theater as a primary source can be traced back to December 1829, when the first play based on American history was performed in New York. It was set during King Phillip’s War, a conflict which took place a century before the Revolution (two before Russian-born Irving Berlin would step off a boat and onto Broadway). Metamora; or, the Last of the Wampanoags, is a tragedy centered on

2 Ibid, 4.
the eponymous Indian Chief (also known as King Phillip). After its premiere, the show gained widespread popularity in the young country; performances did not cease until 1887. Historian Jill Lepore claims that much of the play’s appeal had to do with the talent of Edwin Forrest, the actor who played Metamora. In the role, he was described as both “distinctly American” and “wholly Indian.”

Audiences in the 1800s were excited by a native history belonging only to the Americas. Forrest’s iconic portrayal of the figure was inspired largely by his love of history and his patriotic view that “Our [American] literature should be independent.” The play thus marks a revolution because it signified the birth of an American form of art.

The production *The Last of the Wampanoags* shows the birth of an American theater separate from the history of Europe. It also indicates a discrepancy between history and memory. The “aboriginal heritage” depicted in the production (though painfully reductive) established America as its “own nation, with a unique culture and ancestral past.” But the production is also chronologically connected to the presidency of Andrew Jackson, who declared his policy of Indian Removal just a week before the play’s debut. The production was popular for its espousal of independent American history at a time when the very Native Americans who forged it faced systematic discrimination. Despite this tragic historical irony, the play is notable for its patriotism and aspiration towards Revolutionary American ideals—a recurring theme in American theater. This idealism would both unite the American people and inspire the inclusion of previously marginalized groups on and offstage in the twentieth century.

**Republican Mother Murray: The Great War, Suffrage, and *Dearest Enemy***

The first Revolutionary War play of the twentieth century did not focus on a Founding Father, but instead, on the concept of republican motherhood. The comedy appropriately highlighted women’s contributions to the Independence effort. Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart’s musical, *Dearest Enemy*, is the tale of Mary Lindley Murray, a New York widow who distracted British General William Howe “with her tea and her charms.” The play is based on a story from Revolutionary period folklore. Both the play and the original story credit Murray with preoccupying Howe and his troops long enough for General Washington to cross the state to meet reinforcements. The play embellishes the original tale by introducing an extended cast of young women to aid in the effort of detaining the British troops. Rodgers and Hart also suggest unlikely romantic relationships between several of the Patriot women and the redcoats. Despite these enhancements, the musical does indicate the

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4 Ibid., 194.
5 Ibid., 205
changing perception of women’s role in American society following the Suffrage movement and World War I.

*Dearest Enemy* premiered on Broadway in 1925, ten years after an initial suffrage bill in the House failed to reach the required two-thirds majority to pass. But the decade between this failure and the debut of *Dearest Enemy* was one of immense change for American women. By the time the musical opened in New York, “Americans were setting new standards for themselves—what their homes should look like, how they should dress, and even what it meant to be an American.”7 Women redefined their status in the democracy by continuing to fight for and ultimately gaining the right to vote in 1918. The Nineteenth Amendment was partially made possible by American involvement in the Great War. Women served as nurses, clerks, and volunteers in the army. The Suffragettes collected war bonds and rationed food. President Woodrow Wilson pointed to the female contribution during the conflict as evidence of the need for equality, stating: “We have made partners of women in this war... Shall we admit them only to a partnership of suffering, sacrifice, and toil and not to a partnership of privilege and right?”8

Rodgers and Hart’s production asks the same question from the audience that President Wilson asked. The creators purposefully characterized their British soldiers (the only male characters) as exceedingly patronizing to the American women they encounter, thereby associating the Old World to an oppressive order. In one exchange, General Howe asks his scout whether the house he has discovered belongs to Whigs or Tories. When the scout tells him that the house is full of women, Howe chuckles and replies, “Oh, it doesn’t matter then!”9 The two male leads (Howe and Captain Sir John Copeland) never suspect that their hostesses are in communication with the Patriots. An audience in 1925 would have recognized the sexism associated with the British characters as a symbol for the patriarchal society that only recently granted the fair sex the right to vote.

In choosing this narrative of the American Revolution, the creators of *Dearest Enemy* celebrated progress while also portraying enduring expectations of the feminine. Lorenz and Hart, like most performance artists of the 1920s, “reflected for the country an image of its most refined ideals of female beauty, an image that still exists, a century later.”10 The musical underscores that the women’s greatest weapons are twofold—their beauty and their cooking. To keep the attention of the British troops, the female Patriots flirt. In a pivotal moment, the ladies capture a British spy. In order to extort information from him, they tie him up in the kitchen and bring in

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7 Kantor and Manslon, 18.
10 Kantor and Manslon, 20.
trays of rich food. The soldier, surviving on his meager rations, cannot resist the feast and divulges his information. It is a comic moment emphasizing a traditional female role; “Only women could think of this torture!”\textsuperscript{11} Considering the many female contributions to World War I outside of the kitchen, the forward-thinking musical still shows an evident generational bias.

**Liberty Must Be Refreshed: Premiering *The Patriots* While Fighting Fascism**

The next musical set during the Revolutionary War did not appear for another forty-five years. But during World War II a straight play gained recognition for its focus on a specific Founding Father. On April 13, 1943, Franklin Delano Roosevelt stood up to address a crowd in Washington D.C. The president began: “Today, in the midst of a great war for freedom, we dedicate a shrine to freedom. To Thomas Jefferson, Apostle of Freedom, we are paying a debt long overdue.”\textsuperscript{12} The dedication of the Jefferson Memorial was held on his two hundredth birthday. At the time of the ceremony, the United States had been actively involved in the Second World War for nearly two years. One soldier, in particular, was invited to sit in the President’s box at the inauguration of the memorial. Sergeant Sidney Kingsley was honored not for skill in combat, but rather for crafting his play, *The Patriots*, which centered on Thomas Jefferson. The writer of the Declaration of Independence proved to be an appropriate hero for the generation facing Adolph Hitler and European fascism.

Unlike its predecessor, *Dearest Enemy*, Kingsley’s play is not a musical. *The Patriots* is darker in tone than the escapist production of the roaring twenties. The playwright believed the Founding Fathers to be enlightened philosophers, and thus depicted them as such. Premiering on Broadway in June 1943, the release of *The Patriots* coincided with the Allies’ strategy of Island Hopping in the Pacific arena and attacks on German industrial centers in Europe. Seventy-three percent of U.S. military personnel (which consisted of approximately nine million Americans by 1943) were deployed overseas.\textsuperscript{13} Audience would thus likely associate with a characterized Thomas Jefferson, who is looking forward to being reunited with his family at the start of *The Patriots*.

The play opens in 1790 with Jefferson’s return from France. The politician’s plans to relax at Monticello are interrupted by the call of duty when George Washington asks him to become the Secretary of State in his new administration. Jefferson acquiesces and leads a force against the advance of monarchism abroad. His crusade against the rise of European monarch could easily

\textsuperscript{11} Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, *Dearest Enemy* (film).
\textsuperscript{12} Franklin D. Roosevelt, 37th Address at the Dedication of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, April 13, 1943.
be likened to the American campaign against European fascism. The vengeful British crown and failing French Monarchy might have been analogous to Nazi Germany for viewers of the 1940s. The play culminates in Jefferson’s election in 1800, marking the first presidential victory of the Democratic-Republican Party (from which FDR’s Democratic Party descended). Roosevelt pointed to these similarities in his dedication speech, saying: “Our generation of Americans can understand much in Jefferson’s life which intervening generations could not see as well as we.”

Despite the parallels between Jefferson’s life and the American situation during World War II, Kingsley claimed that he did not initially set out to create a play highlighting Jefferson. In a 1988 interview at his home, the playwright reflected on his work in the context of the American atmosphere during the war:

At that time democracy was being challenged and questioned, and was a good party of thinking that it couldn’t stand up to the single mind of fascism and or communism. And so I determined to write a play about it to see if I could find out for myself what it [Democracy] really was. I didn’t intend to write a play about Thomas Jefferson, it just happened that way.

As the playwright claims his work was based on national sentiments, the naturally occurring focus on Jefferson speaks to the link between the generation and the specific Founding Father. This connection between America in the 1940s and Thomas Jefferson is solidified by the quote on the Jefferson Memorial. The site is marked with the words: “I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man.” The impact of Jefferson is most direct in the post-war years. After the atrocities of World War II, the language of the Declaration of Independence and its assertion of inalienable rights became more applicable and desirable for people around the world. In subsequent years, Jefferson’s rhetorical influence would extend to the newly formed United Nations’ paramount document—the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**Sit Down, Johnson: 1776, L.B. J, and Congressional Consent**

“I have come to the conclusion that one useless man is called a disgrace. That two are a called a law firm, and three or more become a congress!” So begins a theatrical John Adam’s iconic number “Sit Down, John,” in the musical, 1776. While the line initially seems to be a humorous insight into the strident historical character, it takes on a greater meaning in the context of contemporary events in the late 1960s.

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14 Franklin D. Roosevelt, 37th Address.
15 Sidney Kingsley was interviewed by Mike Wood in February of 1988. Interview segments are courtesy of the William Inge Center for the Arts in Independence, Kansas. Accessed via: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4njiNqevOE
16 Franklin D. Roosevelt, 37th Address.
American Revolution on Broadway

Peter Stone and Sherman Edwards’s play debuted on Broadway in 1969, the year after the general election. President Johnson had just left the White House after six years. He had opted not to run for reelection in 1968, though he had overwhelmingly won the popular vote in 1964. Johnson was as unpopular as ever. The war in Vietnam continued. Cold War tensions ran high, while national pride was at an all-time low. The patriotic production appeared at a moment when the ideals of the Revolution would have been particularly appealing. Analysis of the play in its historical context shows protagonist John Adams as a sort of foil for Lyndon B. Johnson.

According to *Time Magazine*, LBJ had the potential for greatness. In 1965, the president was named “Man of the Year” by the publication for the first time. The cover story narrates a story of a teacher turned politician who became president of the United States by chance. Due to his southern roots, Johnson did not have the support (though *Time* claimed he had the political acumen) to win the presidency. He was put on the Kennedy ticket as a vice presidential candidate, unaware that an assassination would eventually catapult him to the role of Commander-in-Chief. The article depicts Johnson as a humble man, carrying “the torch of continuity” for his beloved predecessor. The president was also characterized by his exceptional work ethic, as illustrated by his initial eagerness to converse with congress. But the magazine admits that Johnson is not without his quirks. Like President John Adams, he was found to be extremely temperamental, compared to “a geyser at perpetual boil.” Johnson was a progressive, though not a radical. He desired harmony between the three branches of government as he tackled domestic issues of Civil Rights and education.

Three years (almost to the day) after the original article, *Time Magazine* once again featured President Johnson on its cover. But this time, the stoic pastoral profile of Johnson was replaced with a political cartoon. Johnson was caricatured as William Shakespeare’s King Lear—an English monarch in the process of going mad. “The Prudent Progressive,” had become a theatrical parody. Americans were dismayed at Johnson’s use of executive power, which earned him a new nickname (“King Lyndon”). The war in Vietnam was the nation’s most unpopular conflict to date. By 1967, it was also a war without specific congressional consent. It would seem that Johnson considered Congress to be as useless as 1776’s Adams asserts. This lack of endorsement encouraged public disapproval. The war already stood out as an anomaly amongst a series of American victories in the name of freedom.

19 Ibid., 20.
21 Ibid., 20.
22 “Man of the Year: Lyndon B. Johnson, the Paradox of Power,” *Time Magazine*. 
Furthermore, as Vietnam was considered a fight against encroaching Communism, it would seem as though LBJ faced a foreign threat to American democracy which might be linked to the reign of King George III.

Enter John Adams, stage right. At a time of “depressed national spirit” this particular Founding Father became an appropriate hero. Adams and Johnson both started as vice presidents to their legendary predecessors. They both left office significantly less popular than when they were elected. The two had exceptionally loving relationships with their wives, exhibiting unconventional equity in their married lives (a departure from the dually unequal duo of Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings). And both politicians garnered a good deal of criticism from their supporters and opponents alike. But unlike Johnson’s inhibiting, impetuous personality, Adam’s brazen approach led to many political successes. His conviction is depicted by Stone and Edwards as the force behind the American Declaration of Independence. He is portrayed as the ultimate protector of American interests. This image would have resonated with an audience that had just emerged from the Johnson years (and would soon experience the scandals of the Nixon administration).

An audience in 1969 was treated to a performance in the classic style of American musical theater, which was typical of the fifties and sixties. 1776 is set in the summer of the titular year. Action takes place at various spots around Philadelphia. The musical numbers are often punctuated by Church bells—evoking images of Philadelphia as a shining city upon a hill. John Adams is usually at the center of attention, pushing constantly for the Congress to vote for independence. Through musical numbers, Adams’s relationship to his world is effectively established. His aforementioned opening number “Sit Down, John,” presents his character’s objective (his push for American independence). Through song he exchanges letters with his beloved wife, Abigail. Even amidst the sexual revolution, this female character epitomizes a domestic colonial life. Once the vote is finally cast in his favor, John oversees the drafting of the declaration by a young Thomas Jefferson. Though the situation looks bleak, the Congress validates the document. The play closes with the signing of the Declaration as the Liberty Bell is rung.

John Adams is presented as the very antithesis of Lyndon B. Johnson. In these select months of 1776, he is pictured as the meticulous politician who reached his potential. Adams is characterized by his passionate attempts at persuasion, possibly linking him to an early Johnson (who was once praised for his ability to negotiate). Yet, Adams never acts without the consent of his fellow representatives, despite his frustrations. On a subtler note, Adams is always connected to the cosmopolitan. For instance, at one point in the play, he becomes appalled at Virginian Thomas Jefferson’s apparent intimacy with his wife in the afternoon. To this Benjamin

23 Ibid., 36.
Franklin humorously responds, “Not everybody’s from Boston, John!” According to *Time Magazine*, many Americans interested in urbanization were disappointed that a Texan had taken over for another Bostonian—John F. Kennedy. These factors might have revitalized interest in John Adams.

The play and its protagonist were met with widespread acclaim. By 1972, a movie adaptation was released. Whether or not it was through a conscious association, audiences loved *1776*’s John Adams for what they viewed was lacking in President Johnson. This point is most accurately illustrated in November 10, 1972 issue of the *New York Times*. Vincent Canby’s film review provides insight into the theatrical merit of *1776*. Canby negatively rates the music, lyrics, and playbook, but claims the movie is nonetheless quite notable:

> … [It] insists on being so entertaining, and at times, even moving, that you might as well stop resisting it. This reaction, I suspect, represents clear triumph of emotional associations over material.25

The review goes on to explain that the accomplishment of the Founding Fathers gave a certain weight to the play. It is American exceptionalism, an idea lost with Vietnam under Johnson, which permeates in this otherwise unexceptional piece of theater. It is likely that this concept inspired feelings of nostalgia for a generation raised on politicians and war heroes like Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower. John Adams was a refreshing reminder of the national resolve. Since the Revolution, Americans had fought through civil war, world wars, and even ideological wars. It is hard to imagine that folks leaving the theater in 1969 would not be reassured that Uncle Sam could also handle Victor Charlie.

**Who Tells Your Story? *Hamilton*’s Multiple Perspectives**

In December of 2008, *Time Magazine* once again featured an American president on its cover. The same publication that once praised Lyndon B. Johnson for his policies regarding Civil Rights was now reporting on a president who truly embodied the movement. Barack Obama made history when he was elected the first African American president of the United States. A few weeks later he was named *Time*’s “Person of the Year.” The self-evident truths of equality championed by the rhetoric of the American Revolution had finally manifested in the highest echelon of American politics. Despite the cultural significance of the election, which “ushered the country across a momentous symbolic line,” Americans faced financial troubles that threatened the most cherished national concept of “boundless opportunity.”26 According to *Time*, Obama faced the most difficult first year in the Oval Office of any president since Franklin Roosevelt. The American economy was in the middle of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Cue Alexander Hamilton,

the Father of American Banking.

One year after his election, President Obama invited a young composer to perform at the White House. Lin-Manuel Miranda was expected to showcase a segment from his Tony-award winning musical *In the Heights*, a cultural homage to the barrios of New York City. Instead, Miranda proceeded to rap about the life of Alexander Hamilton. Manuel’s piece would later become the opening number to *Hamilton: An American Musical*, the 2015 show based on a biography by Ron Chernow. The concept of the musical was to promote inclusivity in American history—issues of remembrance and storytelling are major themes. The plot follows Alexander Hamilton from the earliest days of the Revolution until his death (in a duel against Aaron Burr). Through song, *Hamilton* provides perspectives of many actors in Hamilton’s life—from his female family members to his murdor. The show details Hamilton’s various contributions to the young nation he helped to establish. Though still the representative of Wall Street, Hamilton appears in an unfamiliar form.

Arguably the most groundbreaking choice in Miranda’s adaptation is the casting. In the original production, the composer (who is of Puerto Rican descent) played the title character. The rest of the cast was mainly comprised of “talented actors and actresses of color who joined him onstage to portray other long-dead white people.”27 The summer following *Hamilton*’s debut, Miranda was interviewed in his dressing room at the Richard Rodgers Theater (named for the lyricist of *Dearest Enemy*). He told *Rolling Stone* that the casting of the show reflects the current image of the nation, making history more relatable for viewers. Miranda’s perspective is a far cry from Franklin Roosevelt’s desire to memorialize Thomas Jefferson in pale white stone, as he believes: “The people we call Founding Fathers are these mythic figures—but they were people. I think the casting of the show humanizes them, they’re not these distant marble creatures.”28 Just as *Dearest Enemy* put the only male cast members in redcoats, the only Caucasian actors play King George and his loyalists. For an audience that witnessed and participated in the election of the first African American president, *Hamilton* is an experience that embraces all backgrounds.

Alexander Hamilton became the face of this project because of his background, which Miranda details in the opening number:

How does a bastard, orphan, son of a whore and a Scotsman, dropped in the middle of a forgotten Spot in the Caribbean by providence, impoverished, in squalor Grow up to be a hero and a scholar? The ten-dollar Founding Father without a father Got a lot farther by working a lot harder…29

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28 Ibid.
Starting as an immigrant with nothing but his untapped potential, Alexander Hamilton would go on to found institutions of finance in what would become one of the wealthiest nations in the world. For a public facing a depressed economy, this ascent would be particularly appealing. Hamilton’s status was often questioned; his fellow Federalist John Adams even referred to him as a “Creole bastard” (to which Miranda’s Hamilton stridently responds: “Sit down, John you fat mother—”). But the Founding Father’s unique origins and the story also allow the play to address two modern issues that the composer calls America’s “Original Sins”— the legacy of slavery and gun control. Miranda states that memory of the slave trade is integrated into the show starting in the third line, “Every day while slaves were being slaughtered and carted away...” In addition to the aforementioned casting, Hamilton highlights lesser-known founding figures like John Laurens, a vocal critic of slavery, to comment on issues of race. Miranda also claims that contemporary audiences are made painfully aware that “guns are responsible for all of the deaths” onstage.

The female perspective provides another link between the life of the Founding Father and the modern day. The show often (somewhat humorously) points to the unequal status of women; “Its eighteen hundred, ladies, tell your husbands, ‘Vote for Burr!’” Hamilton also features two leading ladies; both Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton and her sister, Angelica Schuyler, are given multiple solos that promote them as individuals while speaking to women’s history. The most notable example of this comes when Angelica is admiring the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, and when I meet Thomas Jefferson, I’m a compel him to include women in the sequel!” Her character is constantly seeking an intellectual partner. Eliza, too, is portrayed as more accomplished than the women of Dearest Enemy or even 1776. After her husband’s death in 1804, she went on to live another fifty years. The show credits her for her “proudest accomplishment”— the first private orphanage in New York City. These influential female roles debuted on Broadway just as the first female candidate won a presidential nomination. It seemed that Obama’s historic election was to be followed by that of another pivotal politician— Hillary Rodham Clinton.

By November 2016, Mike Pence, a vice president-elect was attending a performance of Hamilton in New York City. Unbeknownst to Pence, the vice president-elect was going to have an audience with the actors. At the end of the production, one of the performers went off script to address the politician. Brandon Victor Dixon, the African American actor portraying Aaron Burr, addressed Pence

30 Ibid.
31 Simon Vozick-Levinson, “Revolution on Broadway.” 16
32 Ibid., 24.
33 Lin-Manuel Miranda, Hamilton (Soundtrack).
34 Ibid.
as a concerned citizen:

We, sir, are the diverse America; alarmed and anxious that your new administration will not protect us and uphold our inalienable rights. We truly hope that this show has inspired you to uphold our American values and to work on behalf of all of us.35

In the wake of the divisive 2016 election, Dixon’s speech vocalized the plight of many citizens in the United States. Donald J. Trump had been elected president after an unusually contemptuous campaign cycle. Trump’s platform for immigration reform, trade reform, and tax reform combined with his outlandish rhetoric alienated many of the individuals that Miranda’s production hoped to include. But it is perhaps most interesting that this speech came from the actor portraying a most flawed statesman, and the killer of Alexander Hamilton. In the musical Burr is characterized as an opportunistic politician. Throughout the play, he repeats the line: “Talk less, smile more. Don’t let them know what you’re against or what you’re for,” emphasizing his crookedness.36 Burr is a complicated figure, filled with remorse by the finale of the show (which marks the end of Hamilton’s life). Though coincidental, perhaps this connection between Burr and modern politicians is an indication that the country can survive and thrive even in the face of adversity.

The Collective Memory: In Conclusion

“Characters are the masks worn by moral philosophies,” quotes Andrew J. Bacevich in his book on American warfare, *Breach of Trust*, “They describe those social roles which provide a culture with its moral definition.”37 Similarly, in the book *Democracy in America*, author Alexis De Tocqueville claims, “The effect of democracy is generally to question the authority of all literary rulers and convention; on the stage it abolishes them.”38 The characters from the American Revolution who have been brought to life on Broadway do describe the philosophies of the age in which they were created. And, as evidenced in the analysis above, they also espouse different aspects of the American Revolution. Broadway does have a unique capability for challenging authority, but it does not abolish this authority. If anything, the shows can more adequately bring marginalized groups into the fold of American history. The interpretations offer a solution to a longstanding problem in the study of history: no longer is history solely written by the victors. Collectively, Revolutionary War plays on Broadway are a useful and effective memorial, juxtaposing a variety of perspectives to remember America’s resounding democratic ideals.

Manufacturing Progress, Prosperity, and Pride
The Social Construction of Worcester’s Industrial Identity, 1850-1910
Michael T. DeSantis ’18

“Worcester is essentially a manufacturing city, and, as such, one of the most important of American cities... The industrial life of the city has beat with strong, unflagging pulsation through the years that have passed. The character and intelligence of the people have made Worcester what she is: Foremost among manufacturing cities; first among American inland cities.”

—Worcester Board of Trade, 1906

As the midpoint of the nineteenth century approached, several ongoing changes forced the residents of Worcester, Massachusetts, to reconsider their city’s identity with regards to its economic activity. From its very founding, Worcester fashioned itself as a town friendly to tradesmen. However, the emerging realities of social and economic life made this identity untenable. The city’s population more than quadrupled from 1830 to 1850, growing from just over 4,000 in 1830 to around 7,500 in 1840 and 17,000 in 1850. Because of this expanding population, the former town...
of Worcester officially became incorporated as a city in 1848. The transition from small, rural town to burgeoning urban center meant that in Worcester, like nearby Springfield, the experience of community “was changing from an informal, direct sensation to a formal, perceived abstraction.” This left one important question unanswered: what form would this “perceived abstraction” of the Worcester community take? Considering Worcester’s rise as a city resulted almost entirely from industrial development and many locals had long prided themselves on the city’s craftsmanship, the obvious answer was that of a manufacturing city. As the opening quotation from the Worcester Board of Trade suggests, Worcester would eventually become primarily known as an industrial city that took pride in its productive capacity.

However, Worcester’s industry-driven growth into a city occurred at a time when Americans already possessed an abstract notion of “manufacturing cities,” one that bore a series of almost exclusively negative moral and social connotations. In part, Americans feared manufacturing cities because of accounts that described conditions in English industrial centers, such as Manchester and Liverpool, as being both physically debased and morally corrupt. Americans believed that the concentration of large numbers of poorly educated workers in cities would lead these people to engage in a range of vices that violated Protestant Christian codes of propriety. Adding to the moral quandary of industrial development was the fact that the form and function of manufacturing cities appeared to be at odds with the grand republican experiment of the early United States. In many ways, the Jeffersonian ideal of a decentralized agrarian republic of yeoman farmers represented the opposite of manufacturing cities with their capital-holding industrialists and concentrated working-class populations.

As a result, anxieties and uncertainties about the moral implications of life in manufacturing cities delayed the emergence of an industrial identity in Worcester. Over time, newspaper writers, business people, advertisers, and other commentators in Worcester managed local anxieties about the transition towards an urbanized industrial economy and society by positively redefining the term “manufacturing city.” Through the careful construction of narratives about Worcester as a “manufacturing city,” writers developed an industrial identity for the city that aligned with the evolving American vision of the republican nation. These commentators claimed that industrial development would produce social progress, material prosperity, moral propriety, and community pride for all Worcesterites. But, in doing so, these narratives obscured the class divisions in the local community that unequally distributed the economic benefits of industrialization.

Prologue: Material and Moral Anxieties about “Manufacturing Cities” in Worcester, 1829-1850

Worcester newspapers expressed fears about the physical conditions of “manufacturing cities” based upon images of such cities in England that were widely distributed in the United States. In 1832, the *National Aegis* described the working conditions in England as “an atmosphere loaded with the smoke and exhalations of a large manufacturing city.” ⁴ Not only was such an atmosphere aesthetically displeasing, but it was also a danger to the inhabitants’ health because city life forced the English working class to be “crowded into one dense mass, in cottages separated by narrow, unpaved, and almost pestilential streets.” ⁵ The wellbeing of workers represented the Worcester newspaper’s main concern about life in English manufacturing cities, which is unsurprising considering local conceptions of labor emphasized the dignity and material prosperity of working people.

In addition to the polluted atmospheres and crowded housing units of centralized manufacturing cities, the *Aegis* also expressed fears about working conditions in these cities’ large factories. As with the state of cities themselves, the *Aegis* worried that large factories possessed displeasing and dangerous physical conditions. The newspaper wrote that urban English workers “are congregated in rooms and workshops during twelve hours in the day, in an enervating, heated atmosphere, which is frequently loaded with dust or filaments of cotton, or impure from constant respiration, or from other causes.” ⁶ The *Aegis* also underscored that factory work was dehumanizing by its very nature, saying that factory workers were “engaged in an employment which absorbs their attention, and unremittingly employs their physical energies.” ⁷ The total sacrifice to the whims of the factory caused anxieties because it challenged the prevailing belief in Worcester, demonstrated by the tenets of the Worcester Mechanics Association, that workers should live well-rounded lives with opportunities for education, recreation, and religious worship. Such a view also would have made it difficult for any Worcesterites who believed the *Aegis*’ view of English manufacturing cities to desire for the town of Worcester to grow into such a place.

While the Worcester press expressed serious concerns about the material and labor conditions in manufacturing cities, local newspapers were most troubled by the supposed corrupting influence of these material conditions on workers living in emerging cities. Once again, the Worcester press first expressed their fears while discussing English manufacturing cities. In 1829, the *Massachusetts Spy*, a Worcester newspaper, described these new urban centers as “vast manufacturing cities in which

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⁵ Ibid.
⁶ Ibid.
⁷ Ibid.
the laboring classes are collected together, forming the crowded population, which is always favorable in commercial as well as manufacturing cities to the increase of immorality and vice.” Similar connections that linked the crowded population of manufacturing cities to an increase in general immorality appeared repeatedly in the Worcester press, as well as other American newspapers, over the next three decades. During this period, the threat of the morally corrupting influence of manufacturing cities took on a new urgency with the emergence of nearby Lowell as a large-scale industrial center with sizable factories. National Aegis in 1839 ran a report on Lowell which said, “The progress of this manufacturing City [sic] must be viewed with great interest and some anxiety,” because the working people in the city resembled “a class of people that in other countries have been led by their conditions into depraved habits.”

In Lowell, industrialists dealt with the potential corrupting influences of industrialization by hiring a workforce comprised almost entirely of young, single women. Factory owners employed individual women from the surrounding area for a few short years at a time in order to create a high rate of turnover that prevented the city from developing the type of entrenched proletariat vilified in accounts of English manufacturing cities. Despite some fears about the ways in which factory work undermined traditional notions of womanhood, the Lowell strategy of hiring women generally received praise for its supposed role in maintaining the city’s virtue. As Jocelyn M. Boryczka writes, “Owing largely to the moral excellence of these female workers, foreign visitors such as Charles Dickens, Harriet Martineau, and Michel Chevalier depicted Lowell as superior to the corrupt, degraded, miserable conditions of European industrial cities such as Manchester, England.” However, the structure of social and economic life prevented Worcesterites from following a similar approach since Worcester was a residential community with mechanics shops far smaller than the massive Lowell textiles mills. Worcesterites needed a way to assuage anxieties that they themselves would become morally corrupted as their city continued to grow both in terms of population and industrial output.

The Worcester press responded to fears over the potential of manufacturing cities to morally corrupt their large working-class populations by suggesting several ways that American society could manage the corrupting influences of industrialization. Before Worcester’s own growth into a city, local newspapers suggested that the immorality of densely populated industrial cities could be avoided by maintaining an economic and social structure in which manufacturing operations and the population were physically dispersed. The Spy noted that American industrial

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8 “Manufacturers,” Massachusetts Spy, May 13, 1829, 1.
Worcester's Industrial Identity

development was following this trajectory in the same article in which it posited that the crowding of populations into English manufacturing cities led to “the increase of immorality and vice.” The Spy wrote, “The manufacturing operations in the United States are all carried on in little hamlets, which often appear to spring up in the bosom of some forest, gathered around the water fall [sic] that serves to turn the mill wheel.” Although it did not possess a water fall or natural water source to power its industry like the idyllic forest towns described by the Spy, Worcester resembled one of these “little hamlets” in size when this article appeared in 1829. Officially still a town, the municipality’s population had just reached approximately 4,000 residents.

The Spy believed that a small population such as this could prevent the widespread immorality associated with large urban areas. Manufacturing cities, according to the Spy, dispersed responsibility for enforcing moral standards in the community, whereas there existed a “marked ignominy that is usually visited so heavily upon the guilty in the narrow circle of a small community or country village.” The notion that American industrial development should be centered in small communities extended beyond Worcester in the decades before the Civil War. Eric Foner has demonstrated that the Republican Party of the 1850’s also “believed that industrial development should take place within the context of the society with which they were familiar” and that party members therefore “rejected the idea that industrialization and the rise of great cities and large factories necessarily went hand in hand.” Unfortunately, the belief in a dispersed, town-based industrial development could only assuage fears about the immorality associated with manufacturing cities as long as Worcester remained a town.

In 1839, the National Aegis put forth a more sustainable view for managing the immorality associated with manufacturing cities. Discussing the growth of Lowell and the potential for this development to corrupt the working-class of the city, the Aegis said, “How far the influence of republican principles and habits may tend to elevate the condition and sustain the self-respect of a class of people that in other countries have been led by their conditions into depraved habits, remains to be determined.” Again, the Worcester press demonstrated the widespread influence of republican ideology and the belief that practices derived from such an ideology served as a path towards moral behavior. Although the Aegis did not explicitly state the ways in which “republican principles” would help the residents of manufacturing cities lead moral lives, seemingly the most important of these values were self-

12 “Manufacturers,” Massachusetts Spy, May 13, 1829, 1.
13 Population data from federal census.
14 “Manufacturers,” Massachusetts Spy, May 13, 1829, 1.
restraint and the ability of individual citizens to resist the supposed temptations of densely populated urban areas. According to various Worcester newspapers of the era, urban residents required self-restraint to resist the temptation to engage in a variety of behaviors found in manufacturing cities including a self-indulgent pursuit of monetary wealth, theft, excessive consumption of alcohol, violence, and idleness. The new focus on republican principles and self-restraint, though still uniquely American in nature, represented a more sustainable vision for preventing the immorality associated with English manufacturing cities in Worcester as it grew into a manufacturing city itself.

The Pursuit of Progress Legitimizes Worcester’s Emergence as a “Manufacturing City”

Interestingly enough, local newspapers and other writers generally discussed the emergence of Worcester as a manufacturing city in positive terms by praising the moral qualities supposedly required to ensure this prosperity. Only a few years after the incorporation of Worcester as a city, the Spy predicted in 1851, “At no distant day, Worcester is destined to be one of the most important manufacturing cities in the Union.” The Spy spent much of the early 1850s printing similar articles which lauded the growth of manufacturing industries in Worcester. This represented a noticeable metamorphosis in the Spy’s position on manufacturing cities. The Spy celebrated industrial development for its “important” contributions to the advancement of the material wellbeing of society. The evolution in the Spy’s thinking about industrialization reflected a similar evolution in the ideology of the Republican Party.

The best example of the Spy’s early efforts to promote Worcester industry, the five-piece “Worcester in its Shirt-sleeves” series, also appeared in 1851. Printed between April 30 and June 9, 1851, the series highlighted five prominent manufacturing companies in the young city. These articles represented a liminal phase in the discursive development of the city’s industrial identity. Although the series, like other accounts published in the 1850s, did not yet christen Worcester as a “manufacturing city,” they prepared the way for the local community to accept the label as a self-defined point of pride rather than a pejorative imposed by outsiders. The “Worcester in its Shirt-sleeves” series highlighted the existence and diversity of manufacturing firms across the city. The series demonstrated to the Worcester community that these industries were important and worthy of recognition both through the narratives contained within the stories and, more simply, through the very act of committing five front-page articles to city’s manufacturers. Further, the series made the developing industrial character of the city appealing by emphasizing

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18 “Public Spirit,” Massachusetts Spy, June 4, 1851, 2.
two supposed benefits of the city’s manufacturing interests: “progress” and “prosperity.” These two intertwined narratives reflected the allegiance of the *Spy* to the Republican Party and an embrace of the latest development in the Party’s thinking about industry. As Eric Foner says, the Republican Party of the 1850s came to view industrialization as essential to the economic growth of the United States and adopted the related “view that for a society as for individuals, economic progress was a measure of moral worth.” The progress and prosperity narratives of Worcester’s industrial development came to dominate histories and descriptions of Worcester during the latter half of the nineteenth century, eventually becoming inseparable from local ideas about the city and its identity.

In the progress narrative, writers positioned the manufacturing industry as the city’s main source of growth, both in terms of size and in terms of importance. In fact, the “Worcester in its Shirt-sleeves” series began by framing the surprising industrial development of the inland city in terms of progress:

Strangers visiting Worcester, often ask the question of its denizens—‘What do the people do here.’ To visitors accustomed to associate all their ideas of business with salt water and waterfalls—with the white sails of commerce and the ponderous roll of giant water-wheels, it is always a matter of surprise that an inland town like Worcester should show such indications of thrift and prosperity, that its business should be continually on the increase, and the quiet stillness of its rural environs should be constantly encroached upon by the march of improvement, and the din of business.

As first articulated by the *Spy*, the Worcester press came to view the manufacturing industry as the driving force in the development of Worcester.

According to the “Worcester in its Shirt-sleeves” series, the progress of industry in Worcester possessed importance because it not only led to the further growth of the city but also developments in technological and material rewards as well. For starters, the city’s manufacturers directly contributed to the material wellbeing of people within but mostly outside Worcester by engaging in the “production of those articles of convenience and comfort which find a ready market everywhere.” Even when they did not purchase Worcester-made products themselves, the workers in Worcester benefitted. Workers and their families primarily benefitted from the growth of Worcester industries by securing wages on which they could support their families. The series made note of the number of people whose livelihoods were supported by each of the profiled manufacturing firms with statements such as “[the business] keeps the pot boiling for some fifty or more thriving families” and “The establishment gives employment at the present time to about one hundred men in

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19 Foner calls the *Spy* a “radical” Republican newspaper on p. 114.
20 Ibid., 39.
22 “Ibid.
23 “Worcester in its Shirt-sleeves, No. 4: The Carriage Builders,” *Worcester Daily Spy*, May 9, 1851.
all the various departments, most of whom have families, and whose wages average higher than that of workmen engaged in most of the mechanical trades elsewhere."24 Thus, the “Worcester in its Shirt-sleeves” series helped craft an early version of the prosperity narrative of Worcester’s development. In this narrative that would become ubiquitous in accounts about Worcester by the end of the century, commentators claimed that the manufacturing industry provided the city of Worcester and its residents of all classes with not only essential material goods but also with some respectable amount of material luxury not found in other locales.

However, in the eyes of the Spy, Worcesterites did not simply reap the benefits of the city’s industrial development. Instead, the “Worcester in its Shirt-sleeves” series consistently presented the city’s workers as the agents responsible for Worcester’s industrial and financial growth. The Spy explained the process through which Worcester gained prosperity from manufacturing by stating:

the prosperity of Worcester rests upon the strong arms and clear heads of her artizans [sic]; and that while they toil to shape from the crude forms of nature, from the ore of the mine and the timber of the forest, articles of comfort, convenience and luxury, for the markets of the world, for which the world is ready to pour into their homes, cash or its equivalent, in exchange, our city must go on prospering and to prosper.25

Notably, the Spy viewed the city’s “artisans” as the agents of Worcester’s growth in the early 1850s at which point the city’s economy was still dominated by craftsmen and their small shops. As we will see, later narratives would position elites such as industrialists, capitalists, and traders as the agents responsible for Worcester’s development. As the agents of Worcester’s development in the early narrative presented in the “Worcester in its Shirt-sleeves” series, artisans possessed valuable moral attributes. The series described the positive moral influence of the city’s artisans and their work on the development of the city by writing, “the demand for their labor has been the means of attracting to our young and growing city an industrial population whose moral qualities have given to its character a high name in the calendar, for public spirit and private enterprise.”26 Such qualities broke sharply from the vices associated with the “industrial population” in English manufacturing cities and demonstrated a shifting attitude towards acceptance of the industrial workers in Worcester.

The Spy did not view these emerging industries and its envisioned future of Worcester as a manufacturing city through the lens of fears and anxieties with which the Aegis had earlier observed the development of Lowell. Instead, the Spy explicitly argued that Worcester should embrace its industrial present and future. In fact, the

Spy printed its article to announce its support for the construction of a new industrial building and began the piece by saying, “We are glad to learn that the contemplated enterprise of erecting a spacious and substantial building for manufacturing purposes, and furnishing it with an engine of great power, meets with deserved encouragement from all quarters.”27 The Spy also lauded both Worcester’s business climate at that moment as well as those who would be attracted to it by stating, “at the present time even, we believe there is scarcely another place which can offer so many inducements for men of industry and enterprise to settle.”28

This represented a dramatic shift in the moral qualities associated with people drawn to urbanizing and industrializing cities like Worcester. Earlier articles expressed fears about the rise of immorality in manufacturing cities and claimed that such increases in immoral behavior resulted from large concentrations of working-class people. In contrast, the “men of industry and enterprise” which Worcester sought to attract to encourage industrial development would have been either businessmen with capital or master mechanics capable of starting their own small production shops. Both of these groups occupied higher positions in the socioeconomic hierarchy of the period with businessmen ranking among society’s upper echelons and, as Bruce Laurie demonstrates, master mechanics formed a substantial portion of the period’s middle class.29 The Spy’s shifting of focus on the population growth associated with industrialization away from the working class and towards businessmen and mechanics both reflected and was made possible by Worcester’s early industrial development as a small shop town.

The Worcester community’s support for the proposed manufacturing building demonstrated a shift in attitude towards the industrial development of similarly great magnitude to that made by the local press. Even in past instances in which the local media had, if somewhat timidly, endorsed industrial progress, the newspapers revealed that other parties possessed much less enthusiastic support for industrial development. For example, the Aegis’ article on Lowell’s growth in 1839 deemed that the Lowell “experiment this far has been deemed satisfactory and encouraging” but noted that “many still look upon the system with distrust as unfavorable to the moral condition of the community.”30 Such early fears associated with manufacturing cities delayed Worcesterites embrace of the city’s industrial nature and prevented them from developing a civic identity founded upon pride in the strength of local industry like that which would form in the latter half of the nineteenth century. However, as the local community began to see the economic benefits that the city could derive

27 “Public Spirit,” Massachusetts Spy, June 4, 1851, 2.
28 Ibid.
30 “Public Spirit,” Massachusetts Spy, June 4, 1851, 2.
from an increased manufacturing output, local businessmen began to support investment in the manufacturing industry and a positive industrial identity became a possibility for Worcester.

Thus, it became possible for the National Aegis to run a front-page article on April 11, 1863, that began by simply yet boldly declaring, “Worcester is a manufacturing city.” The Aegis embraced the progress and prosperity narratives about Worcester that the Spy had outlined a decade earlier. Importantly, though, the Aegis went a step further by linking these two narratives to the “manufacturing city” label that the newspaper emphasized as the primary identity of Worcester. Immediately after labeling Worcester as a manufacturing city the Aegis asserted that the city’s “elements of growth depend mainly on the increase of new or enlargement of old manufactories. Deprive us of Union street and the junction, and the numerous factories that skirt Millbrook, and in the end you will deprive us of half our population.” Like other early sources that attempted to reframe narratives about manufacturing positively, the Aegis now imbued this industry-driven progress with a noble character, one possessed by the residents of the city. “But it is not corporation manufacturers that have built us up,” the paper noted. Rather, the Aegis stated, “The growth of Worcester is due to the energy of her own citizens and no capital from abroad comes in hither to give employment to labor and to put the chief profit into the pocket of the non-resident stockholder. All monies made here, remain.” On an economic level, the local investment of capital in Worcester did, in fact, help contribute to the city’s rapid early economic development and industrialization.

On a discursive level, the Aegis’ emphasis on the local investment of capital suggested to readers that existing local capital holders viewed Worcester as a place deserving of loyalty and pride. More importantly, this narrative presented Worcester industrialists as benevolent stewards of the community. Like other New England business elites, Worcester’s industrialists saw investments in the local community as a public good and a civic duty. Historian John F. Kasson describes the ideology of the region’s capitalists through the specific example of the Boston Associates of Lowell, Massachusetts, and argues that these men:

were in fact both capitalists and concerned citizens, hard-dealing merchants and public-spirited philanthropists, entrepreneurs and ideologues. Even as they helped to transform New England’s economy, they sought to preserve a cohesive social order by adhering tenaciously to a rigorous code of ethics and responsibility. They took seriously their role as republican leaders, and the public turned to them for leadership.

The Aegis’ account helped to transmit the industrialists’ self-image of themselves as

34 Kasson, 71.
stewards of not only Worcester’s moral character but also its republican underpinnings amidst the economic and social upheaval caused by industrialization.

Further, the *Aegis*’ presentation of local investments by business elites helped to foster an idyllic understanding of the prosperity afforded to the city by industrialization that minimized class considerations and conflict. Essentially, the *Aegis* espoused an early version of the paternalistic nature of Worcester’s manufacturing community by suggesting that investments by local economic elites provided employment and financial prosperity to all members of the community. Reflecting on the significance of Worcester’s manufacturing establishments, the *Aegis* wrote, “Who can estimate their value and influence? It is not to be calculated in dollars and cents; for the domestic happiness of the millions of people, dependent upon manufactory[ies] for a living, is no branch of arithmetical calculations.” 35 According to the *Aegis*, manufacturing workers did not merely depend on factories for a subsistence living, as in other countries such as England. Instead, these workers enjoyed high wages and a high quality of life. The *Aegis* described this luxurious material and social prosperity saying, “In no other country is wealth as generally diffused; in none other does the manufacturing workman enjoy such good wages, give such an education to his children, or have such an opening before him for mental development.” 36 Just in case readers could not ascertain which group was to thank for the luxuries enjoyed by the local working-class, the *Aegis* finished by proclaiming, “All honor to manufactures! May the next ten years witness as great an increase as has the last.” 37 With any potential class tensions between the city’s labor force and its manufacturers now firmly eliminated in narratives about the city’s source of wellbeing, manufacturing progress, and the prosperity it promised, was now the order of the day.

**Manufacturing’s Progress at the Heart of the Commonwealth**

The progress of manufacturing and, in turn, the acceptance of the city’s identity as a city that made things continued well into the 1860s and beyond. Although some Worcesterites had initially resisted the “manufacturing city” label or viewed it with some distrust, it became one of the primary identities of Worcester in a relatively short period. In 1871, the *Aegis* printed an amusing piece that featured “a veritable ‘composition’ of a pupil in one of the public schools of this city.” 38 The composition amounted to only one sentence and featured numerous grammatical errors, such as a misspelling in its title, “Discription [sic] of Worcester,” which indicated that the student who had written the piece was fairly young. The student’s full description

36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
read, “Worcester is surrounded by Large houses Principal places city hall Common, Worcester is a grate [sic] Manufacturing city there are grate hotels in Worcester.”39 Beneath the grammatical errors and tongue-in-cheek presentation of the piece lay an important lesson. Only a decade after Worcesterites had first embraced the term “manufacturing city,” the use of this term had become so widespread that even young children knew about the city’s manufacturing prowess and identified it as one of the city’s defining characteristic.

Within three decades of the term’s introduction, the “manufacturing city” label even became normalized as the city’s primary identity. The Worcester Daily Spy, the same paper that had previously borne the name Massachusetts Spy, printed an article in 1890 in which the newspaper challenged the notion that Worcester was merely an industrial city by highlighting the size and quality of the city’s universities. However, while setting up this argument, the paper also noted that Worcester residents were “accustomed to think of Worcester as a manufacturing city and to attribute its reputation, its prosperity and its rapid advance to the rank of third city of New England in population, to the development of its varied mechanical industries.”40 Ascribing to the longstanding progress and prosperity narratives, the Spy revealed that, less than half a century after the very mention of the term produced anxiety and fear, most Worcesterites tended to think of the city primarily, if not exclusively, in terms of its identity as a “manufacturing city.” Thus, the identity shift that paralleled the rise of Worcester’s manufacturing industry represented a radical reshaping of the community in its own right.

To Worcesterites, the importance of their city’s rise as a manufacturing center extended beyond mere technological advances and the population increase to include social progress itself. The growth of Worcester took place, after all, in the milieu of nineteenth-century America which viewed Social Darwinist thinking as one very real explanation for development. An 1882 advertising catalog for Worcester framed its development-minded history in these terms:

Agriculture, Commerce and Industry thus are typical of three grades of civilization, the last mentioned being latest in order of appearance, but first in culture and refinement. It is then but the fulfillment of nature’s edict that the industrial community is peculiar to modern civilization. With the diffusion of knowledge and the advancement of science came the development of manufactures.41

In this narrative, the rise of industry represented a civilizing process characterized by increasing reason, order, and artistry rather than the morally corrupting force it had been portrayed as in earlier accounts. Further, this narrative combined a Social

39 Ibid.
40 “Commencement Week,” Worcester Daily Spy, June 6, 1890, 4.
Darwinist understanding of industrial development with a nationalistic belief in the primacy of the United States by continuing on from its outline of its development theory of history to say, “No country more forcibly illustrates the truth of our first statement than the United States[,] Here are the finest types of the manufacturing village or city.”

According to the Worcester catalog, the same type of “republican principles” that the Aegis had argued would prevent moral corruption in American manufacturing cities as they emerged in the late 1830s had, in fact, enabled the United States to rise to the forefront of the industrial world and, therefore, civilization. Discussing the manufacturing cities of the United States, the catalog stated, “Nowhere are there industrial communities possessing so high an intellectual and moral tone. They are the natural outgrowth of our democratic institutions, and are the strongest testimonial to the inestimable benefits conferred upon humanity by our republican form of government.” Of course, this narrative did little to distinguish Worcester from the nation’s other manufacturing cities of the period. That is until the advertisers promoting the city used their progressive view of American industrial history to explain the development of Worcester, which they claimed most fully exemplified the civilizing influences of American government and industrial development by writing:

No American city more clearly shows this to be true than the subject of this sketch. From the early settlement its growth lay in the direction of manufacturers. Thus, early in the history of Worcester, was the foundation laid for a healthful growth in the direction of a high social order. The development has kept pace with the city’s advancing prosperity. The progress of Worcester’s manufacturing industry and the city’s rise to prosperity, therefore, came to be associated with and justified through a belief in progress towards a more refined, civilized, and, above all, industrialized society.

Worcester: The City of Diversified Industries?

Just as the National Aegis was among the first publications to christen Worcester as a “manufacturing city,” the Aegis also put forth one of the first local articulations of the belief that manufacturing diversity ensured Worcester’s long-term prosperity. For example, in 1865, the National Aegis detailed the number of manufacturers, branches of manufacturing industries, and manufacturing firm values before concluding, “Worcester may probably challenge a comparison with any other city in the United States for its diversified industry.” But why did the Aegis take such great care to detail and demonstrate this diversity? The importance of diversified industries

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42 McKinney, 18.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
originated out of the belief of the Aegis, and eventually of other Worcester publications and most Worcesterites engaged in industrial pursuits, that “diversified industry also furnishes our people with more varied opportunities to acquire wealth, to obtain independence and character than any other nation in existence.”

According to the logic of the decades following the Civil War, the presence of diversified industries in a locale ensured material prosperity by encouraging innovation and, more importantly in a century characterized by periodic depressions, protecting against economic downturns in any one sector. Thus, the Aegis featured this commentary in an article entitled “Our Prosperity.” Although the Aegis’ belief in the economic benefits of diversified industries was widespread in late nineteenth century America, especially in the industrial North, it aligned well with Worcester’s antebellum industrial history as a mechanics’ haven which had also emphasized innovation, independence, and manufacturing diversity.

Historians of Worcester have noted that diversity characterized Worcester’s manufacturing industry and that the city became known throughout the late nineteenth century for the variety of its manufacturing interests. Carolyn J. Lawes argues that the association of the city with diversified industries characterized a shift in “temperaments” that resulted in more rigid social boundaries and less affinity for humanitarianism. Lawes writes, “Whereas antebellum Worcesterites described their city metaphorically as the ‘Heart of the Commonwealth,’ the postbellum generation embraced the less lyrical ‘City of Diversified Industries.’” In Lawes’ interpretation, technological advancement and the development of a more modern form of capitalism drew the ethos of the local community away from the ideals associated with a republican government and society. However, a closer examination of the “diversified industries” term reveals that this assessment is, at best, only partially accurate.

For starters, the use of the phrase “City of Diversified Industries” as a proper noun referring to Worcester does not appear in nineteenth-century advertising literature or newspapers until 1890. Even then, it made only an appearance in an advertisement manual published by the Worcester Board of Trade entitled Worcester:

46 “Our Prosperity,” National Aegis, Apr. 28, 1866, 2.
47 Ibid.
48 One example of the prevalence of narratives emphasizing the merits of “diversified industries” is Charles Nordhoff’s Politics for Young Americans (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1881); for a history of Worcester’s antebellum industrial history and the reasons for its rise to prominence, see Chapter X of Charles G. Washburn, Industrial Worcester (Worcester: The Davis Press, 1917), especially p. 292 and pp. 299-301.
49 Roy Rosenzweig, Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 12.
51 Lawes, 181.
City of Diversified Industry. The term did not reach widespread use as a standardized moniker for the city on the same level as the “Heart of the Commonwealth” label until the early 1920s when the Worcester Chamber of Commerce began including it in promotional literature. Even then, the term often appeared as a secondary moniker as was the case in an early 1920s pamphlet which sought to promote Worcester’s diversified industrial base by making the dubious claim that Worcester “[was] known throughout the world as the ‘City of Diversified Industry’” but appeared several pages after the title Worcester: Heart of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Surely, Worcesterites viewed the prominence of “diversified industries” in the city as an important feature of the city, and the term often appeared in promotional literature and newspapers discussing the city’s economy starting in the mid-1860s. But in local use, the term “diversified industries” represented a local characteristic of Worcester’s identity as a “manufacturing city.” Further, Worcesterites attached specific meanings to both of these terms, especially “diversified industries,” in ways that demonstrated their attempts to preserve the city’s idyllic antebellum republican character amidst the widespread social transformation wrought by industrialization.

The Aegis’ 1866 “Our Prosperity” article hinted at some of the noble moral attributes and beneficial personality characteristics that Worcesterites believed were fostered among people engaged in “diversified industries.” The Aegis featured a striking mix of material and moral benefits when it stated, “diversified industry also furnishes our people more varied opportunities to acquire wealth, to obtain independence and character than any other nation in existence.” The economic logic of relying on “more varied opportunities to acquire wealth” and protecting against economic depressions reacted to and originated from experiences with the tenuous market of nineteenth century America. While the logic required for the Worcester press to associate diversified industry with “independence and character” is less obvious, such associations were made by many contemporary commentators, most from well beyond Central Massachusetts. Such associations were so deeply ingrained in the thinking of late nineteenth century Americans that an 1881 textbook for schools and colleges by prominent journalist and political commentator Charles Nordhoff devoted a twelve-page chapter to the subject “Of Diversity of Industries.” In it, Nordhoff remarked upon the effect of diversified industries for fostering practical character traits at the same time that it brought about practical economic benefits:

54 “Our Prosperity,” National Aegis, Apr. 28, 1866, 2.
55 Nordhoff, 89-101.
That nation or people is happiest which has the most widely diversified industries; because its members will be led inevitably to the exercise of great and varied ingenuity and enterprise, while at the same time capital, the fruit and reward of labor, will be more equally distributed among the population than in a country where but a few industries are pursued.56

Nordhoff’s book reveals that late nineteenth century Americans believed that an economy based upon diversified industries, such as the local one observed by Worcester commentators, forced participants to develop the skills of innovation and hard work, which would, in turn, produce widespread economic equality and egalitarianism.

Late nineteenth century narratives about Worcester’s industrial heritage were imbued with this egalitarian spirit and emphasized the material prosperity afforded to all residents by the city’s diversified manufacturing industry. As has already been discussed, narratives celebrating the economic benefits of manufacturing development for all Worcester residents date to the earliest identifications of Worcester as an industrial city. Such identifications continued throughout the century and into the next.

To be fair, the narrative became mainly widespread because it was supported by economic data and because the logic behind it was sound. With regards to wages, one advertising manual drew from a history paper by a local merchant and recorded, “The average annual income of the laborer was said to be $240 in 1847, while in 1870 it has increased to $377. The greater the result of a given amount of labor the greater is the happiness and possibility of the workman’s comfort.”57 Regarding the logic behind the industrial egalitarianism in many narratives about Worcester’s manufacturing economy, an 1889 advertising manual about Leading Business Men of Worcester and Vicinity clearly explained the origins of industrial egalitarianism within Worcester’s long-term identity as a mechanics’ city: “[I]n the main the growth of Worcester in population, and its increase in valuation, necessarily goes back to its many manufacturing interests which demand, and do give employment to thousands of skilled mechanics, artizans [sic], and laborers.”58 Unlike most narratives about Worcester’s industrial identity, this advertising manual was printed and distributed primarily outside the city, specifically in nearby Boston. This demonstrates that although narratives about Worcester’s industrial egalitarianism had changed relatively little since the 1860s, such narratives had begun to spread awareness of this carefully constructed image of the city to other locales thanks to the efforts of local business elites and advertisers. These narratives essentially mirrored the economic beliefs of the nineteenth century Republican Party by emphasizing the necessity of cooperation

56 Nordhoff, 89.
between capital and labor as well as the belief that “all classes would benefit from economic expansion.”

To be sure, the Republican commitment of Worcesterites to egalitarianism in Northern industrial society reflected very real socioeconomic gains made by Worcester’s working class during the second half of the century. However, the egalitarian narrative also obscured differences in class and served the purpose of encouraging the paternalistic nature of Worcester’s labor climate by easing tensions between capital and labor.

Advertisers with interest in promoting business elites and the companies these men owned were not the only ones to put forth such narratives. A decade after the Leading Business Men manual put forth capital’s narrative of the city’s industrial past and present, in 1899 the Central Labor Union and the Building Trades Council of Worcester published their own description of the city’s industries. In it, they emphasized class cooperation before drawing similar egalitarian conclusions to the 1889 Boston advertising manual:

> Worcester furnishes truer conditions of real life, more hopeful and rounded standards of life for ‘all classes and conditions of men’ than almost any other community. The resident of Worcester, be he workman with hands or brain, may have his own home, made attainable by the large industries which are glad to exchange just coin for fair service, and, by low rents, with room for the garden and leave to own his own spot of ground; while the cheapness of the overflowing home market, spilling itself in surplus all over the world, relieves him from an existence of mere animal slavery to the common needs of life.

With statements like these, the labor organizations’ narrative of Worcester’s history can best be described as a bizarre mix of radical and conservative understandings of the division of material wealth. On the one hand, the labor organizations’ manual contained preambles to several national unions as well as texts strongly critical of capitalists and industrialists such as August McGraith’s “The Object of Unions,” George McNeill’s “Philosophy of the Labor Movement,” and Samuel Gomper’s “What Does Labor Want?”

On the other hand, the book contained advertisements for hundreds of local businesses, including some of the largest manufacturing firms in the city, and featured narrative elements friendly to capital. In addition to including egalitarian interpretations of local society that obscured any notion of class division, the book endorsed corporate paternalism by saying:

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59 Foner, 19-20.
61 Central Labor Union and the Building Trades Council of Worcester, Massachusetts; sketches and preambles of national unions on pp. 129-137; McGraith text on pp. 245-249; McNeill text on pp. 251-265; Gompers text on pp. 267-287. McGraith’s text appears anonymously in the Worcester labor organizations’ account but is attributed in other publications such as “Why We Organize,” *The Labor World* (Duluth and Superior, MN), May 19, 1900, 1.
Thus the manufacturer and capitalist seeking a home in Worcester finds his interests and the safety and well-being of society resting upon a basis of well-conditioned labor. The absolute rectitude, which is the truest charity, and which, if practiced, would render half the so-called charities unnecessary, has noticeably been shown by Worcester corporations toward their large armies of employes [sic], and mutual esteem and conditions of true individual development and manliness are the outcome of such relations as are maintained between the so-called different classes in this city.62

Most tellingly, the labor organizations’ public account of industrial Worcester called into question the existence of class divisions and even class differences within the city. This classless and cooperative presentation of Worcester’s social life was a product of the labor organizations’ own membership and ideologies. Both the Central Labor Union and the Building Trades Council represented the city’s skilled workers such as painters, carpenters, tailors, building-trades workers, horseshoers, and printers.63 The skilled workers represented by these organizations benefitted in many ways from the Worcester’s industrial growth and generally received higher wages, more autonomy, and greater social standing than unskilled industrial laborers.

Crucially, the membership of the two labor groups did not include workers in the city’s largest industrial sector, the machine and metalworking industry. Efforts to organize these excluded workers failed due to the strength of the stringent anti-union stance and paternalism of some of the city’s largest employers such as the Norton Company and the Washburn and Moen Wire Manufacturing Company.64 In contrast to the conditions enjoyed by skilled tradesmen, laborers in Worcester in the machine and metalworking industries faced increasingly demanding work conditions as result of industrial development. In 1915 more than 3,000 local machinists went on strike demanding higher wages, an eight-hour workday, and union recognition in response to the introduction of “scientific management” techniques that divided work into smaller, routinized tasks in the name of efficiency. Said one striker, “The dissatisfaction in the shops is caused by the way they drive men — driving to get a man to do twice the amount of work.”65 Support for industrial development among workers in Worcester differed depending on the degree to which these workers enjoyed the material benefits, and quality of life promised to all by the progress and prosperity narratives. Because the workers who gained the most economical and political power from industrial development, the city’s skilled workers, also possessed the means to present their view through labor organizations, the struggles of the city’s blue-collar workers gained little attention in the local press.

Late nineteenth-century Worcesterites, at least those positioned prominently enough to produce public narratives, recognized the existence of class divisions in the United States and attached stereotypical moral characteristics to the members of

62 Central Labor Union and the Building Trades Council, 41.
63 Rosenzweig, 20.
65 Quoted in Rosenzweig, 26.
certain classes. However, Worcester commentators, including some involved in the labor movement, either rejected or failed to recognize the existence of such class divisions within their own communities. In Worcester, according to these narrative producers, all economic actors were idealized industrious and ingenious men engaged in the mechanical arts. In reality, class-divisions characterized the Worcester community, and the city had both a strong group of industrialists and a large, marginalized working-class. The uplifting narrative of class cooperation and diversified industries producing widespread prosperity for Worcester hid the material hardships faced by many blue-collar residents and the efforts of local industrialists to deny them economic gains.

Class, Civic Pride, & the Politics of Worcester’s “Manufacturing City” Identity

Given that the label “manufacturing city” acquired a series of moral meanings in the local consciousness, it is unsurprising that the term also possessed political associations with class dimensions as early as the 1870s. One of the most telling revelations of the classed political associations attached to the “manufacturing city” label in Worcester discourses comes from an article about New York City. This article, featured in an 1892 edition of the radical republican newspaper the *Worcester Daily Spy*, quoted prominent Republican James G. Blaine, who had served as Secretary of State and as a Maine Senator, at a New York City rally in which he said, “The opponents of the republican party [sic] always represent New York as a commercial city, and not a manufacturing city…but all the men engaged in commercial affairs in and about New York are smaller in number than the men engaged in manufactures.” As was common in late nineteenth-century political dialogues, Blaine juxtaposed commercial interests and manufacturing interests, with a special focus on the character of the cities in which these two types of economic activity took place. Commercial centers represented the domain of economic elites who made their fortunes off of “merely exchanging—passing from the producer to the consumer—producing nothing themselves.” Such speculation led to the accumulation of wealth by a limited number of financial elites stood in stark contrast to the Republicans’ desire toward increasingly equal distribution of wealth while the financial elites themselves belonged to the wealthy class distrusted by nineteenth century Republicans. Republicans portrayed themselves as the champions of laborers and “the common man” employed in the manufacturing industries in cities such as Worcester while describing Democrats as supporting corporations and the wealthy.

68 See Foner, 18-23.
A vital issue in the national political debates between Republicans and Democrats about manufacturing cities was the protection of American manufacturing interests through tariffs on imported goods. Throughout the nineteenth century, the United States Congress considered implementing a series of tariffs on foreign imports. In general, Republicans supported the import duty, while Democrats opposed them. Republican support for the tariff originated from the belief that tax protected American manufactured goods from competition in domestic markets. This allowed for competition between American companies, leading to lower prices on products for American consumers and greater returns on investment for American entrepreneurs, which in turn led to steady employment with high wages for laborers.

Class-based images of manufacturing and commercial cities featured prominently in the platforms of both the parties, especially the rhetoric of Republicans from manufacturing regions like New England. Such was the case when Republican Massachusetts congressman William A. Russell took the floor in an 1882 tariff debate. As quoted in the *Boston Herald*, Russell announced his support for the tariff because of its benefits to American laborers by saying:

> There is another very important consideration in estimating THE VALUE OF PROTECTION, as it affects compensation for labor here: that is, the steady employment furnished our workmen. Our wages are not only more per diem than in other countries, but the employment constant, insuring a larger yearly income. Our works are not so easily affected by the ebb and flow of surplus products as with other countries; the laws of demand and supply control the increase of manufactures here, and we seldom have long seasons of depression and consequent suffering among our people. We have in our manufacturing cities good illustrations of the advantages of protection and diversified interests, both as they relate to the cities themselves and to their importance to other sections of the country. We have Manchester, Fall River and a score of other large manufacturing cities in New England dependent upon the agricultural regions for their food. All of these have sprung up since the Clay tariff of 1824, and not one of them would have been in existence today without it.69

If manufacturing cities demonstrated the importance of protective tariffs for supporting American workers, commercial cities showed the shortcomings of the existing tariff in establishing a genuinely egalitarian industrialism. Russell alluded to Democratic attacks against the tariff based upon the same logic of egalitarianism saying, “It is said that our system of protection makes THE RICH RICHER AND THE POOR POORER, and a few men who live in our great commercial cities are made the scapegoats. Their great fortunes furnish the text for all sorts of hostile legislation.” 70 However, Russell argued that the Democratic Party misplaced its attacks by targeting manufacturing interests in commercial centers.

Like most Republicans, Russell claimed that commercialists were the true enemy


70 Ibid.
of egalitarianism while flipping the Democratic critiques by saying, “The great fortunes, however, have been made in this country in land, railroad and commercial speculations, and not in manufacturing. Very few manufacturers have fortunes independent of their brick and mortar investments.” 71 Operating within the Republican ideology that viewed the manufacturing economy as one of the small independent manufacturing entrepreneurs, Russell’s claim resembled Worcesterites understanding of their own industrial identity as a small shop town. The same could be said for Russell’s egalitarian interpretation of the effects of the tariff which highlighted the need for cooperation between all socioeconomic classes: “The protective features of our tariff were instituted and have been maintained in the interests of no one class of our citizens, but for all.”72

Local politicians and producers of narratives about Worcester’s identity as a “manufacturing city” were well aware of the politics surrounding the term. The local identification of Worcester as a manufacturing city provided a rhetorical advantage to Republicans and forced Democratic candidates to address concerns of local laborers on the campaign trail. Democratic candidate John E. Russell felt such a need to address working-class concerns about the tariff that he devoted almost the entirety of the speech declaring his candidacy in the 1886 congressional election for Worcester’s representative in the House to the topic. Russell flatly stated, “Now the tariff is to protect the laborer. That is nothing but a pretense—a dishonest pretense. It is well known that wages are lower in protected industries than in industries that protection cannot reach.”73 The Worcester Daily Spy was not convinced. The very day after printing the full transcript of Russell’s speech, the Spy presented an editorial on Russell’s candidacy with regards to the tariff debate and the effects that repealing the tariff would have on Worcester:

    Congress could kill or cripple [Worcester’s] industries by enacting a tariff for revenue only, could turn Worcester into a decaying and dwindling, instead of thriving and growing city, and stop the factories in all those busy towns. Mr. Russell probably does not think this would be the effect of his doctrines if put in practice. But, though there may be room for difference of opinion on the point, it is a serious thing to tamper with the industries of a great country.74

Given the importance of the manufacturing industry, it seems somewhat surprising that the local residents sided with Russell and the Democrats over the Spy and the Republicans. However, as historian Robert Kolesar has demonstrated, Worcester politics in the late nineteenth century were dominated by development-minded politicians of both parties who capitalized upon the city’s identity as a manufacturing

72 Ibid.
city and enacted policies favorable to local industrial growth.\textsuperscript{75}

Late-nineteenth-century political narratives about Worcester as a manufacturing city emerged very much in relation to Republican understandings of commercial cities. An 1882 advertising catalog demonstrated that Worcestersites possessed the same opinion of speculation as immoral while making a similar comparison between manufacturing and commercial cities by stating that Worcester “has been always free from the feverish, demoralizing influences of the speculation incident to a commercial city.”\textsuperscript{76} Instead, Worcester served the nation by enhancing and ensuring the American quality of life through the production of useful goods. The \textit{Worcester Daily Spy} presented this narrative to its readership in 1884 when it wrote that Worcester was “essentially a manufacturing city, its wealth, its population, its ambition, its lines of thought leading almost wholly in the manufacture of something, and, almost entirely, of something useful.”\textsuperscript{77} According to both commercial advertisers and unionists, these useful goods provided consumers with an increased ability to access “some of the most essential comforts of life.”\textsuperscript{78} In this narrative, both the city and its workers gained a potential source of pride through the very nature of their manufacturing labor and its productive contributions to the betterment of American society.

By emphasizing the importance of manufacturing cities and Worcester’s prominence among them, local narrative producers crafted an industrial identity for the city with pride at its heart. Proud presentations of Worcester’s industrial nature emerged in the rhetoric of advertisers and local politicians throughout the late nineteenth century and became fully formed in the first decade of the twentieth century. The Worcester Board of Trade put forth one such testimony about the character of the city in a 1906 account which began, “Worcester is essentially a manufacturing city, and, as such, one of the most important of American cities.”\textsuperscript{79} According to the Board of Trade, Worcester’s identity as a manufacturing city gave it superiority over all cities that did not produce goods upon which the American way of life depended. But Worcester possessed an even greater importance in this narrative because, “The industrial life of the city has beat with strong, unfaltering pulsation through the years that have passed. The character and intelligence of the people have made Worcester what she is: Foremost among manufacturing cities; first among American inland cities.”\textsuperscript{80} Once viewed as something to fear, the

\textsuperscript{76} McKinney, 18.
\textsuperscript{78} Central Labor Union and the Building Trades Council, 39; for similar narratives published for the purposes of advertising Worcester businesses see \textit{Commerce, Manufacturers, and Resources of the City of Worcester}, 18-19, and F.S. Blanchard & Co., \textit{Industries of Worcester}, 3-7.
\textsuperscript{79} Worcester Board of Trade, \textit{Worcester, Her Worth, Her Works}, 45.
\textsuperscript{80} Worcester Board of Trade, \textit{Worcester, Her Worth, Her Works}, 45.
manufacturing-centric economy now provided Worcester with a level of importance that made its manufacturing city identity not only palatable but also prideful. It was for these reasons that the Boston Herald stated in a 1909 article that “what Worcester people unanimously pride themselves upon is the industrial activity of the place.”

Worcesterites specifically noted their city’s position as “first among American inland cities,” meaning the largest industrial city not on a major waterway such as a river or ocean. This feat represented a special point of pride in narratives about the character of the city because it “proved that mechanical skill, enterprise, and industry, can build up a large city, even though it does not possess the advantage of code water and commerce.” That is to say, Worcester’s rise to prominence demonstrated that the city’s residents possessed supreme industrial talents which enabled the city to overcome its relative geographical disadvantage, which is why one advertising catalog stated, “Worcester has a history of which its people may well be proud.” Granted, advertisers and the Board of Trade had a vested interest in crafting narratives that positively depicted the importance of Worcester as a city and the industrial abilities of its workforce to sell locally produced products and attract additional manufacturing businesses to the area. However, that fact does not detract from the power of the Board’s narrative to provide a potential source of pride for local residents and workers whose work this narrative deemed essential and superior to that of others.

This compelling narrative appealed to at least some of Worcester’s labor organizations. Several years before the appearance of the Board of Trade’s report in which it attempted to craft an industrial identity for Worcester that instilled pride in local readers, the Central Labor Union and the Building Trades Council of Worcester, two of the city’s largest labor organizations, published a very similar narrative.

It seems almost incredible that Worcester…should be home of as large a number of manufacturing enterprises, in proportion to population, as any city in the United States; yet this is so, and when one considers the interests represented here he certainly has reason to feel proud of the place as one of the great industrial, progressives cities of New England.

In Worcester, the standard American workingman’s pride in the production of goods developed a local variant in public narratives which emphasized the unique contributions of the city.

In the process, the narrative presented by the skilled laborers in the Central Labor Union and Building Trades Council once again became closely aligned with

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81 “Worcester City of Booming Trade,” Boston Herald, June 20, 1909, 16.
82 Leading Business Men of Worcester and Vicinity, 13.
83 Ibid.
84 Central Labor Union and the Building Trades Council, 43-45.
descriptions put forth by capital interests such as the Board of Trade, a group endorsed by the labor organizations’ account of Worcester history as possessing “a career of great usefulness.”85 This left Worcester’s blue-collar industrial workers with little agency over narratives about their own identity and served to further ensure labor passivity in a city where the labor movement was already weak. Regardless of whether or not actual blue-collar workers took pride in the industrial enterprises of the city, the public record indicated that they did. Many working-class Worcesterites inevitably developed their conceptions of identity based upon their class, labor, place of residence, and, as Roy Rosenzweig suggests, ethnic heritage.86 However, there is no way in which blue-collar workers could have formulated individual identities without being influenced by public narratives about Worcester as a manufacturing city or without constructing their own personal identities in relation to the public narrative.

**Conclusion: Structural Weaknesses Appear in Worcester Despite Continued Prosperity**

Amidst a regional industrial decline in the 1920s and 1930s, commentators celebrated the continued prosperity of Worcester. While discussing Worcester in his definitive overview of the state’s manufacturers published in 1930, Orra Stone remarked, “it is interesting to note that between 1913 and 1927, the number of local manufacturing establishments rose from 448, in the former year to 515, in the latter while invested capital increased from $75,474,918, in 1913 to $174,115,467 in 1927.”87 But the successes of Worcester went even further, with Stone continuing: “Most significant of all, however, is the increase in the value of products in this fifteen year period. In 1913, the commodities fabricated in the 448 establishments were valued at $89,707,793, while in 1927, the value of locally manufactured goods was $191,865,312.”88 These statistics were so “interesting to note” for Stone, and for other New Englanders of the period, because they demonstrated Worcester’s ability to resist the manufacturing decline that befell the region, and most especially Massachusetts, in the two decades after World War I. From 1923 to 1939, the state’s number of manufacturing jobs declined 31 percent, from 667,000 to 461,000.89 The economic climate in which Stone wrote and published his survey was so desperate that one Massachusetts textile worker reflected upon it by saying, “Nineteen twenty-

85 Ibid., 43.
86 Rosenzweig explores the ethnic nature of working-class social life in Worcester throughout his book but a concise overview of this trend can be found on pp 27-32.
88 Stone, 1650.
eight, 1929, 1930, very bad. No jobs, no work, nowhere. No help from the city; you just suffer, that’s all.”

Manufacturing employment declined slightly in Worcester as well, from 31,801 in 1913 to 30,162 in 1923, but industrial workers garnered increased prosperity during the period because “wages paid in 1913, amounting to $19,887,759, rose to $41,082,936, in 1927.”

In a turn of fate that would have made nineteenth century Worcesterites proud, the city owed its continued economic prosperity to the strength of its diversified industries. Although Stone reported, “Worcester has long been recognized as typical of industrial Massachusetts, due in a great degree to the fact that from the beginning it has possessed diversified industries,” the truth is that Worcester’s diversified industries both stood outside the regional norm and, at least temporarily, saved the city from the same fate as the rest of the state. Stone highlighted the fact that in Worcester “more than 3,000 different manufactured products [were] daily turned out by more than 500 establishments located in the city.” In contrast, as historian David Koistinen notes, the industrial decline in New England most affected the cities and towns that had to that point relied almost exclusively on the cotton textile industry.

That said, reading Stone’s piece in hindsight reveals that Worcester’s industries were poorly positioned to continue prospering indefinitely. Stone posited, “Worcester’s industries can best be described as ‘Manufacturers to Industrial America’” because “a considerable percentage of its manufactured products never reaches the so-called ultimate consumer in the form in which they are produced, because of the fact that they are utilized as essential equipment in a wide variety of industrial plants.” This characteristic of Worcester’s industrial economy would eventually prove problematic for two reasons. First, it made the demand for the products of Worcester’s manufacturers dependent upon industrial conditions in other locales. That is to say that industrial Worcester would prosper only as long as Industrial America did. Second, it meant that the city of Worcester would only benefit indirectly from the economic stimulus of the New Deal in the late 1930s and the years following World War II because this stimulus worked by encouraging widespread consumption by the American populous, the mass of people Stone referred to as “the so-called ultimate consumer.” For most of its first century as an industrial city, Worcester enjoyed sustained growth by adhering to the logic that

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91 Stone, 1650.
92 Ibid., 1651
93 Ibid., 1651
94 Koistinen, 15-18.
95 Stone, 1652; Stone, 1651-1652.
diversified manufacturing industries generated economic prosperity. However, the diversified industrial base of Worcester could do little to protect the city from the effects of the Great Depression and the United States’ transition to a post-industrial economy in the latter half of the twentieth century.
Dialogue

Bringing History into the Daily Conversation:
An Interview with Professor Edward T. O’Donnell

Brett Cotter ’19

The student work that appears in Of Life and History is made possible by the talents, teaching, and mentorship of the History Department faculty of the College of the Holy Cross. We wish to share some of these faculty members’ valuable insights on the process and importance of doing history by publishing an interview with one faculty members for each issue of our journal. This year, Brett A. Cotter ’19 sat down with Associate Professor Edward T. O’Donnell ’86 to discuss a variety of topics including Professor O’Donnell’s path from Holy Cross student to Holy Cross professor and his extensive work as a public historian. The interview appears below with only minimal revisions made for clarity.

In addition to teaching at Holy Cross, Professor O’Donnell is the author of several books including Henry George and the Crisis of Inequality: Progress and Poverty in the Gilded Age America (Columbia University Press, 2015), Ship Ablaze: The Tragedy of the Steamboat General Slocum (Random House/Broadway Books, May 2003), and 1001 Things Everyone Should Know About Irish American History (Random House/Broadway Books, 2002). He is also an active public historian who has delivered history-themed presentations before thousands of educational, business, non-profit organizations and who has provided historical insight and commentary for programs airing on PBS, the History Channel, the Discovery Channel, C-Span, ABC World News Now, NPR, the BBC, and Bloomberg Radio, among others. Since 2016, he has helped spread his passion for and knowledge of American history through his podcast In the Past Lane.

As a student here [at Holy Cross], what would you say drew you to history?

Well, a little background before I got here. My older brother was attending Holy Cross exactly four years ahead of me, so when he graduated, I arrived. He was pre-med but chose to major in history, which is exactly what our father did: pre-med history major. And my mother was a history major as well, so I grew up in a house that just loved history, filled with literally thousands of books. We hit every historic site within two hundred miles of the Boston area. So, I really loved history as a subject and I really didn’t like science that much, so I just thought I’d follow in that path. So, I came here intending to be a history pre-med. One semester in and the pre-med part was in ruins on the runway after a spectacular crash and burn! And at
that point it just seemed like I would continue in the history direction. I also knew
that I liked to teach, and both my brother and my father also had done a fair amount
of teaching at various stages in their careers teaching medical students. So, I thought,
maybe I'll just transfer all of those ideas about history and about teaching into a full-
on history major and just see where that takes me.

Alright, so what would you say as a student at Holy Cross or at any point in
your academic career influenced you to choose the specific path in history
that you've taken- Irish-American history and history of the Gilded Age.

Well it's interesting, I really loved being a history major at Holy Cross and
studied a lot of those things, a lot of American history, and in those days the
requirements weren’t quite as advanced as they are now where you have to really
think about your thematic concentration, and also the offerings in the department
were more US and European in focus. But I loved the history major and I knew by
the end of my junior year I was pretty sure I wanted to go right to graduate school,
or pretty soon after to grad school, get my PhD, become an historian and teach at a
college like Holy Cross. And so, by the time I got to graduate school two years later,
the fall of '88, I was wide open to whatever topic. I knew it was going to be US
history, but I wasn’t really sure if it was going to be colonial history.

One of my graduate school friends- and this is in 1988- his focus was the 1970s,
and though I never said it out loud I kept on thinking “that’s not history, that’s recent
events” but of course now, the 1970s are firmly back in the past so that it has in fact
become history. So, I toyed with all kinds of ideas, I was really interested in all kinds
of things, from the Civil War and Reconstruction and slavery, and there was
something in my head telling me, “Don’t pigeon-hole yourself, don’t go with
studying Irish-American history as much as that interests you.” So, I really worked
to not go in that direction. I think I had gotten advice about just not getting pigeon-
holed and not being seen as too predictable. Plus, I was interested in so many other
things.

And I was interested in reform. I guess the idea that began to emerge around
that was reform movements. I wrote a big project before I got to graduate school
on a reform movement, but my first project in graduate school was about education
reform for my master's thesis. So, I was interested in reform, but I was also
fascinated by taxation, because taxation and reform go hand in hand in a lot of ways,
including in that master's essay project I had to do.

So, by the time I had to choose what my dissertation was going to be on- that’s
the thing that really points you to the first steps in your career path, anyway, defines
you and the field you’re going to work in- I had really become interested in this guy,
Henry George. I cannot remember who told me about Henry George, that he was
a reformer. His scheme as a reformer was to address growing inequality in the Gilded
Age with this thing called the single tax, which ultimately was never quite fully
explained and never would have quite made much sense, at least in the way he
described it. But it was a way to understand the social turmoil of the Gilded Age and
this idea that people were kind of casting about for ideas, and ultimately with Henry
George what really fascinated me and I think what fascinated people in his day was
not the single tax, it was the way he described what’s going wrong, and the way he
diagnosed the ills of late nineteenth century America. He came up with a kind of
kooky prescription, but in his diagnosis, he was able to point out that inequality
would destroy democracy, and that’s really the big takeaway. And whether you
alleviate inequality and save democracy by a single tax or a whole bunch of things
including an income tax, well you’re essentially heading in the same direction.

So, you’ve done a lot of work as an historian, as a public historian you’ve
been on a lot of programs to offer insight and commentary, and you have
your podcast In the Past Lane. So, would you mind elaborating on your role
as a public historian and what that means to you?

That’s an interesting question. How did I become a public historian? I became
a public historian I think before I even heard the phrase. I love to teach so I’m into
the intellectual quest as a researcher and a writer and a doer of history, but I’ve always
liked talking to the public, trying to reach average everyday people about ideas and
finding ways to make them still smart and still grounded in research and the historical
field, but also translating them in ways that engage people. So, a couple things
happened.

One is, I was extremely poor. My wife and I got married right before graduate
school, two years in we had our first baby, we didn’t have two nickels to rub together,
so I was always running around trying to make some extra bucks. I got involved
doing walking tours for an emerging museum which is now this huge thing called the
Lower East Side Tenement Museum, but back in the late 80s it was just a little office
with a big idea. The best they could do, there was no museum to show people so
they showed them the neighborhood, the Lower East Side. So, I started doing those
walking tours, and so did another guy, and we founded a walking tour business
hoping to make a few extra bucks on top of that. It turned out to be, next thing you
know, we had fourteen people working for us, all graduate students in history, which
is the really cool part; that it’s not only a money-making enterprise and also a public
education enterprise, but was also a way of helping graduate students. I left the
company in ’96, and I’m still in contact with the guy who runs it, but I never asked
him, “Have you ever actually calculated how many tenured professors of history
there are out there across the country?” because it’s got to be sixty, eighty people
who at one time or another worked for Big Onion walking tours and that was a key
part of their becoming better teachers, paying their bills, and ultimately finishing their
graduate program.

So that’s pure public history, right? Out there on the streets, giving walking
tours and trying to make them smart walking tours, not just telling ghost stories and half-truths and the kind of crap that you often hear on a walking tour— not to cast aspersions on out of work actors who have memorized old, outdated guidebooks, but you hear a lot of really sketchy, factually inaccurate and sometimes racially tinged, even unintentionally, commentary about neighborhoods and people. So, we really worked hard to make these growing lists of incredibly interesting walking tours of Wall Street, of Central Park, of Harlem, the Lower East Side; and six versions of the Lower East Side! The multiethnic tour, the Jewish tour, the Irish tour, the Italian tour, tours about riots, tours on President’s Day where we would do a tour on presidential New York. You’d be amazed how many presidents did something in Lower Manhattan from the founding all the way to the present day. So that was real pure public history: taking historical knowledge and insight and translating it to really interesting, carefully crafted public presentations.

By then I was working on my dissertation, and there was an Irish history exhibit in formation at the museum in the City of New York, and to make an incredibly long story short, the person who got it off the ground was fired or let go or had a parting of ways with the museum, someone about my age, who was also working in Irish-American history. So, they called me, somehow the word got out that I was this guy studying Irish-American history, gave the occasional Irish-American walking tour, and they said, “Would you like to carry this museum exhibit into fruition, called Gaelic Gotham: The Irish in New York?” And I said yes! So, I dove right into that, and super-long story with many ups and downs, but in March of 1996 this full-on, huge exhibit on the Irish in New York went up.

So that’s fine, it’s been a couple years, and two pretty big public history opportunities came my way. The first, I kind of created by myself, and this other one sort of fell on my lap. The year after that I started doing little history thought pieces on the local NPR, WNYC, because 1998 was the hundredth anniversary of the creation of Greater New York. Before 1898 it was just Manhattan and a bit of the Bronx. Brooklyn was independent, Queens was a whole bunch of independent cities, and so they merged them all into one megacity. So, the mega, five-borough city we have had its hundredth anniversary in 1998.

So, I pitched an idea. By then I knew one of the talk show guys, because as walking tour guides we would come on a few times. I said, “I’m wondering if we could do a regular series, once a month or so for the whole year 1998, where I’d do a piece on the parks and the history of the parks system, history of immigration, history of the mayoralty, history of the Brooklyn Bridge, and it was great, it was a great opportunity to hone my skills. Those are the skills I now use in my podcast—writing for the spoken word.

So those are three very distinct pieces: walking tours, formal museum exhibit, and then public radio think pieces on history, that really got me started. And then ever thereafter there were other museum exhibits and different forms of public
history, helping people create walking tours. And now with digital technology that’s also kind of expanded the kinds of things I’ve been able to do, including now with my own podcast.

**Yeah, it’s definitely increased the audience. It is important work; not enough people have access to good history.**

Well, yeah, it seems like it’s a boom-time for historians to be engaged with the public, because we are living in very tumultuous times. I was listening to something on the radio the other day, and the lead-in was, “Whenever we want to know the history, we turn to…“ and they name the name of one of their journalists, and it’s like: really? He might know a lot about history, but I think you really want to, maybe in tandem with him, talk to an actual historian. So, there is that kind of frustration. When there is an issue with global warming, you talk to a climate scientist. When there’s an issue about terrorism, you talk to a terrorism expert. When there’s an issue about the economy, you talk to an economist. And when there’s an issue about history, you just go to Wikipedia and start cobbling together an article or a featured piece for NPR without actually talking to an historian. I hope that’s changing a little bit, but I think there’s always a need for historians to be a part of the daily conversation.

A lot of what screws up our politics and screws up our ability to have rational conversations—I mean think about guns, immigration, and inequality, just three issues; if you have a twisted or half-baked or willfully uniformed understanding of history, your ability to actually understand that issue is very, very compromised. Because you’ll make grand statements about how America has always this or America has always that, or we’ve never done this. You’re a history major, and you know we preach that everything is way more complicated. Things happen for several reasons, there are multiple causations, there are all kinds of things to take into consideration, and also, we forget our historical memory is very short. Historians are very good at saying, “You know what people are saying about Mexican immigrants today? They said the exact same things about Italians, and a generation earlier they said the exact same thing about the Irish, and the generation before that…” And providing documentation to show people that that’s the case. So that when people say, for example, “Well, when my grandparents came here, they came here, they got to work, they didn’t go on welfare, they had to learn English right away, they became good citizens.” And you’re like, yeah maybe, but you’re leaving some important details out. First of all, you’re making sweeping associations like, they didn’t go on welfare. Well, when they got here in 1915 there was no such thing as welfare! So, you don’t really get points for that. B., they spoke the language… well yeah, but they came from Ireland! So, you no points for that either. And you can go on and walk people through the kind of mythologies that inform some of the heated ways in which some people view contemporary political issues. So, I think public-facing historians play a
really important role.

If you could maybe also talk about some of your experiences in, for example, conducting history and research and the writing of books, things like that.

Well, I’ll give you another piece, another thing that came my way quite by chance, the opportunity to write for a US history textbook, to be a co-author of a textbook. That happened starting in ’98. So, a lot of these things converged early on in my career, and that was a true case of just being in the right place at the right time. A bunch of really random things happened that put me there. In fact, the connection point was they looked me up, the acquisition team assembling the team to write this new version of a textbook. Their idea was that the textbook would use images and visuals not just to decorate the pages but to actually be texts, to be part of the narrative. So, a political cartoon about the Fugitive Slave Act wouldn’t just be stuck in the corner by some layout guy, it would actually be chosen by me, the writer of that chapter, and in the chapter it would say “As you can see in the political cartoon on the left, Lincoln is depicted as…” So, one of the reasons why I stood out on their radar was because of my public history background, that I had done museum exhibits, used images to try and communicate in a different way. So, these things are all ultimately connected.

So, I’ve done a variety of things. That textbook was one, my book on Henry George, is, if you want to call it this, pure academic scholarly work, published by Columbia University Press. And I’ve also done a trade press, which is my book on the General Slocum disaster, which is a steamboat that caught fire. A really horrific but amazing tale, and that was with Random House. So, I published an education publication for college and AP U.S. history kids—and that book is now in its third edition—an academic book on Henry George, and a popular history book, kind of a disaster thriller book, which I published in 2003 which is still alive and still going—they just put it out in audio!

Are there any ongoing projects that you’re currently working on—besides maintaining your podcast, of course?

Yes, I’m eating, sleeping, running, teaching, and doing my podcast. [both laugh]

Yeah, the podcast, it’s a monumental amount of work. And I say that not complaining, but in fascination of how much work it takes to put out a good podcast. When Bill Simmons, proud graduate of the College of the Holy Cross, he now has an incredibly popular sports podcast. But he has a staff. He is the genius talent, but he has people that do all the recording, that do all the planning, that book the guests, that write the pieces, and select the music and all those things.

And my podcast is just little old me, learning things like what microphone to buy, how to hold the microphone, how to speak into a microphone, and what recording software to use, and how to edit the recordings, how to knit together
different files, how to record an interview with someone through Skype—just endless layers of technological know-how, learning by doing or learning by asking. And then, figuring out how to use, as it is known in radio and now in podcasting bumper music—instead of just having your voice just suddenly start have a little intro music that seems to fit the mood of the topic. And then when you’re finishing the interview, music starts to rise just like it does on NPR like, “Well, it’s been great talking to you Brett Cotter about your latest book on Polish-Americans in Central Massachusetts.” And then the music gets a little louder and I say “Brett Cotter, scholar of this at Cambridge,” etc. And then, “You’re listening to In the Past Lane, the podcast about history and why it matters.” I might actually have several segments, maybe a set-up segment, three, four, five, eight minutes that set up my interview with you about Polish-Americans. So, if you listen to the podcasts, it’s not exactly the same every time, but I had to learn how to do that stuff. Then— I already had a Facebook account and a twitter account—but then you have to learn how to market, how to promote this thing in effective ways to reach people. And then, there are all these new platforms. About a month ago, Spotify announced that they were going to start streaming podcasts— and that means that you have to actually do something [to make that happen]. It took me two hours, but I had to go into my hosting platform, and click and click and choose to upload this and put in this code. It’s not that complicated, but when you’re really, really busy that’s a [whole] thing. But now, my podcast is on Spotify, so that’s a good thing. But for everything like that that I accomplished I have a list— podcasts are now streaming evermore on Alexa and Google Home, those smart speakers. Again, that won’t just happen, I actually have to somehow set it to do that, and it’s not super complicated but it will involve time and figuring things out.

So, it’s a ton of fun, and it ebbs and flows. Every time that I’m thinking, “I just got to ditch this thing, man, it’s so much fun and so great and I love it, [but] I just don’t have the time and it’s bumping up against everything else. And then I’m getting towards the end and I bring up the outro music and then I listen to it, and I say “that’s pretty darn good… That’s a really good episode, that’s a really brilliant person that I had a chat with about their new book and I think I chose the right music to fit the transitions.” And then, that boosts your spirits for the next time you’re in crisis, and then someone will contact you on Twitter saying “I just played that episode about mass incarceration to my high school sophomores and they had so many questions. It’s all we talked about in class.” Just the little bit of fan feedback, the listener feedback—when you hear that sort of stuff, you’re just like, yeah OK! I’m not breaking any records here, but it’s having an impact.

My big moment was when I interviewed Ken Burns. Ken Burns did not need to go onto my podcast to promote his Vietnam War documentary, but he was kind enough to do it because I knew somebody who knew somebody who got him to do it. But the most recent interview I’m going to drop later this week is about this book,
which is *The Weeping Time* [Memory and the Largest Slave Auction in American History, by Anne C. Bailey], a new book by a scholar at one of the SUNY [Binghamton]. It’s about slavery and, in this case, it’s about the largest slave auction in US history, [which] took place just before the Civil War—more than three hundred slaves sold over two days. So, it’s a great idea, to write a book about this. But she’s never going to get onto NPR with this book, or [with] Brian Lamb or any venue where a guy like Ken Burns or David McCullough, the kinds of rock stars [like] Rob Chernow who wrote the biography *Hamilton* who’s now the source of the great Hamilton mania. I know people tell me this, that I’m doing an important service to getting some of these more obscure academic voices to reach a much larger audience. So that is a very gratifying thing as well, [because] at various points you really feel like, “you know, I’m not really breaking any records here” but there’s some value that’s coming out of this in different forms. And what I’ve done is I’ve given myself a three-year window.

So, two months ago was my second anniversary. Third week of January—I should know the date by heart—of 2019 will be my three-year anniversary, and that’s when I’ll look at it and say, “was this a good idea?” I mean, it was definitely a good idea. Tons of fun, really interesting, learned a ton, created all kinds of opportunities. I’m going to fly out to California in April to go to the Organization of American Historians, which is the big annual American history conference, and I’ll be at a panel about history and podcasting at that conference, and that will probably be my seventh or eighth consecutive panel that I’ve been on in the last two years in history or history-related or public history conferences. So that’s been kind of cool, to have been recognized as one of these history podcasters and being able to talk to people, whether it’s high school teachers or fellow academics.

And one of the most interesting questions, circling back to something you asked earlier which is (and I know I’m probably talking way more than you want)… there’s an emerging question about things like podcasting, just like there is about—if not the project you worked on with Professor [Stephanie] Yuhl—but what does a scholar—in the old days it was books and articles: if you wrote a book or you wrote an article, that’s history, that’s scholarship. And then, over the last twenty-five or thirty years, museum exhibits, documentaries have started to count. And there are questions like, how much do they count for? In some places they count more, some places are a little more old-school. But now with all this new digital technology, a big question in the air is: to what extent can a history podcast be counted as scholarship? Not quite at the same level as academic book, of course, but should it count towards your tenure or your promotion, or [whether you’re] seen as a productive scholar, and if so, in what way and how do you evaluate it? Because books and articles, [as] you know from Historian’s Craft, they get evaluated by peer-editing; other scholars in the field look at these things and say: “Yes, publish this; well maybe publish this but with revisions; don’t publish this, it’s crap.” So that’s an interesting
question that’s emerging. And Holy Cross has a committee called the Committee on Emerging Scholarship, I think, something like that, trying to figure out internally our own understanding of museum exhibits or oral history projects, digital exhibitions-ones that don’t go up in a museum but are just online museum exhibits, so to speak. So, it’s an interesting moment in that regard as well. So, after three years, I’ll take stock. And part of it, also, is financial too. If I can find a way to hit a certain point of listener-ship, or if I can get a couple of sponsors, I wouldn’t make any money on it but that would get me money that I could then use to hire people to do my editing. If I could get somebody to just do my editing, it would, you know, just be transformative in terms of the dramatic reduction in how much time I have to spend on it. So, there’s always that.

Well hopefully that does happen!

Yeah, we’ll see, and there’s a second way, which is you can get people just to donate, just through Patreon. And I established a Patreon page, probably in January. So now, every now and again I get a notice, “someone has pledged a dollar a month. Dollar a month, two dollars a month. It hasn’t been a paradigm-shifting moment yet, but if the momentum continues I could reach a point where I would be pulling in a hundred dollars a month or two hundred dollars a month. And if that’s the case then that’s right about where the cost of farming out editing is actually quite affordable. So, I could accomplish a lot as far as reducing hours and that would make it more manageable. So, we shall see!

So, is there anything that you’d like to close out with for the journal, for any prospective history majors or words of encouragement for history majors?

Well, I think all the things I’ve talked about here are indicative—and you’ve probably heard me say [this] in different variations and at other times— [of the fact] that history is a twenty-first century major. And a lot of really remarkable things are happening on this hallway [the history department] and with the kind of project you did—it used to be who did summer research at Holy Cross? The science kids and maybe some economics and psych kids. Now History, English, and other sort of “pure,” more traditional humanities disciplines are doing research. And it’s not just, you know, researching poetry or researching Civil War battles. It’s doing unique, cutting-edge research using digital tools and such. So, I think there’s a lot of energy and creativity in the history major, and we are making the case day by day that history is a terrific major for the twenty first century no matter what you want to do. We have career nights, when we bring back recent graduates—we got people in e-commerce companies, Google, commercial real estate, anything you could possibly think of, and their foundational major is history. And I think all these things I’ve been talking about, there’s a way in which it’s all part of what’s happening in the department, and I’m just a piece of that.
Meet Our Contributors

Brett A. Cotter ’19
Brett A. Cotter is a junior History and Music double major from Sterling, Massachusetts, with a History thematic concentration in Resistance, Revolution, and Reaction. In addition to conducting historical research as part of the Charles Weiss Summer Research Program in 2017, he has also been a cellist in the Holy Cross Chamber Orchestra for his entire college career. An avid history lover from a young age, Brett studies history in the belief that through a thorough analysis of the past we can come to an understanding of our place in the present.

Michael T. DeSantis ’18
Michael T. DeSantis is the founding Editor-In-Chief of Of Life and History. He is a History and Sociology double major from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Within the History major, Michael concentrates in Resistance, Revolution, and Reaction and just finished writing a senior honors thesis about the effects of deindustrialization on conceptions of individual and communal identity in Worcester, Massachusetts. During his time at Holy Cross, Michael has explored his passion for studying the history of American society through the American Antiquarian Society, the Digital Transgender Archive, and the Holy Cross Summer Research Program. Outside the classroom, Michael has worked to assist first-year students in their transition to college as both an Orientation Leader and as a Resident Assistant. Combining his passion for social justice and living in community with other people, Michael has also participated in the Haiti International Immersion Program and the Spring Break Immersion Program.

Catherine B. Griffin ’18
Catherine B. Griffin is a graduating senior at Holy Cross from Cohasset, Massachusetts. She is a history major—concentrating in Resistance, Revolution, and Reaction—with a French minor, and a concentration in Peace and Conflict Studies. Catherine studied abroad in the Fall of 2016 in Strasbourg, France, which inspired her to pursue her capstone research on the Alsace region. Her motivation to study history stemmed from courses she took with Fr. Anthony Kuzniewski during her freshman and sophomore years. While at Holy Cross, she was very involved and participated in many different activities, some of which include: domestic and international immersion trips, fall orientation, and media relations intern in the Athletics Department.

Ada Liu ’20
Yuwei “Ada” Liu (刘雨微) is a sophomore international student from Beijing, China.
She is a Studio Art minor, and History major whose history concentration will be either War and Memory or Resistance, Revolution, and Reaction. She is also a member of the College Honors Program and will spend her junior year studying at the University of Melbourne in Australia. Ada is always surprised by the empathy she establishes with historical figures or with historical art and artifacts. She says that that she chooses to study history because it helps her to not only understand the human society but also to figure out her personal and social identity through different life stages.

**Campbell Loeber ’18**

Campbell Loeber is a History and Philosophy double major in the Class of 2018. On campus, she has been involved in a variety of activities ranging from varsity athletics to Gateways Orientation to the Spring Break Immersion program. Following her freshman year, she was invited to the interdisciplinary Charles Carroll Fellowship Program and has since been inducted to both the Phi Alpha Theta and Phi Sigma Tau international honors societies. As an upperclassman, she has enjoyed working with students in a number of majors as a consultant at the Writer’s Workshop and coordinating a staff of tour guides with the Admissions Office. She has also had the pleasure of presenting her research at the annual North Eastern Writing Center Conference in both 2017 and 2018 (with the help of an Ignite Fund Grant). Though Campbell recently completed an honors thesis in philosophy, history was her first academic love, dating back to a middle school class that explored the history behind Billy Joel's hit "We Didn't Start the Fire." She is exceedingly excited to have been able to participate in this historic issue of *Of Life and History* as both a contributor and an editor.

**Dimitri Savidis ’18**

Dimitri Savidis is from Worcester, Massachusetts, and is a member of the Class of 2018. He majors in Economics and History at the College of the Holy Cross. His thematic concentration is Resistance, Revolution, and Reaction, and he has a passion for Ottoman history and the emergence of national identities within the Ottoman Empire. In addition to his studies on Ottoman Palestine, his research interests also include the development of national identities of various ethnic groups on the Anatolian coast of the Black Sea in the early twentieth century.

**Emma Catherine Scally ’18**

Emma Catherine Scally is a senior History major and Russian and Eastern European Studies minor. Emma has plans to work at an investment firm in Boston after graduation but will always continue her love for Russian and Cold War history as a side hobby.
Edward T. O’Donnell ’86
Edward T. O’Donnell is an Associate Professor of History at the College of the Holy Cross. Professor O’Donnell is the author of several books including *Henry George and the Crisis of Inequality: Progress and Poverty in the Gilded Age America* (Columbia University Press, 2015), *Ship Ablaze: The Tragedy of the Steamboat General Slocum* (Random House/Broadway Books, May 2003), and *1001 Things Everyone Should Know About Irish American History* (Random House/Broadway Books, 2002). He is also an active public historian who has delivered history-themed presentations before thousands of educational, business, non-profit organizations and who has provided historical insight and commentary for programs airing on PBS, the History Channel, the Discovery Channel, C-Span, ABC World News Now, NPR, the BBC, and Bloomberg Radio, among others. Since 2016, he has helped spread his passion for and knowledge of American history through his podcast *In the Past Lane.*