

SPRING 2013

The Colorado Historian
AN UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL



History Club/Phi Alpha Theta and Department of History
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Department of History
University of Colorado at Boulder
204 Hellems Building
Boulder, Colorado 80309-0234

Letter from the Editors

We are proud to present the 2013 edition of *The Colorado Historian*, a culmination of a yearlong project to publish undergraduate work. We are very excited to have received excellent submissions over a wide array of topics and eras. For students at the university this is wonderful opportunity to not only learn about different periods in history but also an opportunity to be published.

In the fall we began to advertise for students to submit their work. We were honored to have received so many eager submissions but regrettably were unable to publish them all. In the spring we edited the papers, and with the help of the authors, we are now able to produce this journal consisting of these students' work. We applaud all the hard work of those published in this journal who have put tremendous effort into their papers.

We appreciate the support of the CU History Department in sponsoring the CU History Club and *The Colorado Historian*. We would like to especially acknowledge our faculty advisor Professor Ralph Mann for all his help and support. We would also like to thank Professor Patrick Tally, undergraduate advisor of History, for promoting the CU History Club and *The Colorado Historian* and for all his support in our academic endeavors. Finally, we extend our appreciation to the other editors, Sara Belford, Carmela Ortiz, and Emma Stewart, without whose help this journal would not have been possible.

Kind Regards,

Manon Williams
Luc Polglaze

Editors-in-Chief

Disclaimer

The Colorado Historian is an undergraduate academic journal written and edited by students with only minimal supervision of a faculty sponsor. The publication process begins by encouraging students both within and outside the Department of History to submit their work. Once the submissions are received, an objective and anonymous evaluation process begins. Submissions are evaluated on quality of analysis, clarity of organization, use of sources, and writing mechanics and style.

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The Colorado Historian would like to thank all of the students who submitted their work for consideration.

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Thessala and (Re)Imaginations of the Greeks in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligès*

Gabrielle Friesen is an undergraduate History and Women and Gender Studies major, hoping to graduate in the spring of 2014. Her focus of study is split between the ancient Mediterranean world, and European imperialism/decolonization.

Chrétien de Troyes' Arthurian romance *Cligès*, written around 1176, reveals much about contemporary European attitudes regarding the crusades and the crusader states in the Levant, the Outremer. On the surface *Cligès* reads as a tale of intrigue and monarchical succession, with the narrative following men from two generations. The first section follows the Greek Alexander who seeks to reclaim his throne from his brother Alis, while the second part of the narrative follows Alexander's son Cligès. Alis and Alexander are reconciled to each other in the first half of the tale, when Alexander allows Alis to remain emperor of Constantinople, but only if he swears not to marry so that Cligès may later rule. However, after Alexander's death, Alis goes back on his word, and marries a woman named Fenice, who Cligès also loves, denying his nephew both love and the throne. Contained within the surface-level reading of the text is another tale—one of Western Europe's continued losses in the East, and its desperate search for allies to help hold the Outremer.

Within *Cligès*, traditional Western Christian notions of Greeks prevalent during the medieval crusades are reversed. Greeks were already looked down upon by Western Europe, who believed them to be effeminate and cowardly. Interactions between the two groups during and after the first through fourth crusades exacerbated already present tensions. Western Christians also viewed the Greeks as heretical, and following the interactions between the two groups during the first crusade, the Greeks came to be widely regarded as untrustworthy and villainous, and were deemed "traitorous" by Western Europeans. As Western Europeans and Greeks played out their simmering hostility, the initial victories of the First Crusade were being reversed. Muslim forces were strengthening and regaining control of the territory that had been seized by Western

Christendom, and the crusader holdings in the Outremer began to shrink. The crusading forces began making concessions and seeking allies in an attempt to retain their eastern holdings, sometimes negotiating with previous enemies. *Cligès*, written in about 1176, can then be placed within this refiguring of alliances, and viewed as an attempt to justify alliances with the Greeks by recuperating their image in Western eyes. While some Greeks within *Cligès* do prove to be traitorous and untrustworthy, many others are noble, chivalrous, and serve Western Christians unerringly. One such character is Thessala, hailing from the Greek city of Thessaly. Thessala serves as the nursemaid/governess for Fenice, daughter of the German Emperor, and is staunchly loyal to her. Without Thessala, the story would be unable to reach a happy conclusion, and Chrétien employs her character throughout to rehabilitate the Western image of the Greeks, while still situating the Greeks as subservient to European Christians.

Before and during the course of the initial crusades, the Franks and other Western Europeans had come “to resent what they increasingly perceived as Greek arrogance and to revile what they perceived as the Greek propensity to deception.”¹ In the popular imagination of Western Europeans, the Greeks were opulent, effeminate, and untrustworthy. *Cligès*’ uncle Alis plays into this stereotype, usurping the throne from *Cligès* even after swearing an oath to his brother to allow his son to rule. In “The poetics of Translatio: French-Byzantine Relations in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligès*,” Sharon Kinoshita posits “...the story of *Cligès* proper...[exploits] Latin stereotypes of Greek faithlessness and deception systematically to invert the cultural hegemony that the eastern empire exerted over the West.”² However, locating *Cligès* temporally as being written and circulated in a time of deep spiritual crisis for Western Europe – the Outremer holdings were being eroded and reclaimed by Muslim forces – reveals another reading. Within this context, *Cligès* can also be viewed as Chrétien de Troyes’s attempts at recuperating the image of the Greeks in popular Western discourse, and so recuperating the possibility of alliances against Muslim forces in the Holy Lands as well.

Western distrust of the Greeks was already present by the First Crusade, and is captured quite clearly and with much vitriol by Robert the Monk, as well as by other

¹ Sharon Kinoshita, “The poetics of Translatio: French-Byzantine Relations in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligès*,” *Exemplaria*, 8, Number 2, (1996): 316.

² *Ibid*, 319.

chroniclers of the crusades. Anti-Greek sentiment and rhetoric was present in most Western dealings with the Greeks after the First Crusade due to an exacerbation of existing tension by the Greek Emperor Alexius. Robert the Monk, writing in 1105-1106 about the First Crusade of 1096-1099, notes that the Emperor Alexius “was always suspicious about the strength of the Christian soldiers and more so the Franks,” as the first wave of German soldiers arrived in Constantinople.³ As the main bulk of the crusader army arrived, Robert chronicles that Alexius set an ambush for the Duke of Godfrey’s men, but was repelled by the Duke’s brother Baldwin.⁴ Alexius later sends soldiers to kill or capture any stragglers from the crusader force. When Alexius’ men are caught and questioned by the Franks, they say that the Emperor fears the crusaders are in Greece not to press forward to the Holy Lands, but to take the Emperor’s kingdom. Alexius learns he has been discovered, and, furious, he begins “to mull over plans for treachery,” continuing to plot against the crusader forces.⁵ As the entire Catholic force of the first crusade make it to Constantinople, Alexius is described as “lacking in courage, devoid of sense and short on wisdom.”⁶ Robert on numerous occasions derides the Greek emperor, as well as his subjects, for the untrustworthiness and frequent betrayals of Western forces, a sentiment not uncommon among his readership and peers.

Fulcher of Chartres, a soldier also writing about the First Crusade, had fewer grievances with Alexius and the Greeks as a whole. However, while his discussion of the Greeks and Constantinople is brief, his compliments and praises contain elements of traditional Western European complaints against the Greeks. When describing Constantinople, he calls it an “excellent and beautiful city...it is a great nuisance to recite what an opulence of all kinds of goods are found there; of gold, of silver, of many kinds of mantles, and of holy relics.”⁷ While Fulcher seems to hold less antagonistic feelings towards the Greeks than his monk counterpart, he nonetheless notes the opulence of the Greek capitol city, part of a popular articulation of the Greeks as lavish and effeminate.

³ Robert the Monk, *Robert the Monk’s History of the First Crusade*, trans. Carol Sweetenham (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 84.

⁴ Ibid, 94.

⁵ Ibid, 96-97.

⁶ Ibid, 99.

⁷ Fulcher of Chartres, “The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I,” in *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials*, ed. Edward Peters, (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 62.

Portrayed by portrayed by Robert as treacherous, and opulent by Fulcher, the Greeks were also viewed as heretical by Western Europeans. The Western Catholic Church viewed the Greek Orthodox as theologically different, which resulted in the centuries long East-West Schism between the two groups, and much of the distrust and contempt between the two sides. Although occurring after Chrétien de Troyes had written *Cligès*, the Fourth Crusade (1202-1204) was also rife with anti-Greek sentiment, and resulted in Western forces overthrowing two emperors of Constantinople and ultimately taking the city. It is in this context of schism and Western European distrust that *Cligès*' Greek characters were written, in an attempt to depict the Greeks as something other than traitorous heretics.

Kinoshita notes that *Cligès* can be interpreted either as primarily half-Greek, or focus on the fact that he is half-Arthurian, a European who cuckolds then overthrows a Byzantine emperor as Kinoshita mentions.⁸ That reading is present, but the presence of the other Greek characters – namely the villainous Alis- make it so that *Cligès*' Greekness, if not the primary source of identity, is at least equally as important as his Western and Arthurian heritage. *Cligès* stands in the middle, obviously the protagonist, being of mixed Greek and European heritage, opposed by his corrupt Greek Uncle in his love for the European princess Fenice. While the conflict between *Cligès* and his uncle would muddy the restoration of the Greek image that Chrétien de Troyes is attempting to create, it is through the character Thessala that the text succeeds in this regard. Kinoshita focuses on *Cligès* as an “intervention in one of the most problematic issues confronting the medieval imagination: the troubled relationship between Greek and Latin Christendom in the century following the First Crusade.”⁹ But if *Cligès* is an important intervention, so too is Thessala, although, as a servant, she operates in a different interventive manner than the half-Greek, half-Latin noble *Cligès*. Thessala remains in a subservient position to the Western European characters in the narrative, yet she is fiercely loyal to them, a figure of respected authority and knowledge, in an albeit somewhat taboo field.

⁸ Sharon Kinoshita, “The Poetics of Translatio,” 318.

⁹ *Ibid*, 319.

Thessala is first introduced as a necromancer, and secondly as a Greek. Her two identities are linked, as in Thessaly, “diabolical enchantments flourish and are taught.”¹⁰ On a purely textual level, necromancy is coded as being a foul thing from the devil. But subtextually, necromancy stands in for Greek Schismatic heresy. The Greeks, who were mostly Christian Orthodox, were considered to be heretics by their European counterparts. This heresy, considered somewhat devilish since it differed from European doctrines, is presented in the text of *Cligès* through Thessala’s somewhat devilish knowledge of necromancy. Interestingly enough, Thessala’s necromancy, after initially being introduced as diabolical in nature, is then used for good throughout the text. Thessala only seems to use her skills at the behest of Fenice, a good European, or Cligès, who, while also Greek, has assimilated to European Christendom. In fact, she only reveals this talent when it is needed by Fenice, stating, “...I would not have told you even now had I not clearly seen that a malady for which you need my aid has overwhelmed you.”¹¹ Her dark magic is then forgivable because she uses it only in the employ of European Christendom.

Indeed, her first instance of using necromancy appears in order to protect Fenice’s honor. After being married to Cligès’ uncle Alis, Fenice realizes she is in love with Cligès. Fenice is distraught, because she does not want to wind up another cautionary love story like *Tristan and Isolde*, which she surely will if she sleeps with both Alis and Cligès. But because she is Alis’ wife, she must submit to him, and is distraught that she must forever be apart from her true love Cligès, or else bring dishonor upon him. Thessala’s intervention and knowledge of necromancy allows the two heroes’ honor to remain intact and for them to eventually find happiness. So, while necromancy is devilish in origin, Thessala’s necromancy works to protect Fenice and Cligès (who again, are embodiments of Western Christendom), meaning an alliance is permissible.

As the Outremer shrunk under the force of Muslim incursions, it became both necessary and forgivable to ally with heretics in order save the honor of Christendom and to ensure its happiness. Thessala’s necromancy also becomes permissible in its results of mirroring Christ. Just as Jesus died and arose, Thessala’s necromancy works in imitation

¹⁰ Chrétien De Troyes, “Cligès,” in *Arthurian Romances*, trans. by William W. Kibler, Penguin Books, 1991, 159.

¹¹ Chrétien De Troyes, 159.

of this miraculous event. Her skills place Fenice in a death-like state, from which Fenice rises again days later. This imitation works as a reminder within the text that although the Greeks may be heretics - embodied by Thessala's necromancy - they still share their religious origins with Western Christendom, which means that alliances during the most dire of times are permissible. Chrétien de Troyes was writing in the context of the Great Schism, and deliberately invoked an arisen Christ parallel to Thessala's necromancy and the revival of Fenice to point out the commonality of origin between the Greek Orthodox and Catholic Churches and thus facilitate a palpability for Western Europeans of Greek Christian's religious practices.

Thessala's social position is also integral to Chrétien's articulation of the ideal Greek identity. While always aiding the good Christian characters, she is also always subservient to them. Thessala is a woman, which plays on the conceptions of the Greeks as effeminate. It is her gender that allows her to serve European Christendom so well, as she would surely not be in the position of Fenice's guardian had she been a man. Later her gender is also highlighted as a positive trait amidst a crowd of other women. After Fenice has taken the potion to keep her in a death-like state, doctors from Salerno¹² arrive, and in an attempt to wake her, they begin to torture her. They torture her to the point of death, from which "a thousand ladies who saw the torture and suffering being inflicted upon the lady" fortuitously save her.¹³ Rushing in, the women snatch Fenice away from the doctors, whom they then promptly kill. Among the crowd of a thousand women is Thessala, "who had no other thought than to reach her mistress."¹⁴ Thessala's gender allows her to be able to save Fenice, as part of a crowd of other women, which can also be read as a crowd of (effeminate) Greeks coming to save Western Christendom as it's Outremer holdings are slowly tortured and destroyed. The presence of the European doctors complicates the reading further, as the Greeks are saving Europe from itself and its own folly. The defenders of the Outremer were spread thin, and their losses were caused largely by their own lack of resources. But should stronger alliances be formed with Greek forces, as the doctor scene implies, the situation in the East could still be repaired.

¹² Located in modern-day Italy.

¹³ Chrétien De Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*, 196.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Additionally, as noted by Kinoshita, the direct translation of the title Fenice addresses Thessala with is a difficult matter. Fenice addresses the other woman as ‘Mestre.’ Many translations have rendered this as nurse or governess, but according to Kinoshita, these translations “obscure the more standard readings of the term; ‘Docteur, médecin’ [doctor] – [reading which are] of considerable interest, given the critical attention paid to Thessala’s relationship to professional practitioners of medieval medicine.”¹⁵ Thessala is in a subservient position to Fenice and the crown, but that position is one of a respected expert. Thessala, while a necromancer, is also respected as a doctor, which means that the incident with the doctors from Salerno can be read as Greek medicine winning out over Western European medicine. Kinoshita figures this victory also as an act of movement- the export/import of Greek medicine to Western Europe. “Originating from the other end of the Mediterranean, ‘mestre’ Thessala incarnates yet another alternative to the routes of *translatio*, combining a professionalized medical knowledge of pulse and urine with a (gendered) mastery of the esoteric arts of the east.”¹⁶ Thessala, as a doctor, is victorious over Western doctors and medicine, indicative of an increased Western European awareness of the Greek’s medical knowledge. Indeed, Kinoshita notes that, “even as Chretien was busy pitting Thessala’s (Greek?) magic against the interpretive skills of the three physicians of Salerno, the scholar Gerald of Cremona was in Toledo (1175-87), hard at work on translations of Galen and Hippocrates that would transform western knowledge of the medical sciences...”¹⁷ Greek medicine was being combined with Western knowledge during Chretien de Troyes’ lifetime, and *Cligès* sought to reflect that increased dialogue through the figure of Thessala, a Greek using her medical knowledge for the benefit of a Western European.

Using the translation of “mestre” as nursemaid or governess provides a slightly different, but still positive reading of Thessala. Under this translation, Thessala works as Fenice’s governess, and also served as her nursemaid when she was young. This position, once more a gendered position, is also importantly a position of subservience. Thessala

¹⁵ Sharon Kinoshita, “Chrétien de Troyes’s “Cligés” in the Medieval Mediterranean,” *Arthuriana*, 18, No. 3, Essays on Chrétien’s Cligés (Fall 2008), 53.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 54.

¹⁷ Sharon Kinoshita, “Chrétien de Troyes’s “Cligés” in the Medieval Mediterranean,” 52.

inhabits a social sphere parallel to that of John the carpenter's in relation to Cligès. John and Cligès have a relationship of serf to lord, and John is fiercely loyal to his lord- even under extreme duress. Thessala is similarly devoted to Fenice; she occupies a position of subservience to Fenice and is devoted to her needs and safety. Thessala not only rushes in to save Fenice from the doctors, but uses her necromancy multiple times to protect and serve her charge, seeking to ensure Fenice's happiness. Thessala then is the ideal Greek – working to ensure the prosperity of European Christendom (embodied by Fenice) and existing as a totally loyal subject to Western Europeans. Thessala recuperates the image of Greeks as traitorous, since she is only ever loyal, and uses her skills only when asked by characters who stand in for European Christendom. Her necromancy, when called upon, is employed only for the betterment and happiness of the Western European Christian protagonists of *Cligès*. Chrétien is articulating through Thessala the ideal Greek subject- one who is subservient and loyal to Western Christendom. This idealized Greek subject works to protect Western Christendom from the more traditionally traitorous Greeks, portrayed in the text by the traitorous emperor Alis, who must be made subservient to Western Christendom's (Fenice and Cligès) desires. The defeat of the traitorous Greek is a feat that is accomplished solely due to Thessala's intervention and protection of Fenice's, and by extension Cligès', honor.

Writing during a period when the Outremer was rapidly shrinking, Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligès* is situated within a very specific set of needs by Western Christendom. Scrambling to protect its holdings, Western Christendom and the Crusader States began seeking out allies wherever they could. In some cases this meant making peace treaties with Muslim forces, something that would never have occurred during the First Crusade. The Greeks, previously maligned and distrusted, were also a pool of potential allies. Chrétien's work, written and disseminated during a period of grave concern for the Outremer, functions as propaganda seeking to make the reversal in stance on cooperation more palatable. Through the Greek characters explicitly coded as good, Chrétien sought to do two things. One was to reconstitute European Christendom's perceptions of the Greeks by countering portrayals of stereotypical traitorous Greeks with images of loyal, subservient Greeks, whose heresies could be forgiven with enough service to Western European Christendom. The second was to present an image of the ideal Greek, who

acted correctly in their interactions with western Christendom. Thessala as a character accomplished both these propaganda goals; she justifies a softening of relations with the Greeks by repairing their image. Not all Greeks are untrustworthy- Thessala never betrays her European Christian mistress, and works only for her happiness. Although a heretic, her aid is crucial, and her heresy can be forgiven in exchange for her aid of Western Christendom, much like an indulgence. As a character, Thessala functions to allow for softer interactions with the Greeks in the public imagination. She does this by exemplifying a Greek capable of supporting Western Christendom and of being worthy of trust, which were both critical recuperations to be made in the context of the continued loss of the Outremer and the need for allies.

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The Peasants' Revolt of 1381: Moral British Rebels

Caleb Robinson is graduating with a History degree in May 2014. He has played guitar for 12 years and snowboards every chance he gets. He was born in the Bay Area but moved to Highlands Ranch, CO in 2000. He is uncertain of his plans following graduation, but has enjoyed studying history, in particular modern European history. He has treasured history all his life, going back to elementary school.

It was not an accidental phenomenon nor a well planned military strategy, The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 rested somewhere in between. It was violent yet civil, chaotic yet structured, and gruesome yet alluring. A well articulated but perhaps overlooked objective of the Peasants' Revolt included the moral reform of both Church and society. Multitudes of common people in late fourteenth century Britain kept their sanity while committing crimes of insanity to propel the revolt into reasonable fruition. The attraction of an egalitarian social system, the vision of rebel leaders, and the sins of society encouraged demands for moral reform within English society. Egalitarianism gave the commoners hope, the leaders' preaching gave them drive, and the sins of society gave impetus to revolution. The execution of the archbishop, John Wycliffe's condemned beliefs, and John Ball's testaments of ecclesiastical reform incited demands for moral reform of the church. This combination of events provided evidence for the rebellion's impetus for ecclesiastical reform of morality. The happenings and demonstrations of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 expressed widespread concerns yearning for reforms of both society and the Church.

Several primary and secondary sources have addressed perceptions of immorality during the late fourteenth century. Many modern scholars have written about the perception of immorality of Church and society during the fourteenth century, but they have failed to argue that immorality was a primary factor in the outbreak of the uprising.

Over a hundred years ago George Trevelyan addressed this subject. His England in the Age of Wycliffe reported the lawlessness rampant throughout England in detail. Trevelyan's historical analysis of sheriffs, retainers, and law enforcement brought light to the disobedient state of many 14th century English citizens. He wrote that the sheriffs, who were once powerful law keepers, became ineffective by this time. The sheriffs were replaced by retainers who "demanded new remedies"¹⁸ and a new style of law enforcement. The retainers were loyal to a specific noble, who supplied compensation. Trevelyan continued to state that this led to unlawfulness throughout England. He wrote, "The judges, sheriffs, and juries of the royal tribunals were often so effectively terrorised by the hired retainers of some local magnate that the result was very much the same as in the bad old feudal days of King Stephen."¹⁹ Trevelyan recalled how the retainers abused their power by threatening commoners and law officials with death: "[The retainers] gave their victims to understand that if they sued in court they would have their throats cut."²⁰ Trevelyan made it clear that nobles held excessive control through their hired retainers, who avoided judicial indictments and threatened the common people. Trevelyan laid out the basis of an immoral, lawless society but failed to tie this to the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. He wrote about frequent robberies, violence, and murder that went unpunished in England,²¹ but did not make a statement that declared this unlawfulness as impetus for the rebellion. Trevelyan did, however, provide justification for the monarchy's negligence to uphold a moral, lawful state: "The reason of the helplessness of the government to enforce the law is not far to seek. The King was powerless to act against the great nobles, because his only military resources were the resources commanded by the nobles themselves."²² During and prior to the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, the state of England was unlawful and immoral. Trevelyan's analysis supplied background information and familiarity with lawless English society leading up to the revolt.

¹⁸ George Macaulay Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wycliffe* (New York City, NY.: AMS Press, 1975), 58.

¹⁹ Trevelyan, p. 59

²⁰ Trevelyan, p. 60

²¹ Trevelyan, p. 60

²² Trevelyan, p. 64

More recently Steven Justice shed light on the social and ecclesiastical state of England before and during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, while Richard Firth Green focused on John Ball's letters' contribution to literature and significance.

In Writing and Rebellion, Steven Justice focused on John Wycliffe and his influence in England. Justice thoroughly described many of Wycliffe's preachings, including Wycliffe's opposition to clerical wealth. Justice recalled Wycliffe's belief that the church should not be wealthy because Christ "abjured all forms of secular ownership; that is therefore the duty of the clergy... to refuse ownership."²³ Justice expressed animosity toward clergy members employed by lords for secular business. He continued to state that, "clerical luxury, avarice, and lechery [had] driven the peace of God from the realm."²⁴ Justice concluded that the church as an immoral establishment and agreed with the need for restoration. When Justice discussed the need for ecclesiastical lands to be given to the poor, he connected Wycliffite theory to the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. Justice stated, "Wyclif needed to argue that the grant of ecclesiastical lands and rents to the realm at large was ipso facto a grant to the poor, and he did this in two ways, both of eventual importance to the rebels of 1381."²⁵ Justice reported Wycliffe's push for ecclesiastical disendowment and his view of the importance of the peasantry to society. He wrote about how Wycliffe saw the poor as the foundational pillars of society and how they embodied Christ's own authority.²⁶ According to Justice the rebels of 1381 were agents for Wycliffite theory; he believed the rebels "shaped Wyclif's teachings into a vernacular program of disendowment."²⁷ Justice failed, however, to give a strong statement that Wycliffe's teaching on immorality in the Church was a direct motivation for the Peasants' Revolt.

Working with similar sources, Richard Firth Green's analysis of John Ball's letters recounted their literary components and historical details. Because *Piers Plowman* was alluded to in many of the Ball letters, Firth Green stated that the letters were analyzed and studied by scholars of literature: "for literary scholars they [John Ball's

²³ Steven Justice, *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 82.

²⁴ Justice, p. 82.

²⁵ Justice, p. 84.

²⁶ Justice, p. 85.

²⁷ Justice, p. 90.

letters] offer dramatic examples of a minor literary genre...satire, complaint literature, or the literature of popular protest.”²⁸ Opposed to limiting the letters to historical research and the analysis of the revolt’s aim, Firth Green expressed the significance of John Ball’s letters to general literature. Firth Green continued to ask questions about the importance of the letters on the revolt. Specifically, he compared previous historians’ views of the letters’ importance to the Peasants’ Revolt with his own notions. Firth Green wrote, “the question of Ball’s authorship of the letters remains, of course, a more open one;”²⁹ this statement expressed that Firth Green questioned if John Ball wrote the letters and if the letters written by other rebel leaders were pseudonyms of John Ball or separate entities. Firth Green provided background knowledge about the misconstrued order of the seven deadly sins in Ball’s letter but failed to offer any explanation about its significance.³⁰ Firth Green overlooked Ball’s rationale for moral reform of church and society. Even though he gave detailed analysis about John Ball’s letters, he did not connect the letters’ content to impetus for revolt.

The authors of these writings did not connect the need for moral reform to the Peasants’ Revolt. Using many similar sources, Trevelyan, Justice, and Firth Green simply reiterated that lawlessness and immorality was rampant in the church and society during the late fourteenth century. Several chroniclers wrote about the need for moral reform and its role in the Peasants’ Revolt. Each primary source recalled occurrences that took place during the insurrection and provided a response to the outcomes. These occurrences gave support to the objective of moral reform in the church and society.

The hierarchical society of fourteenth century England separated the wealthy from the poor. The king, lords, knights, and the rest of the aristocracy held most of the wealth while the remaining common people were working hard for little pay. The peasants had been oppressed by their superiors and forced to work their land for miniscule compensation. The desire for an egalitarian society existed among the peasants and common English people. They were weary of being inferior to an aristocratic power and had been driven to change by John Ball’s presentations of egalitarianism spread

²⁸ Richard Firth Green, “John Ball’s Letters,” in *Chaucer’s England: Literature in Historical Context*, ed. Barbara Hanawalt (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 180.

²⁹ Firth Green in *Chaucer’s England*, p. 181.

³⁰ Firth Green in *Chaucer’s England*, p. 182.

throughout the peasantry. According to the chronicler Jean Froissart, many times after giving mass John Ball, a priest, preached about his vision for an equal society:

Ah ye good people, the matters goeth not well to pass in England, nor shall do till everything be common, and that there be no villains nor gentlemen, but that we may be all united together, and that the lords be no great masters than we be... We all come from one father and one mother, Adam and Eve³¹

John Ball nurtured egalitarian visions among the common people. He enlightened the peasantry with the consequence of an unequal society. Not only was the situation of the lower classes unsatisfactory, but all of England “goeth not well.” By encouraging the elimination of the hierarchy, he stimulated unrest among the common people of England. Ball’s encouragement called for a complete reform of society; the peasants saw the hierarchy as morally undignified. Though they may have always believed social hierarchy to be immoral, John Ball gave the peasantry a voice to reject the aristocracy’s superiority to the masses.

Froissart claimed that John Ball compared the luxurious lifestyle of the wealthy with the harsh lifestyle of the poor³². The English peasantry hoped for an egalitarian society. This hope contributed to a primary goal of the Peasants’ Revolt of 1381, a societal moral reform of equality. The insurgents sought to reform the social system in order to receive better treatment and restore England to a morally true state by reminding the Monarchy “that from the beginning all men were created equal by nature.”³³ The motivation behind the rebellion was not to overthrow the government in order to exert power and rule the kingdom, it was to transform the social structure that plagued the English peasants. If the peasantry sought to successfully destroy the hierarchal system and create an egalitarian society, they realized the necessity to replace the top of the social pyramid- the king.

³¹ Jean Froissart, “The Causes of the Revolt According to Froissart,” in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, ed. Richard Barrie Dobson (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1970), 371.

³² Froissart in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, p. 371.

³³ Thomas Walsingham, *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham, 1376-1422* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, England; Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2005), 162.

The motivators of the revolt proclaimed the need for social reform when organizing their vision for the insurrection. In addition to his egalitarian proclamations, John Ball contributed to the moral reform of society through various teachings and letters. The letters found throughout the chronicles were attributed to various revolt leaders and participants, but many are thought to be pseudonyms of John Ball himself. The question of the authorship of the letters has remained unanswerable and open to interpretation.³⁴ Regardless, the letters' of John Ball and other leaders have provided ample insight to the direction and agenda of the revolt's instigators. Thomas Walsingham- a monk chronicler from St. Albans who rejected the preaching of John Wycliffe and John Ball- wrote that Jack Straw, credited as a chief leader of the insurgents, gave a confession of the rising's objectives that has illuminated his desired outcome. A leader of the gathering at Blackheath, Jack Straw, allegedly authored a letter to the rebels proclaiming his dissatisfaction of the existing social hierarchy and motivated them to action. These leaders saw moral discontentment that needed restoration to widespread satisfaction. John Ball, Jack Straw, and Jack Trewman saw the deeds and establishment of the upper social classes as morally corrupt and in need of reformation. John Ball had been speaking for over twenty years on issues that he thought important to bring to light.³⁵ Walsingham wrote that he spoke in spite of "both ecclesiastics and secular lords,"³⁶ preaching the need for moral social reform to the masses.

Although Richard Dobson acknowledged that modern-day intellectuals have rejected the testimony of Jack Straw, Dobson argued that it could not be completely invented by Thomas Walsingham. In his introduction to Thomas Walsingham's confession of Jack Straw, Dobson stated that the supposed admission was not entirely unlikely for Straw to have provided.³⁷ In his confession, Straw admitted to plotting to kill the knights associated with the king, the lords who could have resisted them, and,

³⁴ Firth Green in Chaucer's England, p. 181.

³⁵ Walsingham, p. 162.

³⁶ Walsingham, p. 162.

³⁷ Richard Barrie Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970), 364.

finally, the king himself. He also announced that they would rid England of all “landowners, bishops, monks, canons, and rectors of churches.”³⁸ Straw went on to say:

Since nobody more important or braver or more knowledgeable than us would have been left alive, we would have established just as we pleased the laws by which our subjects would have been regulated.³⁹

If this vision had been carried out, it would have created an entirely reformed society. Straw’s account matched Ball’s push to create a reformed society. Both Jack Straw and John Ball proclaimed the need for hierarchical social reform. The expulsion of most military, monarchical, and church leaders would have restarted British society. Assuming that Straw’s confession was genuine, his aim was to reform society from oppression to a less corrupt society. His idea to establish new laws at the reformed government’s discretion represented a societal reform. By stating this demand, he condemned many old laws that contributed to his discontent with society and hoped for new ones that could spark a moral reform within society. Walsingham’s extreme pro-Ricardian (Richard- king of England) bias dictated what was truly confessed by Jack Straw, but his confessional excerpt gave a glimpse to Straw’s belief in a loss of morality among society- the upper class in particular.

The desire for a moral reform in society was also expressed through Jack Trewman’s letter to his followers at Blackheath. Trewman wrote,

Jakke Trewman doth yow to understande that falsnes and gyle havith regned to long, and trewth hat bene sette under a lokke, and falsnes regneth in every flokke... Speke, spende and spede...and therefore synne fareth as wilde flode...for nowye is tyme.⁴⁰

He rallied against the lighthearted treatment of falseness among society and implored his recipients to react in urgency. Trewman conveyed that deceit and dishonesty had controlled England for much too long. He believed in a moral social reform to rid the country of deceit and dishonesty among the leaders and commonwealth England.

³⁸ Walsingham, p. 148.

³⁹ Walsingham, p. 148.

⁴⁰ Henry Knighton, “The Letters of Jakke Mylner, Jakke Carter, Jakke Trewman, and John Ball,” in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, ed. Richard Barrie Dobson (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1970), 382.

Because of his leadership role in the rebellion, Trewman's vision spread throughout insurgent camps and was understood by many. Trewman's letter advocated moral reform of society to rid the country of falseness and deception. The leaders of the revolt constantly pointed to a need for social reform, due to deprivation of morality. As expressed in the letters, Ball, Straw, and Trewman guided the insurrection to focus on a moral reform of society, their proclamations and imagination inspired the masses to strive for a morally just community.

The sins of society inspired calls for moral reform during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. Several writings on sins of society indicated a vision for its moral reform: the poem "Warnyng To Be Ware," the first letter of John Ball, and Henry Knighton's account of the repugnance of a king's commissioner. Each of these writings highlighted specific sins that took hold of society leading up to the revolt. "Warnyng to Be Ware" focused on apathetic Christianity, Ball's letter recounted the seven deadly sins within society, and the king's commissioner exhibited lechery and deceit among royal officers.

The unknown author of "Warnyng to Be Ware" gave blame to the sins of society for the Peasants' Revolt. The poem contained this passage, "The Rysing of the comuynes in londe...Beo-tokenes the grete vengauce and wrake that schulde falle for synnes sake."⁴¹ The revolt took place in vengeance for the many sins that were committed during this time. The poet proclaimed that the revolt was due to "synnes sake," implying that without sin there would be no revolt. Clearly, it is impossible not to sin, but the focus of the poet was the types of sins and abundance of sins were reasons for the revolt. The poet states, "whi set we that lord so liht, and al to foule with him we fare?"⁴², implying that the commoners were not taking God seriously and the teachings of Jesus were of little value to the people, therefore God punished them with the revolt as well as other catastrophes. The poet also mentioned the earthquake of 1381 and the new outbreak of bubonic plague as retribution for the sins of humanity. The poem adamantly expressed that sin was to blame for the rising. The Christian apathy that plagued England gave impetus to rebellion through the peasantry's yearning for a moral state. The poem revealed Christian apathy as a sin that caused social morality to wither.

⁴¹ Anonymous, "A Warnyng to Be Ware," in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, ed. Richard Barrie Dobson (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970), 358.

⁴² Anonymous in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, p. 357.

The first letter of John Ball, according to Henry Knighton, clarified his feeling of sin among society and called for action. In his letter, Ball wrote,

Now regnith pride in pris, and covetys is hold wys, and leccherye withouten shame and glotonye withouten blame. Envy regnith with tresone, and slouthe is take in grete sesone.⁴³

Ball proclaimed five of the seven deadly sins had a strong hold on the people of England; pride, envy, lechery, gluttony, and sloth. The two sins omitted from his letter were greed and wrath. Why they were left out is up to speculation, but wrath was probably left out because Ball was rallying the peasants to a wrathful rebellion against the monarchy and the Church and he did not want to contradict himself. The standards of society were not in accordance to the church, which was of utmost importance at this time. The church preached against these sins but society continued to indulge in them. Ball rebuked society by illuminating numerous sins being perpetrated. His letter continued with the need for moral reform quickly, “for nowe is tyme amen.”⁴⁴ Society had seemed to lose all reverence for God. The deadly sins of society gave impetus to revolution. Ball showed society that it needed to undergo moral reform to regain faith in God and cease from committing sins. John Ball wanted to see the sins of society discontinue by enacting a moral reform through uprising.

The sins expressed in John Ball’s letter elucidated actual events that took place in 14th-century England. According to Henry Knighton, after a series of dishonest tax collections, the king sent out commissioners throughout the country who investigated the collectors. He stated,

One of these commissioners came to a certain village...(and) shamelessly lifted the young girls to test whether they had enjoyed intercourse with men. In this way he compelled the friends and parents of these girls to pay the tax for them: many would rather pay for their daughters than see them

⁴³ Knighton in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, p. 383.

⁴⁴ Knighton in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, p. 383.

touched in such a way. These and similar actions by the said inquisitors much provoked the people.⁴⁵

The king's commissioner committed a horrible sin to help incite the rebellion. The peasantry was upset with the sins and treatment that upper class statuses were unencumbered by. The molestation of girls in this passage reflected a collective peasant desire for moral reform of society. Knighton goes on to explain, "when the commons of Kent and the neighboring areas suffered such evils...which appeared to be endless and without remedy, they refused to bear such injuries any longer."⁴⁶ These detestable acts apparently occurred throughout England and gave impetus to the involvement of the multitudes to revolt against the morality of upper class society. Knighton continued to say that the commons affected by these sins convened to develop a plan to have them stopped. Therefore they assembled at Blackheath.⁴⁷ The sins of society motivated the peasantry to revolt in reaction to immoral actions of sin-infected royal officers.

Throughout fourteenth century England, the church played an intricate and important role in the lives of the people. It was a source of salvation, politics, legality, economics, and social culture that dictated nearly every person's existence within the British Isles. Because Christianity was of the highest importance during this period, the church acquired immense power.

The insurgents of 1381 aimed to reform the immorality that plagued the church during this time. As was the case in the intention of killing the head of English society - King Richard II- in order to reform society, the insurgents saw it necessary to kill the head of the church to enact reform of the English church by beheading Simon of Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury. Even though Thomas Walsingham believed that the primary reason for the slaughter of the Archbishop was in vengeance for his imprisonment of the insurgent leader, John Ball. The central motive of this event contained more purpose.

⁴⁵ Henry Knighton, "The Outbreak of the Revolt According to Henry Knighton," in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, ed. Richard Barrie Dobson (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970), 135.

⁴⁶ Knighton in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, p. 135.

⁴⁷ Knighton in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, p. 136.

When arriving at the Tower in London to capture the Archbishop “whom they called a traitor,” the rebels questioned, “Where is the traitor to our land? Where is the plunderer of the common people?”⁴⁸ One of several reasons the archbishop was accused of treason and deemed a traitor was because of his relationship with John of Gaunt, “whom the rebels held in hatred and rancour.”⁴⁹ The rebels saw the archbishop as a man “false to his people and a traitor to his kingdom,”⁵⁰ according to Walsingham. These characteristics were an example of immorality among the church and its leaders. They were not acceptable for a man who held such high power and prestige over the church and the people. Therefore, in order to bring the church to moral reform, it was a requirement to kill its treasonable and immoral leader. The insurgents were weary of an insufficient and flawed traitor corrupting the church.

In addition to the insurgents feeling this way, others felt that the archbishop was to blame for the entire revolt. Thomas Walsingham wrote, “Many held the negligence of the archbishop and his provincial bishops responsible.”⁵¹ Following the revolt, individuals saw the archbishop’s flaws as the reason for the revolt. The negligence of the archbishop and his bishops are immoral characteristics for a people in high church positions “for in their care lies the faith and stability of the Christian religion,” therefore they must be caring and nurturing to their followers.⁵² The archbishop did not see his negligence as immorality, his ignorance ultimately led to his doom. The church needed to be reformed to an establishment led by fair, noble, and Godly men.

Similar to the importance of the church to Medieval England is John Wycliffe to the Peasants’ Revolt. Even though Wycliffe publicly disagreed with the revolt, his preaching and Christian doctrine bestowed impetus and motivation for moral reform of the church through rebellion. Henry Knighton credited Wycliffe with the following; “He (Wycliffe) introduced many beliefs into the church which were condemned by the

⁴⁸ Walsingham, p. 172.

⁴⁹ Thomas Walsingham, “Concerning What Happened to the Archbishop,” in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, ed. Richard Barrie Dobson (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1970), 175.

⁵⁰ Walsingham, p. 126.

⁵¹ Walsingham in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, p. 367.

⁵² Walsingham in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, p. 367.

catholic doctors of the church.”⁵³ Wycliffe’s views of the Eucharist were a calling for moral reform of the church. Wycliffe’s rejection of Catholic transubstantiation was an attack on Catholic doctrine, which, consequently, attacked its morality. Wycliffe’s rejection was an attack on the morality of the church because Wycliffe accused the church of false teaching, because he believed Catholic doctrine to be unbiblical. This rejection called for a regression of strict tradition and a progression of Christian essence. Wycliffe’s ideologies accused the church of sloth, for it was not withholding Biblical standards among its leaders. Wycliffe’s teachings condemned the immoral enforcement of Catholic tradition and reinstated the Biblical teachings of Jesus. Essentially, Wycliffe proclaimed many Catholic traditions as flawed and attempted to regroup Christ followers in what truly mattered according to the Bible. He viewed the church as a flawed and sinful establishment that committed prideful, slothful, and lecherous acts. This gave way to the desire of a moral reform of the church carried out by John Ball, a faithful and charismatic follower of Wycliffe’s ideals and philosophy.

John Ball exemplified his desire for moral reform of the church through his writing and teaching. As a chief leader of the revolt, John Ball spread this idea throughout the rebel parties. Consequently, the revolt aimed to reform the immorality of the church in accordance to his philosophy. Thomas Walsingham explained Ball’s preaching in this way:

He even taught the people that tithes should not be paid to a curate, unless the person paying the tithe was richer than the vicar or rector who received it. Also that tithes and offerings should be taken away from a curate, if it was found that his subject or parishioner was a man of better life than his priest.⁵⁴

The poor, who struggled to acquire any income at all, were being robbed by the church’s tithing policy. The church, a very wealthy establishment, exploited their power over the common people to receive revenue. Ball believed this to be wrong. He preached that the church should only take from those that were wealthy; instead of taking from

⁵³ Henry Knighton, “Ball and Wycliffe According to Henry Knighton,” in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, ed. Richard Barrie Dobson (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1970), 376.

⁵⁴ Walsingham, p. 162.

peasants who needed all the money they could scramble for survival. This exploitation was a moral issue that tarnished the benevolence of the church. Ball continued to slight the church's morality when he stated that offerings should be kept from the church if the giver was known to lead a more moral life than the priest. This statement gave the implication that many priests were immoral and many commoners were more faithful than their religious leaders. According to Knighton, "Balle prepared the way for Wycliffe's opinions and...disturbed many with his own doctrines."⁵⁵ Ball's ideology called for moral reform of the church because it implied that church leaders were leading dishonest lives while exploiting their power over the people by demanding financial offering, many of which were more pious than the said priest.

Thomas Walsingham also credited John Ball with preaching Wycliffite doctrine such as, "none were fit for the Kingdom of God who were not born in matrimony."⁵⁶ John Ball reiterated the importance of matrimonial procreation. He reminded the people and the church that bastard children were not fit to enter Heaven and therefore Ball encouraged people to engage in intercourse exclusively when married. The leadership and teaching of John Ball guided the insurgents to collective reason, an objective to reform the morality of the church.

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 has continued to be a topic of argumentation and interpretation. Essentially, a primary objective of the revolt was for moral reform of church and society. Many historians have overlooked this objective as a driving force for the insurrection. Several reports have been written about the lack of morality within the church and society, but have failed to connect the necessity of moral reform to impetus for the revolt. The idea of an egalitarian state, motivation of rebel leaders, and the sins of society dictated the push for social moral reform. In addition, the archbishop's execution, John Wycliffe, and John Ball illustrated the vision for a moral reform of the church. The insurrection's push for reform required courage amongst the peasantry. Their desire for a social and ecclesiastical just community was a driving force for improvement. They took matters into their own hands and propelled their vision into action.

⁵⁵ Knighton in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, p. 376.

⁵⁶ Walsingham in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, p. 374.

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The End of Ideology, the Beginning of Free Will

Taylor Rose Martin will graduate December 2014 with a Bachelor's in History and Anthropology. She would like to continue her career as a student in graduate school and hopefully get a Master's degree in Museum Studies and Field Research. She tries to live by Robert Kennedy's quote "There are those that look at things the way they are and ask why? I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?" This is part of why she values her education. She loves hiking, yoga, and her dog.

Mark Pittenger described the 1930s as an era of “expansive, sometimes radical visions.”⁵⁷ These visions arose during a time of worldwide economic depression when intellectuals and governments sought collective solutions to improve the lives of individuals. In the 1930s, citizens and intellectuals alike appealed to utopian ideas and communal ideologies such as Marxism. Unfortunately, this era also gave rise to one of the most oppressive regimes in history—Nazi fascism. The rise of Nazi fascism heightened Soviet anxiety, which in turn led to heightened government oppression of its citizens. The Hitler-Stalin Non-Aggression Pact in 1939 destroyed the clear distinction between communism and fascism. Khrushchev’s Secret Speech in 1956 exposed the terror of Stalin’s purges, strengthening the similarities between Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany. Oppression, totalitarianism, and bureaucratic genocide were the political and social contexts which set the stage in the 1940s and the 1950s— quite different from those which typified the 1930s. Pittenger describes this post-war period as a “time of mental and moral belt-tightening, of narrower and more modest hopes.”⁵⁸ This statement is summed up in the essays of American intellectuals Sidney Hook, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Daniel Bell. When comparing the radical and expansive visions of Sidney Hook in his 1934 essay to the more restricted visions of Reinhold Niebuhr in his 1944 essay and Daniel Bell’s essay of 1960, the influence of subjugation and inhumane practices in the latter authors’ lack of faith in humanity, their restricted and controlled solutions, and their notion of endings is clear—of both ideologies and a bright utopian future.

Sidney Hook believed in Marxist economic and social principles during an era of world depression. The 1930s gave rise to a generation that sought solutions through expansive and communal means. As an intellectual American communist in the 1930s,

⁵⁷ As quoted by Mark Pittenger, History 4346, University of Colorado, March 21, 2013

⁵⁸ Pittenger

Hook embodied Pittenger's "expansive, sometimes radical visions" through his criticisms of the Soviet Communist Party.⁵⁹ Hook was a Marxist who believed that Stalin obscured the scientific basis from which Marx's social theory had derived. As seen in his 1934 essay, "Communism without Dogmas," Hook displayed a radical and expansionist critique of communism as he envisions a more rational and scientific approach to a communism free of "dogmas." In the beginning of his essay, Hook clarifies his belief that communist *principles* hold significance over communist *organizations*.⁶⁰ By establishing his separation from the Communist Party, Hook approached communist values rationally so they appealed to an American population suffering from economic capitalist destitution. Hook first eliminated the dogmas which strangle the Communist Party so he could convince readers that a classless society is appropriate for America in the 1930s.

Communism's first dogma, according to Hook, was the notion that communism was inevitable. He thrashed the notion of inevitability by factoring human agency into the outcome of a *possible* proletarian revolution. By eliminating communism's inevitability, Hook shifted communism from an ideology that *will* happen despite possible downfalls and shortcomings to a progressive movement where all members play a role, have a voice, and act as intelligent agents. Hook gave freedom and agency to workers and leaders alike, expanding on the working class revolution and adding the observable variants of geographic, social, economic, and political structures, thus Americanizing communist Utopia. Hook's second dogma is the relation between communism and dialectical materialism. Hook emphasized historical materialism, the mode of material production's influence on "social, political, and spiritual processes of life."⁶¹ For the average American, experiencing the struggles of the Great Depression, historical materialism provided a rational outlook on one's economic struggle. Hook efficiently expanded communism to incorporate democracy in his third critique of communist dogma: the relationship between communism and democracy. Communism is said to be a "dictatorship of the proletariat"—but this does not eradicate democratic rights. Hook

⁵⁹ Pittenger

⁶⁰ Sidney Hook, "Communism without Dogmas" in *The American Intellectual Tradition: 1865 to the Present vol. II* ed. David A. Hollinger and Charles Capper (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 246.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 248.

expanded on an already radical, leftist political system while appealing to the democratic values of Americans. Finally, Hook addressed the dogma of the “collective man.” Hook rejected the notion of collective art, literature, and culture. He deplored alienating qualities of capitalist individualism, but celebrated social individuality. At a time when individuals starved for collective financial solutions, Hook’s individuality—rather than individualism—coincided with the social and political needs of America. Hook ends his essay with the optimistic assertion that “The conclusion is clear: *the time has now come to build a new communist party and a new communist international.*”⁶²

Hook’s optimism in a scientifically functioning communist ideal dissipated in the 1940s and the 1950s. The Munich Conference of 1938 crushed many idealists’ faith in humanity and the 1939 Hitler-Stalin Non-Aggression Pact left once fervent communists feeling deceived. This non-aggression pact led many Americans to break away from the Communist Party, even if they still believed in communist principles. Nazi domination and the bureaucratic mass genocide of Jews in Europe in the 1940s only deepened the wound of humanity—leading the intellectuals of the 1940s and 1950s into conservative thinking and “mental and moral belt tightening.” The final blow for the dreams of Utopia, economic and social equality, and a government which works with and for the people was Khrushchev’s Secret Speech in 1956. As a result, intellectuals of the 1940s and 1950s craved a new social and political structure which reflected their fears and conservative needs.

One such moral and social structure is evident in Reinhold Niebuhr’s essay of 1944 “The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness.” A direct consequence of the Munich Conference, Niebuhr resorted to disbelief in humanity by sorting people into two categories: “children of light” and “children of darkness.” The distinctions between the two categories are somewhat obvious—as children of light bring their self interest “in harmony with a more universal good” while the children of darkness “know no law beyond their will and interest.”⁶³ What is not as obvious is the categorized person’s

⁶² Ibid., 254.

⁶³ Reinhold Niebuhr, Selection from “The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness” in *The American Intellectual Tradition: 1865 to the Present vol. II* ed. David A. Hollinger and Charles Capper (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 286.

relationship to the political world. For the intellectual of the 1930s, the children of light would represent the future of governmental and social Utopia. This Utopia would be a world where all people were treated as equal and all citizens possessed a natural moral compass. However, for Niebuhr and his colleagues of the 1940s, Nazi fury destroyed the credibility of the moral compass. Niebuhr emphasized the foolishness of the children of light and criticizes their naive perspective on self interest. The children of darkness, for our author, are wise as they understand that the modern social, economic, and political world functions out of self interest. Niebuhr believed, “Moral cynicism had a provisional advantage over moral sentimentality.”⁶⁴ Although cynical and pessimistic, Niebuhr was thinking realistically in a world shattered by genocide and totalitarian ideals. Niebuhr destroyed notions of communal interest and expansionist, progressive ideas with his assertion, “...there is no level of human moral or social achievement in which there is not some corruption of inordinate self-love.”⁶⁵ This basic distrust of humanity and moral progressive movements was common in the 1940s and the 1950s. Optimistic dreams of community and human nature died with the rise of the totalitarian governments in Eastern Europe.

Niebuhr not only gives up his faith in humanity, but in solutions to social issues as well. The 1930s was a time when many American citizens believed that equality, happiness, and survival lay in a classless society. However, Niebuhr epitomizes the 1940s view of a classless society when he states “...the struggle between classes, races and other groups in human society is not as easily resolved by dissolving the groups as liberal democratic idealists assumed.”⁶⁶ In this quote Niebuhr does not mention communists, but democratic idealists. The author had lost faith in the ideals of the American system as well as in the people who run that system. Niebuhr believed both the creators of the American democratic system and the Marxists to be children of light—but for Niebuhr to be a child of light is also to be foolish. Both parties underestimated the power of self-interest, leading to totalitarianism in communism and corruption in the free democratic system. In the new era, people were not inherently moral but inherently selfish. Niebuhr takes a turn to more restricted, controlled, and conservative solution for the generations to

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 288.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 289.

come. He drifts from the dreams of the 1930s where community solutions were thought to solve world problems, and instead advocated a more cautious individual self regard and declared “The preservation of a democratic civilization requires the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove.”⁶⁷ Niebuhr was afraid, as many were during the Cold War era, of losing democracy to communism—and thus turns to a controlled and strict sense of individuality and moral teachings needed for a thriving democratic society.

Along with the “mental and moral belt-tightening” of humanity which Niebuhr represents, the author Daniel Bell presents the end of ideology with his 1960 essay “The End of Ideology in the West.”⁶⁸ The first line of his essay represents a direct opposition to the expansionist, limitless thinking and possibility which encompassed the 1930s: “Men commit the error of not knowing when to limit their hopes.”⁶⁹ After the radical (and terrifying) political movements of the 1930s and the 1940s, Bell represents an era of restriction. For Bell “ideology is the conversion of ideas into social levers. It is the commitment to the consequences of ideas.”⁷⁰ Ideology was a way for transforming ideas into action; unfortunately, the consequences of ideologies in the mid-twentieth century were ones of terror. It is important to note that Bell was not discussing religious ideologies, but political and social ideologies. These ideologies were freeing in the 1930s, they were solutions to world problems. In the 1940s and 1950s, ideas were seen as dangerous, and the consequences of ideas were often severe. In Bell’s era, ideas were associated with politics, and for this generation the institutionalizing of power became a source for domination. In the 1930s political systems, such as Roosevelt’s New Deal, were a source of stability, safety, and resurrection. However, the mid-twentieth century became a time where people could no longer trust political systems, ideas, or actions. Bell noted that for the new intellectuals, ideas have “lost their ‘truth’ and their power to persuade.”⁷¹

⁶⁷ Ibid., 291.

⁶⁸ Pittenger

⁶⁹ Daniel Bell, Selection from “The End of Ideology in the West” in *The American Intellectual Tradition: 1865 to the Present vol. II* ed. David A. Hollinger and Charles Capper (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 373.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 374.

⁷¹ Ibid., 375.

Bell held on to the 1930s notion of Utopia; however, he made a clear point to separate Utopia from being an ideology. A Utopia without ideology reinforced the perception of the individual. This era is one in which society is more concerned with individuality—whereas the 1930s, as seen in Hook’s essay, emphasized the community at large. Bell did not reject the left completely, but stressed the “New Left,” one without a definition for the future. Without a vision for the future, there is more room for freedom and less room for control and dictation. The disappointment of withering 1930s dreams had warned the New Left not to create an ideology for the future as not to disappoint or force a utopian ideal. Bell wrote in an era in which the ends no longer justified the means, but one in which freedom must be the mean to a healthy end. The 1950s was not an era in which individual rights and freedoms are subordinated for the betterment of future societies. Bell concludes the “End of Ideology” with the notion that “Each age, each generation, each life has its own fullness.”⁷²

The 1930s was an era of expansive, progressive, and drastic ideals. It was an era of world depression which, as seen in Sidney Hook’s essay, sought communal solutions to economic and social turmoil. Unfortunately, the horrific nature of World War II and Stalin’s repressive communist regime destroyed the image of utopia and a world where people can improve one another. In the 1940s, the individual came to be emphasized over the community. Intellectual thinkers, as evident in Reinhold Niebuhr’s essay, began to search for “narrower and modest hopes” of humanity. Niebuhr is not committed to a “golden, beckoning future,” but rather, a future where one must be “careful” and “realistic”—shrewdly moral but with an eye for self-interest. In this new era, people must seek an individual’s “darkness” before they can seek one’s moral compass. Along with “mental and moral belt-tightening,” Daniel Bell presents the idea of the end of ideology. The new generation must be wary of ideas, as they are dangerous when they lead to extreme action. Bell holds on to the idea of utopia, but one free of ideology and hopefully negative consequence. Freedom of ideas, expression, and an unpredictable future became the new mantra for the mid-twentieth century thinker.

⁷² Ibid., 378.

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An Exploration of India's Labor Class from the 1980s Through the Early 2000s (With Particular Focus on Trade Unionism)

Reed Chervin *has been a member of the University of Colorado History Club since 2009. He is a graduating senior majoring in History and Chinese and recently earned magna cum laude for his history honors thesis titled, "Wellington Koo's Dream of National Identity: Transitioning to a Modern China (1946-1956)." He intends to continue studying modern Asian history at the graduate level.*

From 1980 through the early 2000's, India experienced enormous economic and socio-political changes. Similar to China, India "opened up" to market based reforms that led to unprecedented Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth.⁷³ This economic growth resulted in several outcomes. First, economic prosperity on the national level has grown steadily over the last three decades.⁷⁴ However, this growth has also resulted in massive inequalities. The economic growth in India has led to a phenomenon in which the highest 10% of incomes is roughly twelve times that of the lowest 10% of incomes. This divide is twice as profound as encountered in the 1990s.⁷⁵ This essay will attempt to explore how India's working (labor) class fared during this economic transition, and what its experience will likely be like in the future. Additionally, this paper will connect the advances and fallbacks of the working class in India with the global labor movement in its entirety. This labor movement will be considered along similar lines as the movements that occurred in Great Britain, France, and the United States circa the turn of the previous century.

This discussion will begin with an examination of the effects of globalization on the working class worldwide. To be precise, the definition of globalization used in this examination is "the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked

⁷³ "Economic Survey of India, 2007," *ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, OECD*, October 2007, Web, [accessed April 2012].

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ "India's Income Inequality Has Doubled in 20 Years," *The Times of India*, The Times of India, December 7, 2011, Web, [accessed May 2012].

especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets.”⁷⁶ In Ronaldo Munck’s article, “Labour and the Great Globalisation Debate,” he quotes the works of various “experts” who detail the impact of globalization on labor in particular. One notable scholar he focuses his attention on is the economist Joseph Stiglitz. Stiglitz argues from a purely economic perspective, and states that globalization has the “potential to enrich everyone in the world, particularly the poor.”⁷⁷ In this sense, Stiglitz promotes the mainstream, optimistic business perspective of globalization in the current era. However, later in his article, Stiglitz states that globalization has negative effects as well. He writes, “There is discontent with globalisation and rightfully so . . . For millions of people globalisation has not worked.”⁷⁸ Although it is not clear what Stiglitz exactly meant by alluding to “discontent with globalization,” we can infer that this discontent refers to widespread and sustained poverty in many parts of the world—including China and India. After discussing the perspectives for and against globalization from Stiglitz, Klein, et al., Munck links their ideas to his central discussion point of the status of labor. He concludes that globalization “internationalizes workers’ lives and visions for the future” and that workers thereby connect with the effects of globalization in either a direct or indirect way.⁷⁹ From this statement we can assume that—in the broad sense—workers encounter a variety of job opportunities and obstacles in the new economy as a result of globalization. By investigating the ways in which globalization impacts the lives of workers around the world, one can establish the necessary grounding to further explore the subject within the Indian context.

One of the primary issues concerning labor in India is the extent to which a government influences the labor class. In the increasingly globalized economy, many individuals believe that India’s regulations/restrictions regarding labor are excessive and economically counter-productive. In Jenkins’s article regarding the history of labor policy in India, he quotes a study by Besley and Burgess that includes a collection of economic data based on states from 1958 to 1992. In this study, Besley and Burgess found that Indian states without strict “pro-worker” labor protections had significantly

⁷⁶ "Globalization." *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster. Web. [accessed May 2012].

⁷⁷ Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2002, 223.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 224.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 225-226.

higher rates of productivity, employment, investment, and output than their pro-labor counterparts. Moreover, Besley and Burgess found a correlation between entrenched pro-labor regulations and urban poverty.⁸⁰ Further in the article, Jenkins outlines the significance of politics with regard to policies that are favorable and unfavorable to labor. Jenkins argues that these policies are bounded by an “elite-mass framework” that determines what policies are in effect.⁸¹ In addition, he states that skilled politicians are able to manipulate this framework. In the case of labor, these politicians appeal to popular sentiment and common values. Conversely, one can presume that Indian politicians would court the “elite” voting block by supporting enterprise, deregulation, and perhaps even industrial subsidies. Understanding this political side of policies concerning labor is critical for several reasons. For one, it is evident policies are not only influential and impactful in and of themselves, but are also determined via political processes and forces. Secondly, one can also acknowledge the observation that mass values have to be weighed similarly to market concerns when establishing policies on sensitive topics such as labor and industry.

Institutions also influenced the way in which labor policy formed. One key example that influenced labor policy formulation has been the Indian Labour Conference (ILC). In theory, the ILC represents a forum for high level trade unions to inject their opinions into the center of national politics. However, Jenkins holds a more cynical view of the capabilities of the organization. He writes, “Indian Labour Conference, a tripartite body which might easily be dismissed as at best a talking shop, and at worst a den of cronyism in which the interests of the least powerful of India’s working classes are routinely sacrificed in exchange for doctrinal purity.”⁸² Furthermore, he writes the ILC could be a useful forum for injecting the suppositions and grievances of trade unions, but it instead is hampered by the apathy of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) controlled government.⁸³ Assuming this claim is true, it seems obvious that the labor movement in India will only become further marginalized over time. This potential

⁸⁰ Rob Jenkins, "Labor Policy and the Second Generation of Economic Reform in India," *India Review* 3.4 (2004): 345.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 347.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 358.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

disenfranchisement possesses significance since Indian officials under the NDA government will clearly value the interests of business more heavily than those of labor. Jenkins comes to a similar conclusion. He references Union Commerce Minister Arun Jaitley's comment that labor reforms leading to job creation would be a positive outcome.⁸⁴ However, these types of reforms likely would not occur in the current political climate. In order for these reforms to be facilitated, he argues that "institution building" would have to take place in a way that is favorable to labor in a manner unlike that that occurred under the NDA government.⁸⁵ These counterfactual scenarios regarding how future policies may play out in the Indian political environment also depends on other key factors. For one, foreign pressures in the economic and political spheres would undoubtedly influence that trajectory of current policies. In one scenario, if the United States or another major economic power demanded additional plentiful, cheap labor India would be wise to decrease regulation in order to increase employment and foreign investment. In another situation, India may adopt protectionist policies in order to shore up domestic labor interests for political or other reasons.

Although labor policies are undoubtedly a major contributing factor to characterizing the nature of India's labor class, we should also attempt to comprehend the labor class from within. In one sense, the Indian working class began to emerge in the 1980s, when Indira Gandhi called for the government owned car company, Maruti to produce a "people's car."⁸⁶ The working class emerged in this time period because it was the first time in Indian history that large-scale modern manufacturing modeled after Western design was established. Before the economic reforms of 1991, India had the reputation for being a country whereby its manufacturing and production was low in quality.⁸⁷ However, in recent years, India revitalized its manufacturing sector and has thus become competitive on a global scale. In mere decades, it increased its manufacturing capacity from an extraordinarily small percentage to 16% of the country's GDP.⁸⁸ In addition, foreign ministers have discussed the possibility of increasing the manufacturing

⁸⁴ Ibid., 359.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 360.

⁸⁶ John Elliot, "Manufacturing Takes Off in India," *Fortune Magazine*, Fortune International, October 19, 2007.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

portion of GDP to 30% in coming years.⁸⁹ This manufacturing boom affected the labor class in a variety of ways. One case study worth examining is the preeminent forging company in Pune, India called Bharat Forge. The Chairman of the company, Baba Kalyani, believed that Bharat Forge remade the economic landscape of the region. He reinforced this belief in saying, “We took farmhands and made them into factory workers.”⁹⁰ This case study showcases the trend occurring throughout all of India and many other developing countries in the world. Not only are farmers finding work in cities, but they are also learning critical skills regarding working in work units, operating heavy equipment, etc. Furthermore, the Bharat Forge example portrays a change in demand in India away from grain and other agricultural products to steel. This transition is similar to the one experienced by the United States and Russia during the Second World War. Yet—in this instance—India manufactured consumer goods in peace time for the purpose of increasing the prosperity of its people. Although scholars and other figures speak of increasing prosperity in loose terms, one is still obligated to investigate the “real figures” pertaining to the changing economic situations of Indians. From 1999 to 2005, the mean incomes of employees based in manufacturing rose by approximately 50%.⁹¹ During this same time period, the number of employed production workers increased by about 10%.⁹² These figures clearly follow the prevailing idea that compensation and employment are scheduled to increase as the manufacturing sector of the economy grows. As such, one can interpret these data as indications of a prosperous future for the Indian working class. At the same time, detractors from this thought point to other sets of data to project an opposing view. These critics argue that the compensation and growth in compensation are both considerably lower in manufacturing than in the aggregate of all sectors in India. Thus, the “true prosperity” for those involved in the manufacturing sector—the working class—is much less than what is presumed. Another argument they might assert deals with the compensation of those involved in manufacturing. It is clear that the incomes of those involved in manufacturing are

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Jessica R. Sincavage, Carl Haub, and O. P. Sharma. "Monthly Labor Review: Labor Costs in India's Organized Manufacturing Sector." *Monthly Labor Review* (2010). May 2010. Web, [accessed April 2012].

⁹² Ibid., 6.

considerably lower in India when compared to many other regions of the world (including Brazil, United States, Sri Lanka, and Japan).⁹³

Although these criticisms have some merit, they can be refuted to a large degree. To begin, although the trend in income growth is less steep in the case of manufacturing than in other sectors of the economy, it is still steadily growing. Moreover, one can explain the initial gap between the manufacturing growth rate and the growth rate of other parts of the Indian economy by the fact that other parts of the economy were in some ways more developed earlier in the contemporary era. With respect to the inequality of incomes between India and other regions of the world, there exists a straightforward explanation. In essence, because manufacturing is more developed and skilled in other places like the United States or Europe, they have a tendency to demand higher wages than underdeveloped countries. Moreover, powerful trade unions in places like France or Germany are able to secure high incomes for workers through collective bargaining. Thus, the expectations of the manufacturing sector take on an entirely new meaning in the context of Europe.

Without leaving the topic of globalization behind entirely, one is obliged to understand how globalization relates to the labor movement in the global and Indian contexts. In their book *Globalization and Labor*, Stevis and Boswell argue that globalization advances almost universally threatens the status of unions on regional, national, and global levels. In the first chapter of their book, they assert that there exists an ideological tug-of-war between economic liberalization and social welfare. This “back and forth” is complex, and has a history dating back at least two decades. Stevis and Boswell pose a question regarding this issue. They ask, “Can these unions be simply labeled protectionist because they refuse to replace stronger national labor rules with weaker European rules?”⁹⁴ Since time immemorial, trade unions have fought for better working conditions, fair wages, and various other working benefits. Yet, the influence of business and libertarian thought on government—in particular from Milton Friedman—has directly or indirectly eroded the utility of less economically productive practices (e.g., trade unionism). As such, there exists a sharp reaction to this global trend. One aspect of

⁹³ Ibid., 13.

⁹⁴ Dimitris Stevis and Terry Boswell. *Globalization and Labor: Democratizing Global Governance*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008. 24-27.

this type of response stems from recent attempts from global union organizations to insert a “social clause” into World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements.⁹⁵ The definition of the social clause provision is not precise, but hovers around the idea that basic labor standards and the right to organize cannot be sacrificed in favor of the beneficial gains of liberalization. As of 1999, unions did not succeed in inserting their favored social clause into any type of World Trade Organization agreement. To add insult to injury, the Organization appeared unwilling to address labor issues in the future.⁹⁶ This example is noteworthy since it is a manifestation of the global decline of influence from trade unions (who represent the interests of the working class) on international political-business agreements. Though, it is possible that business and political leaders react viscerally to the arguments coming from labor, since these leaders associate social protection demands with protectionism. This confusion is detrimental to both sides. In the case of India, business leaders may lose interest in pursuing economic expansion in the country as they fear the backlash of protectionist sentiment from within. In the extreme case, protectionist sentiment could lead to the nationalizing of particular enterprises, as has been the case in many other non-Western countries historically (see Iran and Venezuela). Given these fears, the organizations that represent labor class grievances around the world face real challenges in the current era.

The labor movement in India adopted characteristics unique to its context. As early as achieving independence in 1947, trade unions began to appear in India. The prominent “faces” of trade unionism emerged in the forms of the All Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC).⁹⁷ Both the AITUC and the INTUC had leftist leanings—with the AITUC being affiliated with the Communist Party of India and the INTUC holding a strong connection to the Nehru supported Congress Party.⁹⁸ Bieler et al. argue that these organizations emerged at a particularly relevant time, due to the emerging government guided, quasi-socialist producing sector initiated by Nehru. Beginning in the 1970’s, the raw number of national

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Andreas Bieler, Ingemar Lindberg, and Devan Pillay. *Labour and the Challenges of Globalization: What Prospects for Transnational Solidarity?*, (London: Pluto, 2008), 69.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

unions began to decline. These organizations started becoming rapidly replaced by smaller, independent trade unions.⁹⁹ Many might argue that this trajectory only signifies turmoil for the labor movement in India. In one sense, these individuals are correct in two ways. If one uses affiliation with national politics as a metric for potential achievement on behalf of the interests of these kinds of trade union members, it is clear that the decline in unions on the national scale would hamper their aspirations. Secondly, one can connect the notion of increased market liberalization with the predicted failure of “socialist oriented” national unions, which mirror the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). These claims appear valid on paper, but are not entirely true in terms of the real history of India. Take for example, membership in central trade unions. Since 1980, five of the ten major trade unions have had substantial growth in membership up through 1997. Of these five organizations that endured growth, three of which had explicitly Marxist or Communist affiliations.¹⁰⁰

Another matter that works in favor of Indian trade unions is their relation to agricultural issues. Bieler et al. write that, “developments in the agricultural sector during the reform period have been nothing short of a serious crisis, resulting in massive slow-downs in income and employment opportunities, adding to the burden of the urban informal sector.”¹⁰¹ Because of this crisis, work in some form related to trade unions appears to be a more appealing alternative to miscellaneous work occurring in cities. These two cases document the sustained vigor of trade unions in one way or another in Indian urban centers. Furthermore, given the time span between the creation of Indian Marxist trade unions and the growth in membership occurring in the 1990s, it is evident that these unions have been enduring fixtures in the Indian socio-political landscape. Members of trade unions—albeit a small segment of the total working population—have secured a surprisingly large number of rights and privileges. This success dates back to the Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 that acknowledges the rights of labor when considered in relation to the rights of business interests.¹⁰² From this date onward,

⁹⁹ Ibid., 70.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 72.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 73.

¹⁰² Ibid., 74.

workers in this minority sect have secured relatively safe working conditions that further the general interests of Indians working blue collar jobs.

Despite the progress made, in recent decades, India's trade unions encountered a variety of setbacks. In 1982, India endured a large, protracted textile mill strike in Bombay that involved 250,000 workers and more than fifty textile mills.¹⁰³ The result of this strike was disastrous—leading to disunity amongst the strike coordinators and ultimately mill closure and heightened unemployment. Moreover, the primary strike leader Samant lost influence over many of the trade unions in Bombay.¹⁰⁴ This case study indicates how “blow-back” can occur from the demands of trade unions. Following this heated case of failed activism, industrial relations between workers and enterprise further deteriorated over the remainder of the decade. Some scholars argue that the government has attacked trade unionism aggressively. Once again, Bieler et al. write that, “state and capital’s concerted attacks on labour fit into a larger pattern where concerted effort is currently being made to roll back democracy.”¹⁰⁵ This accusation undoubtedly looks like an extreme claim. For one, it appears more likely that the Indian state would desire to focus its efforts on pleasing business efforts for political incentives, rather than destroying the democratic process for obscure reasons. Yet, these scholars may indeed be attempting to connect economic liberalization with democratic decay. If this connection is the case, then it should be evident that these scholars would assume that one can only have one of these systems, thereby destroying the other. Whether the situation is true or not true, there are nevertheless many examples of struggles between labor and business and government. The Indian Express outlines another example of a tactical loss on behalf of labor. In July of 2005, 1,000 workers at the Honda Motorcycle and Scooter plant were lured into a compound and were beaten with policemen’s batons.¹⁰⁶ Later on in the description of the incident, it suggests that police officers—including the commissioner joined in on beating the labor members. This incident suggests an enormously corrupt

¹⁰³ "The Great Mumbai Textile Strike... 25 Years On." *Rediff News*. Rediff, 18 Jan. 2007. Web. [accessed 30 Apr. 2012].

¹⁰⁴ Javed Anand, "Rediff News," *Rediff*, Rediff News, January 17, 1997, Web, [accessed May 1, 2012].

¹⁰⁵ Andreas Bieler, Ingemar Lindberg, and Devan Pillay, *Labour and the Challenges of Globalization*, 75.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 76.

connection between business and the State. Similar to fascism (under a corporatist definition), the politicians at times in India may order and influence other than those involved in business to attack and destroy labor leaders who have the potential to uproot business interests, and thereby damage the politicians' key constituency. In addition, because politicians in India have built up a reputation for accepting bribes, it seems only logical that this particular beating incident could expose aspects of all of these issues.

Other setbacks for labor in India include problems concerning labor laws. These laws have not been overly helpful to the working class, as laws in India are subject to arbitrary change based on political circumstances. Moreover—even if certain laws do exist with the purpose of protecting workers—they likely are not enforced as consistently as in countries with more developed legal systems. Additionally, labor laws are sometimes viewed as a nuisance by the state, in so far as being an “impediment to neoliberal economic policies.”¹⁰⁷

India's labor class has undoubtedly gained much over the decades since independence. As Haan and others indicate, bottom-up mobilization of India's poorest classes is a real and present phenomenon.¹⁰⁸ These gains manifested themselves in the securing of better rights for the working class through the political influences of major trade unions such as the National Labor Organization. Particularly since 1980, trade unions have remained a key aspect of Indian life in the face of changes from globalization. At the same time, the liberalizing effects from globalization have lifted millions of people out of poverty in many parts of the world—not the least of which is in India. As such, it would be irresponsible to discount these effects of the free market. In the case of India, many farmers were able to transition from a class condemned by poverty into the working class characterized by manufacturing. All the while, India's history as well as the global history of trade unions played an important role in

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 77.

¹⁰⁸ Arjan De Haan and Samita Sen, *Paper for the SEWA/Cornell/WIEGO Conference Membership-Based Organizations of the Poor, South Asia Labour Activists Library*, January 2005, Web, [accessed April 1, 2012].

influencing the current state of political and economic affairs. The historic trajectory of how governments respond to organized labor and how trade unions confront these challenges are both important aspects of India's development in the contemporary era.

In closing, India's working class sustained itself and prospered during the three decades from 1980 into the early 2000s. In spite of unsuccessful strikes, union leadership issues, and police brutality toward workers, members of the working class persevered. Bieler and others have pointed out that laws designed to protect labor have eroded in recent years due to the prevailing theory of neoliberal economics. All the while, unions like AITUC and INTUC still exist and continue to resist the encroachment of business interests on workers' rights. It will take additional data, research, and time to formulate a conclusion regarding the success of India's unions and working class from the early 2000s to the present.

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Disclaimer

In the interest of promoting academic discussion and inquiry, this article is not censored. While it may contain material that may be considered vulgar or obscene by some readers, it is used solely in the context to be informative and accurate to original sources. Omitting such information would lead to a less accurate article, and would deprive the reader of the full experience of the paper. While there is no intent to promote or encourage offensive terms or context, they do appear in this paper. Removing offensive terms or using euphemisms discourages frank discussion and correct analysis. The *libelles* discussed in this paper were not meant for polite company, and recognizing this is an important component of addressing their impact on society at the time.

-Cat Bell

Sexual Deviancy and the Myth of Marie Antoinette

Cat Bell *will graduate from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts in History. She focuses on studying gender and sexuality in medieval and early modern Europe. She is planning to continue her education in history after graduating.*

In April of 1770, Marie Antoinette, Archduchess of Austria and daughter of Maria Theresa, Holy Roman Empress, married Louis-Auguste, Dauphin of France. Four years later, her husband became Louis XVI, King of France, and Marie Antoinette assumed the title of Queen of France. During her reign of over seventeen years, she became increasingly unpopular with the people of France, until she was finally beheaded by the guillotine on September 21, 1792. The hatred that the people of France had for her covered almost every facet of her being, including her fashion sense, material greed, gluttony, lack of intelligence or artistic talent, manipulative and deceitful disposition, and her sexuality. These attacks came in many forms, from the spoken and written word to visual representations, and eventually formed the basis for the legal attacks that justified the state executing her. The attacks leveled at Marie Antoinette are such a vast topic that this paper can only look at the pornographic attacks leveled at her through pamphlets. It is through these pamphlets that Marie Antoinette becomes the epitome of depraved and unnatural female sexuality, and a larger symbol of what was wrong with the Old Regime.

There were many of these pornographic *libelles* attacking Marie Antoinette. They came complete with inflammatory titles, including The Uterine Furors of Marie-Antoinette, The Patriotic Brothel, The Royal Dildo, The Royal Bordello, National Bordello Under the Auspices of the Queen, and The Royal Orgy.

In The Royal Dildo, Marie Antoinette (as Juno, the Roman queen of the gods and wife of Jupiter) laments how Louis XVI (as Jupiter, the Roman king of the gods) no longer desires to have sexual relations with her. Decrying how Louis is off copulating

with “any arsehole,”¹⁰⁹ Marie Antoinette begins to pleasure her “much scorned cunt,” first with her fingers and then with a dildo. She quickly gets sick of the poor substitute for a real penis, and angry that she is reduced to artificial substitutes while her husband is off engaging with the real thing, and calls on Hebe (signifying either the Mme de Lamballe or Mme de Polignac). Marie Antoinette demands that Hebe fetch her the longest-lasting, most virulent cocks in the land.¹¹⁰

In *The Royal Bordello*, Marie Antoinette meets with the Cardinal de Rohan, a knight, a marquis, and a baron (the later three are unnamed). Marie Antoinette exalts the knight for his poetic abilities, a talent she does not possess, and then chooses to copulate with him first. While Marie Antoinette is otherwise occupied, the marquis, baron, and Cardinal de Rohan sodomize each other. Marie Antoinette admonishes them for not waiting for her, but quickly moves on to coupling with each. The group converses about how their semen has the healing and protective power of holy water, and yet they pay to get rid of it. Marie Antoinette tells the Cardinal not to complain, for he has received his bishopric for trying to heal the original sin within her vagina with his “holy water” a handful of times, and invites him to try again. The Cardinal dismisses her, remarking on her inability to ever be sexually satisfied. Once they have engaged in an orgy for roughly an hour, Marie Antoinette calls her chambermaid to bring them broth for sustenance, and the men take their leave. While Marie Antoinette gets dressed, the Cardinal comes back to help her get dressed (or undressed...) and the Cardinal asks Marie Antoinette why she hates him and had him sent to jail for the Diamond Necklace Scandal. Marie Antoinette confesses that she was jealous that he did not pay more sexual attention to her, and used the scandal as retribution. They agree to make peace between the two, and continue their illicit affair.¹¹¹

The Royal Bordello is unique in how explicitly it relies on Christian themes. While most of the pamphlets have more secular language, *The Royal Bordello* utilizes the

109 “The Royal Dildo,” 1789, in *The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette* by Chantal Thomas, trans. by Julie Rose (New York: Zone Books, 1999), 191-201.

110 Interestingly, Hebe assures Marie Antoinette that the shortest penis is fifteen inches long, and the thinnest is no less than eight inches. Here we can see the persistent male obsession with penis size, as well as the belief that, when it comes to female sexual satisfaction, the bigger, the better.

111 “The Royal Bordello,” 1789, in *The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette* by Chantal Thomas, trans. by Julie Rose (New York: Zone Books, 1999), 217-227.

concept of original sin and links it to a woman's uterus. Additionally, the *libelles* connect sperm with holy water, implying that it has healing powers. This concept serves as an allegory for the idea that sperm, associated with masculinity, was naturally better and closer to God than female reproductive organs. The author of the pamphlet specifically targets the clergy as an institution, while demonstrating great belief in Christianity at the same time.

In *The Love Life of Charlie and Toinette*, Marie Antoinette becomes both emotionally and sexually lonely and seeks solace in her brother-in-law, the Comte d'Artois.¹¹² While in most of the pamphlets, the language is devoid of love or sentiment, this particular pamphlet uses terms like “gentle,” “tender,” and most notable of all, “love,” suggesting that Marie Antoinette’s affair with her brother-in-law is more than just an out-of-control sexual appetite. While this is potentially because *Charlie and Toinette* was one of the earlier pamphlets and the authors felt the need to couch Marie Antoinette’s depravity in softer terms, another reading suggests something more insidious: Marie Antoinette was not only physically unfaithful to her husband with his brother, but emotionally unfaithful to the man who was both her husband, and her king. Marie Antoinette was portrayed as disloyal to the country she had married into, a theme that would continue to reoccur in the attacks on her.

In *The Austrian Woman on a Rampage, or The Royal Orgy*, Marie Antoinette is shown attending the theater with her husband, Louis XVI, her brother-in-law, the Comte d'Artois, and Mme de Polignac. When Louis falls asleep, Marie Antoinette and d'Artois engage in a threesome with the Mme de Polignac, with d'Artois taking Marie Antoinette from behind while Marie Antoinette performs cunnilingus on de Polignac.¹¹³

Marie Antoinette is routinely depicted taking control of her own sexuality and sexual satisfaction. In *The Royal Dildo*, Marie Antoinette uses her fingers, then a dildo, and then finds the penises of men who are not her husband. While anything outside of being sexually passive to one’s husband (and a gate-keeper to the rest) was considered

112 “The Love Life of Charlie and Toinette,” 1779, in *The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette* by Chantal Thomas, trans. by Julie Rose (New York: Zone Books, 1999), 185-190.

113 “The Austrian Woman on a Rampage, or The Royal Orgy,” 1789, in *The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette* by Chantal Thomas, trans. by Julie Rose (New York: Zone Books, 1999), 203-215.

deviant and sinful, certain acts were considered more deviant than others. While all female masturbation was considered somewhat transgressive, because society did not consider anything without penetration to be sex, clitoral friction was often ignored or considered a more minor sin instead of actively demonized. However, Marie Antoinette's act of using a dildo was far more sexually transgressive because it actively replaced the traditionally male role of penetration. Thus, Marie Antoinette was then not simply trying to grab power as a woman, but actively attempting to replace male power. Through this act, she was engaging in the treacherous act of gender inversion.¹¹⁴

In *The Royal Dildo*, when Marie Antoinette fetches her dildo from her bag, she comments how it is an invention she owes to the monastery. By including the monastery, the writer(s) of the pamphlet signify that it is not Marie Antoinette alone, or even just the monarchy, that is depraved, debauched, and corrupt. Rather, it is the entire Old Regime, both privileged classes that are contributing to and creating a widespread and systematic culture of degradation. Unlike *The Royal Bordello*, *The Royal Dildo* makes no such efforts to express faith in Christianity so as to expressly limit the critiques to the monastery specifically. Instead, the *libelles* relies on the language of Roman mythology, portraying Louis XVI as Jupiter, Marie Antoinette as Juno, and secondary characters as other Roman gods and goddesses. By representing the monks as not only the suppliers but the inventors of dildos, *The Royal Dildo* paints monasticism, and potentially Christianity itself, as fundamentally corrupt.

Marie Antoinette was also depicted as engaging in same-sex relations on a frequent basis. Marie Antoinette was painted to enjoy the sexual company of women, and not just on the rare occasions in which she could not find any men around to satisfy her "uterine furors." However, she did have her favorite same-sexed partners: the comtesse de Polignac and the princesse de Lamballe. (The Mme de Polignac had her own pamphlet slandering her, *The Grievances of the Fucking Bitch de Polignac*, or *Regrets on the Loss of the Cocks of France*, in which the comtesse boasts that her sexual prowess in satisfying other women is so great that many virgins have decided to forgo men altogether and opt for the comtesse's hand instead. That gave the Mme de Polignac a certain amount of

114 Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 71-72.

power, in which she became legitimately virile). Within *The Royal Orgy*, Marie Antoinette performs cunnilingus on the comtesse de Polignac, one of the few times the act of performing oral sex on a female is brought up at all in the pamphlets, again stressing the superiority of vaginal penetration in matters of both male and female sexual satisfaction. In *La Journée amoureuse*, the princesse de Lamballe uses an ivory dildo to penetrate both the queen's vagina and anus, thus usurping the male right to be the sole penetrator.¹¹⁵

Marie Antoinette is portrayed in *The Royal Bordello* as not just sexually voracious, but politically manipulative. A footnote in what the reader is assured is a completely factual pamphlet makes the comment:

It seems that falseness is hereditary in the House of Austria. All the Courts of Europe distrust the Court of Vienna She brought it as a dowry to our good King Louis XVI. Consider her falseness in conversation. A tigress whose little ones had been taken from her could not have been more ferocious to the ravisher than she was to Cardinal de Rohan. Although her feelings about him hadn't changed, she pretends to be nice to him. The judicious reader can easily guess the reason.¹¹⁶

Marie Antoinette thus becomes not just a sexually depraved woman that threatens notions of masculinity, but a larger threat of foreign conspiracy and deception that threatens the security of France itself.

When Marie Antoinette breaks her oath of fidelity to Louis XVI, she is not only being unfaithful to her husband, but to the monarchy and the French nation at large. Her "uterine furors" are not simply and privately betraying her husband, but are also publicly betraying the French nation she has sworn allegiance to and claims to be a leader of. When Marie Antoinette makes Louis XVI a cuckold, the entire French nation becomes a cuckold. This is made all the worse by how painfully obvious it is that Marie Antoinette will betray Louis and the French nation with anyone. She is not a woman of standards and morals but rather of such an insatiable sexual appetite that even the lowliest commoner might become prey to her predatory genitals so long as there stands a chance

115 Elizabeth Colwill, "Pass as a Woman, Act Like a Man: Marie-Antoinette as Tribade in the Pornography of the French Revolution," in *Marie Antoinette: Writings on the Body of a Queen*, ed. by Dena Goodman et al (London: Routledge, 2003), 155.

116 "The Royal Bordello," Thomas, *The Wicked Queen*, 224.

that he (or indeed, she) might quench Marie Antoinette's thirst for orgasm for even a couple of seconds.¹¹⁷ This larger betrayal of the French nation stressed the threat that sexual deviancy posed, and the need for a stricter policing of sexual norms by society at large and not just the legal system.¹¹⁸

These pornographic attacks were not directed solely at Marie Antoinette. Rather, they were part of a larger culture of using political pornography against all those in power.¹¹⁹ Nobles, aristocrats, members of the church, politicians, journalists, members of the military – no one was safe from being sexually lampooned. The pamphlets often have similarly inflammatory titles, including *The Apostolic Bordello*, *The Little Buggers at Riding School*, and *The Rights of Buggers* (a play on “The Rights of Man”). In *The Royal Bordello*, not only do the Bishop of Rohan and the two nobles engage in an orgy with Marie Antoinette, but are so filled with the need to orgasm that they sodomize each other while waiting on her. This results in the nobles taking turns of having the most sexually transgressive role of all, the male passive partner. Jacques Necker was portrayed as engaging in illicit affairs, at least one of which was with Marie Antoinette. In *National Bordello Under the Auspices of the Queen*, the radical journalist and writer of *L'Ami du peuple* Jean-Paul Marat is depicted in the gender-betraying and feminine role of “cunt-licker.”¹²⁰ A variety of engravings depicted members of the church engaging in various sexually debased activities immediately after the erasure of the clergy's privileges. Some included notable persons, such as the engraving of de Juigné, Archbishop of Paris, forcing himself upon a wealthy woman. Others exchanged the depiction of specific persons for the depiction of archetypes (i.e. “the nun,” “the monk,” “the noblewoman,” “the priest”), including a priest and a noblewoman fondling each other, a monk and a nun mutually masturbating to a pornographic image, a nun copulating with various winged penises, a nun lifting up her skirt for a priest with a telescope, a half-dressed friar frolicking with a monkey-beast, and a monk hoarding bread while carrying buckets of

117 Lynn Hunt, “The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette: Political Pornography and the Problem of the Feminine in the French Revolution,” in *Eroticism and the Body Politic*, ed. by Lynn Hunt (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990).

118 Colwill, “Pass as a Woman, Act Like a Man.”

119 Lynn Hunt, “Pornography and the French Revolution,” in *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500-1800*, ed. by Lynn Hunt (New York: Zone Books, 1996); Colwill, “Pass as a Woman, Act Like a Man.”

120 Colwill, “Pass as a Woman, Act Like a Man,” 149.

water with his superhumanly strong erection.¹²¹ Similarly, pornographic engravings detailed both specific persons within the military, like General Lafayette and Napoleon Bonaparte, and general members of the military, especially the Sappers, Dragoons, and the Garde Nationale. One of the harshest pamphlets, *Historical Essays on the Life of Marie-Antoinette*, of Austria took issue with all the women of Versailles, calling them “whores and tribades, gamblers and frauds, generally the worst company in Europe.”¹²²

However, the attacks on Marie Antoinette reached a new level of vitriol. She was the most commonly portrayed person in the pornographic libelles. While other notable persons would be shown as being transgressive in a select few ways, Marie Antoinette was shown as being transgressive in every possible way, including contradictory ways. In *The Royal Bordello*, she was portrayed as both too stupid to pull off a one-time illicit affair without being caught and simultaneously so brilliantly cunning and devious that her conspiracies against the French nation were a substantial threat that others should take seriously. The attacks on Marie Antoinette, unlike others, did not stay just in the pamphlets and public opinion, but were also considered to be factual evidence that could be (and was) used against her in a court of law.¹²³

These pornographic pamphlets played an integral part in creating the myth of Marie Antoinette. The depiction of Marie Antoinette as the embodiment of sexual depravity was not about merely being titillating or scandalous; it was about portraying the monarchy as so corrupt and full of various debaucheries as to be irredeemable. As French society policed sexual morality more and more, Marie Antoinette’s alleged sexual wickedness was integral to the French overthrowing the Old Regime.

121 Gilles Néret, *Erotica 17th-18th Century*, (London: Taschen, 2001), 151-156; Gilles Néret, *Erotica Universalis*, (London: Taschen, 1994), 341-392.

122 “Essais historiques sur la vie de Marie-Antoinette d’Autriche, reine de France, pour servir a l’histoire de cette princesses,” 1789, in *The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette* by Chantal Thomas, trans. by Julie Rose (New York: Zone Books, 1999), 112.

123 Lynn Hunt, “Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette,” 110.

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