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The *historiae* editing board and the Students of History at Concordia would like to acknowledge that Concordia University is on the unceded traditional territory of the Kanien'keha:ka (Ga-niyen-gé-haa-ga), a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. *historiae* and SHAC recognize and respect the Kanien'keha:ka as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

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Table of Contents

Foreword

The Students of History at Concordia (SHAC) are thrilled to present this year's edition of the undergraduate history journal, *historiae*. The publication of this journal offers students within the department of history at Concordia University the chance to be editors, published authors, and readers of one another's work. It is a rare opportunity to share a piece of what they are doing when hiding behind computer screens for the majority of their undergraduate years. Its production would not be possible without the curiosity and care students pour into their studies, and the attention and support from their professors.

It took many hours for the editorial board to select the papers that would make up the journal you are holding. We wanted to publish works that were engaging, informative, and thoughtful. In the end, we decided that these seven pieces best showcased the diversity of interests, styles, and methodologies from amongst our peers.

This seventeenth edition of the journal continues on the tradition of representing and bringing together the diverse interests of students from all levels within the department. The pages that follow take their reader from the world of women and science in seventeenth-century England to New York City's Grand Central Station at the turn of the twentieth-century, and moves into today's meditations on conducting oral histories, making many stops along the way.

Thank you to all the students who submitted. I hope that you keep sharing your work and encourage your peers to do the same next year. Thank you to all the selected authors for your hard work and diligence throughout this process.

It took many people to tie together the threads that make up this journal.

This journal would not have been possible without the guidance of Althea Thompson, who generously sat with me– on several occasions – to explain how she tackled the journal two years ago.

Next, Dr. Gossage for your constant support of *historiae* and SHAC. Dr. McSheffrey, Dr. Lorenzkowski, and Dr. McCormick, thank you for answering any and all questions about the editing process and how to manage the project.

To the faculty of the History Department, thank you for continuing to encourage and enlighten us. A special thank you to Dr. Ventura for that time she told her high-strung class to "Trust the process." It became the mantra that drove this project to completion.

Donna Whittaker, thank you for having all the answers all the time. Nancie Jirku, thank you for always going over above and beyond, and for keeping us all in-check over the years,

The SHAC executives- Kaylee, Shannon, Zac, Neveatha, and Tanya, thank you for all your hard work and support.

Thank you to Garvin and Christopher for their patience and meticulous copy editing. Your enthusiasm and efficiency were remarkable.

Finally, thank you to all the editors: Anna, Ona, Ariane, Tyler, Simone, and Daly. Thank you for your hard work, insightful input, and all that you taught me throughout this process. The journal happened because of your care and dedication. You should be proud of yourselves!

Finally, thank you to the history students for entrusting me with the fate of this journal.

With great joy, I pass the journal to the next editor-in-chief, Anna Kiraly.

Julie Santini
Editor-in-Chief

Editors' Biographies

Julie Santini is in her third-year of the History Honours program at Concordia University. Her honours thesis focuses on Eleanor Cobham, former Duchess of Gloucester, who was accused of witchcraft and conspiring the king's death in 1441. She is most interested in medieval and women's history. She would like to thank her professors for their continued encouragement and patience over the years.

Anna Kiraly is a third-year student at Concordia University where she is pursuing a Bachelor of the Arts in Religion and Cultures (Honours) with a minor in History. Her honours thesis focuses on 19th century Presbyterian settlers in rural Quebec. Anna is interested in the intersection of power and knowledge and the impact those structures have had on religion throughout history. Upon graduating, Anna hopes to study law. Her goal is to use her understanding of the place religion occupies in people's lives to help the Canadian legal system better represent Canada's multicultural society. In her free time, Anna can be found watching way too much TV while drinking copious amounts of coffee. She would like to thank Julie Santini for allowing her to be part of the *historiae* team!

Ariane Chasle is a third-year history student in the Honours – Essay option at Concordia University, currently studying enslaved women's experiences of motherhood under American slavery in the 19th century. She loves women's history, with no particular focus as to time and space. She plans to get her Master's in History to eventually teach Cegep students. When she is not reading, she can probably be found rock-climbing, looking at pictures of dogs on the internet, or reading something else. She would like to thank her parents for supporting her in her studies.

Daly Sonesaksith is a second-year student in History Honours – Essay option at Concordia University. Her research interests are early modern and modern France, as well as politics, economics and fashion history. However, she is extremely open to hear and read about different ideas and topics in order to gain more knowledge. Lastly, she aspires to pursue her studies at graduate school after the completion of her BA.

Ona Bantjes-Ràfols is in her fourth year of the History Honours program and is very happy to be part of the *historiae* editing team this year. She is interested in twentieth-century Spanish history, particularly looking at life in Catalonia under Franco's dictatorship. She finds history to be a very exciting field right now and is grateful to the professors at Concordia who have pushed her in directions she never expected. She looks forward to what the next step in her academic career will bring.

Simone Steadman-Gantous is in her last year of studying Public History and Anthropology at Concordia University. Her favourite areas of study are transnational migration, the Middle East, and modern colonialism. She also really likes conducting oral history. When she's not doing that, she's washing dishes at a café, which is pretty much her life plan if she does not get into grad school.

Tyler Russ-Hogg is in his final year of a Bachelor of Arts degree with a Specialization in History. His research revolves around various aspects of the Montreal dairy industry throughout the twentieth century. This includes the movement towards pasteurization, labour movements connected to the dairy industry, and Montreal's shift from urban to rural dairy farming. He hopes to pursue these topics further while studying a master's degree in history. He is also the father of two young children and thoroughly enjoys the challenges of parenting and studying at the same time.

Copy Editors' Biographies

Garvin Brutus is currently a second-year student at Concordia University studying History and Theological Studies. His historical interests include the African Diaspora as a whole and African-American history in particular. Garvin is also a part of the Concordia Moot Law Society where he competes in national undergraduate moot competitions. Naturally, after completing his Bachelor of Arts, Garvin plans to attend law school. Outside of school, Garvin enjoys listening to music and watching sports on TV.

Christopher Orlowski is an undergraduate at Concordia, graduating in History this semester. He studied at John Abbott College earning a Liberal Arts degree, where his passion for history was sparked. He enjoys history because it reveals where we came from and how we got here. He loves to travel, visiting museums and experiencing different cultures. He is an avid reader of science fiction and fantasy in his spare time. This is one reason for his passion for history, since it is the biggest story of all. His interests include Roman, Greek, African and Mesopotamian history. In the future, he hopes to explore the world further, and work in museums to further study and be immersed in these ancient societies. Moreover, after having been published in the Concordia *historiae* journal of 2017, and being an editor for this year's volume, he can envision himself pursuing a career in the publishing industry.

‘A Mad, Conceited, Ridiculous Woman’: Margaret Cavendish and the Royal Society

Molly Taylor

Molly Taylor is a second-year Honours History and Theology major from Bridport, Vermont. She is especially interested in the reigns of English kings Charles II and James VII/II, the history of the Catholic Church, and the Apostolic era. When not busy with coursework, she enjoys playing fantasy games, reading historical fiction, and brewing copious amounts of tea. She plans on writing her undergraduate thesis as a revaluation of the rule of James VII/II. This is her second publication in *historiae*.

Introduction

The traditional narrative of the Scientific Revolution is a triumphalist one, taught as a succession of great names of natural philosophers who helped develop 'science' as we know it today. We first see Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) challenging the geocentric universe, and it all culminates some two centuries later with the genius that is Isaac Newton (1643-1727). These two men, and all those between them, are popularly considered to have taken humanity out of the scientifically illiterate 'dark ages' and forged a future where no-one any longer relies on superstition or Aristotelian suppositions.

A Whiggish account prevails.[1] Some may see the establishment of the Royal Society in 1660 as a keystone in the history of science's inevitable progression. Meeting at Gresham's College in London, this group of gentleman scientists were dedicated to physico-mathematical learning. Within the decade of its foundation, the Society became into a natural-philosophical hegemon, the source for all orthodox facts and opinions on the matter. Yet, this is not to say that they did not go unchallenged. One of the most outspoken critics of the Greshamites was Margaret Cavendish, née Lucas, Duchess of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1623-1673), an English gentlewoman. Known and ridiculed for her eccentricity in her own time, she challenged the atomistic, mechanistic, and experimental nature of the Royal Society, even going so far as to make a mockery of certain fellows in philosophical prose. As one may suspect when considering the time, Cavendish was almost never taken seriously.

[1] Jan Golinski, *Making Natural Knowledge: Constructivism and the History of Science* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 3.

She was written off as being too fanciful, too unconventional, and even as insane. This judgement of Cavendish persevered long into the twentieth-century, until her cause was taken up by feminist scholars in the 1970s. A thorough examination of Cavendish's life and circumstances reveals that, despite the contempt poured upon her by her contemporaries, Cavendish's natural philosophy was anything but hysterical and unfounded. She had a solid background in natural philosophy; she was tutored in it during her time on the European continent during the Interregnum, participated in discussions about it in Parisian salons, and even dabbled in the experimentation that she would later come to vehemently denounce. She prided herself in being able to disseminate her ideas well and in plain English, similar to the Royal Society. Even though some of Cavendish's natural philosophical musings may seem to have a disarmingly fantastical tilt to them, it would be wrong to denounce them as such. Though her opposition to atomism and experimentalism can appear to be odd, if not childish, upon closer inspection, we can see that Cavendish was not introducing random ideas without method, but rather coming from a learned, comprehensive standpoint. She was not the only person to put forth such concepts, but she was, indeed, the only *woman* who dared to do so. Much disdain for her came from the fact that she was a woman willing to "overstep" conventional gender boundaries and roles. We can view Cavendish as unconventional, perhaps, but not unscientific.

Aristocrat, Poet, Scientist: The Life of Cavendish

Margaret Cavendish – then Margaret Lucas – was born in Colchester, East Anglia in 1623. Her family was a well-established one, as they owned land in the city and would go on to be prominent Royalists

when civil war broke out in 1642. Even though the Lucases were indeed a prominent family, their youngest daughter received no formal education. In 1643, when the royal court picked up and moved from London to Oxford, Lucas convinced her mother to let her join Queen Henrietta-Maria's retinue. While in attendance of the controversial queen consort, Lucas became familiarized with Platonism, a philosophy which insisted on the transcendently perfect origin of all objects, and which relied heavily on "true knowledge and reminiscence."[2] This would profoundly impact Lucas' later natural philosophy. In 1645, the English Civil War was not going in King Charles I's favour, and the Queen, along with most of her children (save the Prince of Wales and Duke of York) and her Oxfordian entourage, fled to the Continent. Lucas followed her mistress into exile in France. It was during her time in Saint-Germain-en-Laye that her future was determined. In spring of the same year, she met William Cavendish, Marquis of Newcastle (1592-1673). By the end of the year, they married. Cavendish was over twenty years Lucas' senior, and was a widower with three children, two of whom were older than his new bride. Nevertheless, their "whirlwind courtship" had entertained the exilic court and was made a point of gossip.[3]

With the help of her husband and his brother, Charles Cavendish, Margaret was introduced into the burgeoning intellectual world of the new science. Charles, perhaps, had an even larger influence on Cavendish than

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[2] Eugene Marshall, "Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673)", *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, https://www.iep.utm.edu/cavend-m/.

[3] Anna Battigelli, *Margaret Cavendish and the Exiles of the Mind* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1998), 11.

did Newcastle.[4] In her 2016 preface to Cavendish's famous *The Blazing World*, Sarah Mendelson states that "her interest in the new science was stimulated by a close friendship with her brother-in-law… an accomplished mathematician who was *au fait* with the latest European scientific discoveries and speculations."[5] This is not to say that Newcastle was not a considerable influence and inspiration for his wife. Cavendish herself recognised him as a tutor of sorts, and it was he who helped her grow her interest in natural philosophy.[6] In an age of assured patriarchy, men encouraging a woman to chase such lofty pursuits was almost unheard of. Diarist Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) would later go on to call Newcastle an "ass" for tolerating, let alone *encouraging*, his wife![7] And encourage her he did. Cavendish was the centrepiece of her husband's salons, where all the great minds of the age met to discuss the advancements and controversies in natural philosophy. It was in these salons – organised by Newcastle yet hosted by Cavendish – that she debated with men like René Descartes (1596-1650) and Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655).[8] Discussing mechanical philosophy face-to-face with none other than Descartes himself certainly

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[4] For ease of understanding, from here on out, I will refer to Margaret Cavendish as "Cavendish", and William Cavendish as "Newcastle."

[5] Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, *The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing World*, ed. Sarah Mendelson (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2016), 10.

[6] Battigelli, *Exiles of the Mind,* 46.

[7] Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 18 March 1667/8, ed. Henry B. Wheatley and Richard Griffin Braybrooke, http://digital.library.upenn.edu/webbin/gutbook/lookup?num=4200.

[8] Battigelli, *Exiles of the Mind*, 45.

shows that Cavendish *did not* exist within an intellectual vacuum. Her philosophical legitimacy has so often been discounted because of the poetical, fantastical twist that she put on it. Many of her contemporaries – and beyond – discredited her on that sole account, stating that her philosophy was singular and negligible. Yet, it was not. She developed her ideas and theories in discourse with some of the most illustrious names of the age. At this point in time, Cavendish did not exist in intellectual isolation. She and Newcastle even possessed a wide variety of scientific instruments, including the microscope that she would later condemn as too fallible and superficial.[9] We can see that, even from the beginning, Cavendish was never an intellectual monolith. She worked and thought alongside her mathematician brother-in-law, sparred with René Descartes, and peered through microscopes before Robert Hooke (1635-1703) would begin his work with them.

Gentlemen Scientists and the Royal Society

After over a decade of destitute exile on the Continent, what remained of the royal family returned to England on 29 May 1660. On that day, King Charles II (1630-1685), alongside his brothers, the Duke of York and Duke of Gloucester, triumphantly entered London. Now back on his throne, Charles II carefully curated his image as the Merry Monarch; the jovial, easy-to-access people's king who initially tried to curry favour lest he end up like his father. It was popular at the time to have a passing interest in the new science, especially for those in power. Charles was

[9] Emma Wilkins, "Margaret Cavendish and the Royal Society," *The Royal Society Journal of the History of Science* 68, no. 3 (2014): 247, https://doi.org/10.1098/rsnr.2014.0015.

certainly among those powerful figures who were fascinated with alchemy and experimentation. In late 1660, he granted a royal charter to the Royal Society. The Royal Society functioned, as stated in their title, "to improve natural knowledge."[10] As described by Michael Hunter, a contemporary historian with focus on early modern England, the early Royal Society "was undeniably significant in what might be called its 'definitional' capacity… specifically devoted to the study of natural philosophy."[11]

Not only did the Royal Society function to "define" science, but it was also recognized as the scientific orthodoxy of the age. It was specifically focussed on experimentation, as attested to by Robert Boyle (1627-1691) himself in his *New Experiments Physico-Mechanical*.[12] Boyle's accomplice and sometimes-rival, the aforementioned Robert Hooke, was also very much interested in experiment, as well as artifice that could assist experiment, such as microscopes. The belief in atomism was also a very popular persuasion within the Society. It has been seen that Margaret Cavendish, now the Duchess of Newcastle, was very much opposed to the practises of the Royal Society. By the time of the Restoration, she had disavowed her belief in the corpuscular theory, instead opting for a vitalist one. Yet, her opposition would not be heard nor taken

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[10] "Royal Society" is an abbreviation of the whole name of the organization, which is "The President, Council and Fellows of the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge."

[11] Michael Hunter, *Science and Society in Restoration England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 32.

[12] Robert Boyle, "New Experiments Physico-Mechanical, Touching the Spring of the Air, and its Effects, Second Edition." *Hay Exhibits*, https://library.brown.edu/exhibit/items/show/36.

seriously. The patriarchal nature of the Royal Society would not give her a platform to speak, and the cabal of gentlemen scientists created a nigh impenetrable wall.

The very fact that the Royal Society consisted of what can be called "gentlemen scientists" is a testament to the extremely difficult atmosphere in which Cavendish strove to operate. Though she was granted a visit – something that will be extrapolated upon at length later – she was never allowed to join. One of the defining factors of the early Royal Society was the gentleman scientist, a name that creates a very exclusionary atmosphere. Steven Shapin's monograph *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth Century England* explores the phenomenon of the gentleman scientist at length. It is important that we understand the context in which science was done and disseminated, so that we may better comprehend the situation of Cavendish. To Shapin, a gentleman scientist was a highborn man who dabbled in natural philosophy. The aspects of the gentleman – money, station, and most importantly, honesty – were vital to his scientific career.[13] The gentleman was a reliable, honest person who had no will to dissimulate or obfuscate the truth. He was industrious and pious.[14] Who better, then, to be a scientist? It had to be a man of honour. There would be no place for a woman in this world. After all, women are "endemic dissemblers and

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[13] Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 68.

[14] "A commonly expressed English opinion was that 'a niggard is not worthy to be called a gentleman.'" Shapin, *Civility and Science,* 51.

deceivers", and in every viable way, inferior to men.[15] She could not be trusted in this realm. It was strictly masculine, and that was that.

In understanding the creation of the gentleman scientist, it would behoove us to look first to Robert Boyle. Shapin establishes Boyle as the engineer of the construct, stating that "[he] constructed a usable new identity out of existing cultural materials, employing the understood facts of his birth and standing, and the understood characters of gentlemen, Christians, and scholars, to fashion a new and valued character for the experimental philosopher."[16] Once more, we see the strict qualifiers for such a station. Highborn and High Church were imperatives. Boyle's reputation as a gentleman rendered him unquestionable and created him into an irrefutable authority. Such was the nature of his station. He advocated for experimentalism in the pursuit of natural knowledge, positing that it was the only way to truly understand the world around us, whether it be through weighing air (which, according to Pepys, the king laughed at for about an hour) or the refractions of colours through diamonds.[17] Experimentalism was at the core of the interests of the gentleman scientists, and thus of the Royal Society. Comprehension of this paints a vivid picture of Cavendish's situation. As a woman – a mere dissimulator – she had no way to enter this world. Her ideas about experiment were also opposed to those of Boyle.

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[15] Ibid., 89.

[16] Ibid., XXVIII.

[17] In 1664, Boyle published a piece of work called *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours, with Observations on a Diamond that Shines in the Dark*.

Upon reading one of Cavendish's publications, Dorothy Osbourne (1627-1695) proclaimed that she was "sure there are soberer people in Bedlam."[18] The ever-reliable Pepys painted the Duchess as a sickeningly eccentric and oddball of a woman, but did admit that she was rather comely.[19] Eventually, she was given the moniker "Mad Madge" – her natural philosophy was so eccentric, her dress so extravagant, her manner so unconventional that it all had to be chalked up to insanity. It was not only her natural philosophical works that alarmed her contemporaries. Cavendish also had a massive output of work, publishing 21 pieces in her lifetime. These were not just works of scientific merit, but plays, prose, and letters, discussing gender, politics, and her own personal life.[20] Although her plays and autobiography attracted much criticism – Pepys was convinced that one of her husband's plays was hers, saying he found it to be intolerable – it was her natural philosophy that found itself to be such a point of contempt. But, as we have seen, Cavendish's ideas were not singular. She did not produce her natural philosophy on whimsy, no matter how fantastical it may seem. Why, then, did she have so many detractors? It was partially, if not wholly, on account of her gender. After all, women were the descendants of Eve; they were creatures of fantasy and pretense, never to be taken seriously.

A Woman's Lot

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[18] Dorothy Osbourne, *Letter to Sir William Temple,* 12 June 1653.

[19] Pepys, *The Diary*, 30 May 1667, ed. Wheatley and Braybrooke.

[20] Stephen Clucas, "Introduction," in *A Princely Brave Woman: Essays on Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle,* ed. Stephen Clucas (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003), 9.

To understand Cavendish's situation, it would behoove us to have an understanding of a woman's lot in seventeenth-century England. Dame Antonia Fraser's book on women in Stuart-era England, *The Weaker Vessel*, succeeds in setting the scene. The Creation story was vital in understanding early modern gender hierarchy. Eve came from Adam; thus, she was inherently subservient to him. It was also Eve who plucked the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and it was she who took the first bite.[21] Some even questioned if women had souls at all![22] Many women were denied education, as it was believed that they could not keep up with it. They were inferior to men in every way. A woman's worth was measured in her fecundity; a theme that stretches all throughout history. Margaret Cavendish, on the other hand, was decidedly intellectual, but infertile. "Some real connection was seen between child-bearing and grace: for what was woman's best chance to redeem herself from the sin of Eve and restore herself to honour but by fulfilling this natural female role?"[23] Cavendish's infertility, therefore, was a point of contention for her contemporaries. The fact that she could not become pregnant was unnatural, just as unnatural as her intellect. Cavendish was even disdainful of women who lauded themselves on their "Great Bellies."[24] A contemporary of hers eulogised the Duchess as "as being the exception to

[21] Antonia Fraser, *The Weaker Vessel* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1984), 1.

[22] Fraser, *The Weaker Vessel*, 3.

[23] Ibid., 62.

[24] Ibid., 63.

the rest of 'her frail sex… who have Fruitful Wombs but Barren Brains.'"[25] It can be seen from this that women were expected to be intellectually inferior. Although Cavendish did oftentimes deride other women, she recognised that their main pitfall was the fact that they never received any legitimate education, nor were they ever intellectually empowered. "In 1665 in *The Worlds Olio* [Cavendish] wrote that 'in Nature we have as clear an understanding as Men, if we were bred in Schools to mature our Brains.' …In principle, society rewarded the learned woman with disapproval or at best suspicion."[26] It was, then, the patriarchy that prevented social mobility, and not any inherent inferiority. Cavendish was deemed "mad," then, because she dared to shirk gender norms and ascend what was expected of her.

Perhaps Cavendish is most famous for her utopian romance novel, *The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing World*. Published in 1666, it "offers an up-to-the-minute survey of the state of scientific knowledge in 1666… We are told which questions might or should be asked about the natural world, which theories are currently being debated, and which scientific practices and methodologies appear to be most useful and productive."[27] This longing to understand God and the Heavens, she says, cannot be done through artifice, such as using microscopes or other scientific instruments. As we will see, this was a point of contention between Cavendish and the Royal Society, that she so frequently lambasted

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[25] Ibid., 4.

[26] Ibid., 120.

[27] Cavendish, *The Blazing World*, ed. Mendelson, 29.

on this subject. The way gender is handled in *The Blazing World* is also worth considering. Mendelson posits that it could be considered a "meta-hermaphroditic text", stating that "Cavendish… transcends simple binary oppositions… subverting contemporary notions about gender hierarchy in the spheres of rational thought and literary creation."[28] This subversion of gender can be viewed as a parody of Francis Bacon's (1561-1626) Salomon's House, as seen in *The New Atlantis*. Salomon's House was strictly the realm of men, whereas the science done in *The Blazing World* was wholly controlled by women. Bacon establishes "both woman and nature as resources to be utilized for the modern scientific project."[29] Cavendish also establishes nature as a female but creates her as completely separated from God. The theological spin on natural philosophy – or the lack thereof – in her novel could be seen as a precursor of the deism of the eighteenth-century. *The Blazing World* was controversy at its core. It was a subversive piece of literature that Cavendish used to take the Royal Society to task. Let's now turn our attention to Cavendish's opinion of microscopy, as shown both in *The Blazing World* and its companion text, *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy*, as well as in her disputes with Hooke.

Cavendish, the Natural Philosopher

Before we carry on, however, it may be of great help to us to establish knowledge of Robert Hooke, and where he stood on microscopy. As one of the founding members of the Royal Society, he was very much involved in the intellectual world of the age. Within two years of the

[28] Ibid., 22.

[29] Ibid., 32.

Society's foundation, "Hooke was formally proposed as curator of experiments for the newly formed Royal Society of London, his task being to provide three or four experiments at each meeting."[30] In 1664, Hooke published his *Micrographia*, which "initiated the field of microscopy."[31] Through careful observation, Hooke discovered complex and remarkable things about the superficial structures of objects, both inanimate and animate. Yet, microscopes only revealed things about the *exterior* to the observer, and never of the interior. This was one of the many issues that Cavendish had with these instruments.

The issue of microscopes is taken up in *The Blazing World,* which was "explicitly presented as a response to Robert Hooke's *Micrographia*, published one year earlier, and considered as the banner of the Royal Society and its method."[32] Cavendish makes her issue with microscopes abundantly clear. At first glance, this can appear to be based on contrarianism or a folly of, as John Evelyn put it, an intellectual pretender.[33] Even today, some historians posit that her staunch opposition was just a way for her to show her dissatisfaction with the patriarchal monopoly on the natural science. However, in arguing that, the myth of Mad Madge is perpetuated. Her concern surrounding microscopy and

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[30] Patri J. Pugliese, "Robert Hooke", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/13693

[31] Pugliese, "Robert Hooke."

[32] Frédérique Aït-Touati, "Margaret Cavendish contre Robert Hooke : Le Duel Impossible", *Revue de Synthèse* 137, no. 3 (2017): 249, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11873-016-0302-x.

[33] Wilkins, *Cavendish and the Royal Society,* 246.

artifice did not come out of scorn, but rather, from experience with the fickle tools. "During [her] exile in Paris during the 1640s… Cavendish owned her own microscope — 'my Lady's multiplying glass'— which was 18 inches long, focused with a screw of 10 threads," records historian Emma Wilkins.[34] And so Cavendish was well-aware of microscopy, having used it herself. She knew that the microscope – especially such a primitive version of one – would be exceedingly prone to folly. Any flaw in the microscope could seriously compromise the data being collected. "The problems of lenses and lighting were, if you like, the known unknowns about the reliability of microscopes. But Cavendish warned that there could also be unknown unknowns to worry about—potential flaws in microscopes that had not yet become evident."[35] Artifices, such as microscopes, could corrupt our observation of nature, and give us false readings.

What, then, would be the point? The senses were already fallible and magnifying them was not much better. Beyond this, Cavendish argued that just examining the surface of an object would do no good if one were to *truly* understand it. She considered this issue in her *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy*, stating that "it is impossible that the exterior shape and structure of bodies can afford us sure and excellent instructions to the knowledge of their natures and interior motions, as some do conceive; for how shall a feather inform us of the interior nature of a

[34] Ibid., 247.

[35] Ibid., 248.

bird?"[36] We cannot understand the positions or functions of human organs, she posits, by just examining arms and legs. And so was the problem of microscopy. Her opposition did not exist in a vacuum, as we have established. Her issues with microscopes – especially as it related to their fickleness and inaccuracy – came from her own experience with them. And she was not the only person to espouse distrust of these new tools: "Indeed, Hooke himself confronted the problem in relation to the eyes of a fly."[37] Hooke, of all people, recognised that microscopes were fallible, and prone to error. But his objection to the tool was completely different from Cavendish's. He only recognised that the lighting of the work environment could largely affect his observations; he made no qualms about the superficial nature of microscopy.

She was not alone in her sentiments towards the microscopists. To her, they were but "'boys that play with watry Bubbles, or fling Dust into each others Eyes, or make a Hobby-horse of Snow'. [This opinion] was shared by Hobbes, who derided Boyle's air pump…"[38] Thus, it would be wrong to categorise her opinion as gendered, or reactionary. Cavendish was not alone in her thoughts. Although she may have been unconventional, she was not unreasonable. She knew what she was talking about. We cannot address her ideas with incredulity. Although she may have been wrong in the long-run about microscopes, there was no way for her to know how far they would advance. Her objection to them was rooted

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[36] Margaret Cavendish, *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy,* ed. Eileen O'Neill (Oxford/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 70.

[37] Wilkins, *Cavendish and the Royal Society,* 247.

[38] Ibid., 249.

in precedent and experience. This cannot be stressed enough: her opposition was *not* arbitrary, but rather, learned and measured.

We can, then, summarise Cavendish's attitude towards microscopes in three parts, as presented by Frédérique Aït-Touati. Instruments like microscopes are useless due to their artifice, they are not reliable because of their composition, and they are misleading because of their mediation.[39] To Cavendish, artifice and nature were so diametrically opposed to one another that they could not, in any way, be correlated. As both she and Hooke acknowledged, microscopes could be rather prone to error and issue, both of which could potentially distort and misconstrue observations. I argue that the mediation Aït-Touati speaks of – mediation of artifice between man and nature – can be classified under her first criterion. In short, if it is something artificial, created to observe something natural, then it has no place. Human reason could trump instruments. To her, "reason may pierce deeper, and consider their inherent natures and interior actions."[40]

As we just discussed, in Cavendish's philosophy, nature and artifice were two wholly different categories that should never interact with one another. At risk of oversimplification, her philosophy could be described as things destined to things. A chicken is made up of chicken, and a dog, of dog. According to Cavendish, natural phenomena "cannot be explained by blind mechanism and atomism, but instead require the parts of nature to move themselves in regular ways, according to their distinctive

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[39] Aït-Touati, *Cavendish contre Hooke*, 249.

[40] Cavendish, *Observations*, 94.

motions."[41] Experiment had no place in natural philosophy, or at least, a very limited one. To experiment was to manipulate nature. This, to Cavendish, would not give a proper interpretation of nature, as she believed that "the knowledge derived from experimentalism is as flawed as the ancient superstitions."[42] Experimentalism, by its very nature, is a subjective thing. If the fellows of the Royal Society were to partake in conducting experiments, how could they ever claim that they were objective purveyors of the new science?

Cavendish viewed nature as infinite, and man as finite. How could something so finite, she argued, even *begin* to think that they can comprehend something so incredibly *infinite* as nature? According to Lisa Sarasohn, "the image of hybrid beast-men [in *The Blazing World* was used] to ridicule both the experimenters and their claims to knowledge of the material world."[43] It was an unnatural trespass of nature to assume knowledge of it. Not only do they presume to understand something infinitely more infinite than themselves, but they claim to gather this knowledge through artificial means. We have already seen that Cavendish was extremely opposed to artifice. To her, it was below nature.

> They are but Natures bastards, or changelings... and though Nature takes so much delight in variety, that she is pleased with them, yet they are not to be compared to her wise and fundamental actions; for Nature, being a wise and provident

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41 Marshall, "Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673)".

42 Nicole Pohl, "'Of Mixt Natures': Questions of Genre in Margaret Cavendish's The Blazing World," in *A Princely Brave Woman*, 56.

43 Lisa Sarasohn, *The Natural Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish: Reason and Fancy During the Scientific Revolution* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 2010), 149.

> Lady, governs her parts very wisely, methodically and orderly.[44]

The natural philosophers are only interested, then, in the by-products and manipulations of their experiment. This, to Cavendish, is not true understanding of nature. It is nothing more than the understanding of man's influence over nature, and then passing that off as understanding. This takes on a rather Baconian tack; Bacon unabashedly used rape metaphors in his natural philosophy, stating that man had to assert dominion over Nature (also a female to him) in order to understand it.[45] Cavendish's philosophy, of course, stands contrary to this. In the realm of Cavendish's philosophy, nature is not even *meant* to be understood. It is almost treasonous to assume that it *can* be fully comprehended. The experimental philosophers are Icarus, in that they "[try] to go where no man can go."[46] It would be much better to rely on our minds to carry us to a logical conclusion, rather than trying to exploit nature. Though Cavendish may have been decried as zany or illegitimate in her presentation of these thoughts, she was not alone. Indeed, many of her contemporaries also lauded reason above (contrived) sense: "Perhaps the best known of all the rationalist thinkers was Hobbes, who famously preferred his own 'meditation' to sense-based experimenting."[47] Cavendish certainly disagreed with Thomas Hobbes on quite a few things, though they still had their similarities. We must recognise this. Again, Cavendish was not

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[44] Sarasohn, *Reason and Fancy*, 157-8.

[45] Cavendish, *The Blazing World,* ed. Mendelson, 32.

[46] Sarasohn, *Reason and Fancy,* 159.

[47] Wilkins, *Cavendish and the Royal Society*, 252.

libertine in her philosophising. She did not stand alone in her ideas. Her ideas were not pulled out of the blue, but rather substantiated by those before her. She is only viewed as incredulous because of her femininity, and because she was more than willing to discuss natural philosophy with men, with no reservations.

Cavendish's objection to microscopes and experimentation may be viewed as many things. "Some scholars have argued that her views were odd or even childish, while others have claimed that they were shaped by her gender-based status as a scientific 'outsider.'"[48] In classifying her opposition as a reaction to being excluded, one is only contributing to the myth of Mad Madge. Doing such just creates her as a reactionary figure who does science only to oppose men. Of course, this is not true. We have seen that she came from a learned and legitimate place. And so it is through this lens that we may consider the Duchess' rather unique philosophy of nature, that can be best defined as panpsychism, "the view that all things have a mind or a mind-like quality."[49] Not only is this dangerously atheistic, but it also deviates from the atomistic view of the world as advanced by the fellows. Her theory of matter was autonomous and did not require the existence of a God. The autonomy would, by its very nature, require life. This is why she rejected atomism. Atoms were not alive. That simply could not mesh with her views about and idea of the world. Matter is a moving, living, purposeful thing. To her, atoms were impossible and incomprehensible.

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[48] Ibid., 245.

[49] David Skrbina, "Panpsychism," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, https://www.iep.utm.edu/panpsych/.

> I cannot think that the substance of infinite matter is onely a body of dust, such as small atoms, and that there is no solidity, but what they make, nor no degrees, but what they compose, nor no change and variety, but as they move, as onely by fleeing about as dust and ashes, that are blown about with winde, which makes me thinke should make such uncertainties, such disproportioned figures, and confused creations, as there would be an infinite and eternal disorder.[50]

Though perhaps contrarian, Cavendish has never given reason for one to view her as an illegitimate scholar, based on her natural philosophical merit alone. It is safe to say that not many of Cavendish's contemporaries subscribed to such a philosophy. Panpsychism was seen as too fanciful to even be probable, especially when it sits alongside the much more sensical atomism or corpuscularianism. Yet, perhaps its most famous champion would be Plato, who posited that everything contained a little god.[51] Although Cavendish never suggested a polytheistic philosophy, her thinking was very much in line with Plato. To her, everything was alive with its very essence, as it was alive. Although a chair or this very paper is inanimate, Cavendish would say that it is still alive, as it is possessed of itself in its material composition. She saw it as such: "Matter possesses an internalized spirit or 'life,' what Cavendish had called innate matter in her earlier work, which acts through motion and shape. Nature is no longer a creator being but rather the sum total of vitalized matter."[52] Cavendish's view of nature, therefore, is in part Platonic. More importantly, its evident Platonism precludes the application of Aristotelianism, because "we know

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[50] Sarasohn, *Reason and Fancy*, 64.

[51] Skrbina, "Panpsychism."

[52] Sarasohn, *Reason and Fancy,* 68.

that [Aristotle] viewed the psyche or soul as the form (or structure) of living things. Accordingly, non-living things have no soul…"[53] We should recall that the hallmark of the Scientific Revolution was stepping *away* from Aristotle and the old Scholastic philosophies. Cavendish's panpsychic vitalism is a very firm and obvious rebuke against Aristotelian philosophy, which had been under fire for over a century, by this point. Although she was quite alone in putting forth such ideas, she was not doing it from a place of ignorance or antagonism. It was from a learned place. So, it is seen that this idea, while running contrary to the scientific orthodoxy of her day, is not *completely* unique. It comes from a place of careful consideration and of learning. To posit otherwise would be to discredit Cavendish's diligent philosophical work. As with everything else that we have explored – her disdain for microscopes, first and foremost – her speculations are always grounded in precedent.

Walter Charleton (1619-1707), a correspondent of Cavendish, spoke of the Royal Society as "[the Tribunal of Philosophical Doctrines, and] is of a constitution exceedingly strict and rigid in the examination of Theories concerning Nature."[54] He knew that the Society would not accept Cavendish's unorthodox ideas, but he did not discourage her in her philosophising. In fact, many of their philosophies were the same. They both advocated for a healthy dose of scepticism in philosophy, and both acknowledged the limits of human capability when dealing with infinite knowledge. Again, we have an instance where Cavendish's ideas do not

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[53] Skrbina, "Panpsychism."

[54] Stephen Clucas, "Variation, Irregularity and Probabilism: Margaret Cavendish and Natural Philosophy as Rhetoric" in *A Princely Brave Woman*, 203.

stand alone but are substantiated by other natural philosophers. Charleton, however, was taken seriously.

Conclusion

Even though she knew they would be hostile towards her, in 1667, Cavendish was invited to a meeting of the Royal Society, wherein she witnessed many of Hooke and Boyle's air pump experiments. Of course, Samuel Pepys recorded her visit to the Society's meeting.

> I [found] much company, indeed very much company, in expectation of the Duchesse of Newcastle, who had desired to be invited to the Society; and was, after much debate, pro and con., it seems many being against it… The Duchesse hath been a good, comely woman; but her dress so antick, and her deportment so ordinary, that I do not like her at all, nor did I hear her say any thing that was worth hearing… Several fine experiments were shown her...[55]

Pepys' exclusion of Cavendish's thoughts about the experiments that were shown to her is telling. In this, he is typical of the gentleman scientist of the day. The Royal Society was not all that different than Bacon's theoretical Salomon's House. It was a decidedly male world, one into which Cavendish had no place in trespassing. Yet she did. Pepys was appalled by this effrontery, but nevertheless remained obsessed with the scandal of the Duchess.[56] This may tell us more about Samuel Pepys than we may care – or want – to know. Mary Evelyn could barely even hide her

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[55] Pepys, *The Diary*, 30 May 1667, ed. Wheatley and Braybrooke.

[56] Marjorie Hope Nicholson, *Pepys' Diary and the New Science* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1965), 106.

contempt for the Duchess. The common thread of hatred and disgust that ran through all these accounts is that of Cavendish's status as a "pretender" to science. Yet, we have seen that it was not true. Cavendish's ideas did not exist within a vacuum. She developed these ideas from experience and careful contemplation. She had spoken face-to-face with Descartes, she had viewed specimens under looking-glasses, and she had observed air pump experiments alongside the illustrious fellows. She was intellectually engaged with her world. Her writings and musings on the natural world were to "resist the hegemonic claim of early modern science to interpret nature, but also present women as agents in the production of scientific knowledge."[57] She was just as much of a scientist as anyone in the Royal Society. After all, she had done her fair share of interpreting nature. She had also produced a wealth of scientific knowledge, substantiated by those who came before her and from her own personal experiences pursuing that knowledge. And yet, it was still discredited and swept under the rug. She was called names. Pepys most famously described her as "a mad, conceited, and ridiculous woman."[58] All of this vitriol was heaped upon her because she dared to rise above her role as a mere woman and enter into the masculine sphere of natural philosophy.

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[57] Cavendish, *The Blazing World,* ed. Mendelson, 13.

[58] Pepys, *The Diary*, 18 March 1667/8, ed. Wheatley and Braybrooke.

Margaret Cavendish (née Lucas), Duchess of Newcastle upon Tyne
by Pieter Louis van Schuppen, after Abraham Diepenbeeck
line engraving, circa 1655-1658

NPG D11111

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The Wexford Rebellion of 1798 and the Myth of the 'Patriot Priest'

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Kaylee Kravetz is a fifth-year student in History and Irish Studies. She is primarily interested in the history of Irish nationalism, specifically as expressed through literature. In her (tragically limited) spare time, Kaylee enjoys crocheting, reading, and playing fetch with her demanding, but very fluffy, cat.

The Catholic church has remained an important aspect of Irish life for hundreds of years, including the turbulent period surrounding the Rebellion of 1798. The United Irish rising in 1798 began as a political uprising throughout various parts of the country. The movement was a professed non-sectarian movement that intended to create an independent, unified Ireland. In 1798 French troops were set to land in Ireland to assist the United Irishmen. Ultimately, the Rebellion of 1798 failed but it became a distinctive cultural marker throughout Ireland and is remembered, to this day, in the public consciousness. However, the rebellion as it occurred in Wexford has taken on a life of its own. Many of the myths that surround the Wexford Rebellion of '98 are centered on the Catholic clergy and, more specifically, the supposed 'Patriot Priests'. This paper sets out to examine who these 'Patriot Priests' were in relation to the Church and what the role of the Church was in this period. This paper will argue that large-scale Catholic clerical dissemination of political rhetoric in favor of the Wexford Rebellion did not occur. Rather, the notion of large-scale Catholic clerical participation was primarily part of the centennial commemoration events of 1898.

The turmoil in 1798 in County Wexford was not isolated; various parts of the country were affected and faced heavy losses of life as well as severe property damage.[1] According to historian Daniel Gahan, the Wexford Rebellion, rather than just being an unintentional and extremely violent episode, was in fact a planned rebellion that was meant to go hand

[1] Thomas Bartlett, "Clemency and Compensation: The Treatment of Defeated Rebels and Suffering Loyalists after the 1798 Rebellion," in *Revolution, Counter-Revolution and Union: Ireland in the 1790s,* eds. Jim Smyth, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000 [i-245]), 99.

in hand with a nationwide United Irish plot to take control of Ireland.[2] However, the strategy lost momentum and direction toward the end.[3] The ways in which the violent episodes of this period unfolded points to a limited objective and reinforces the notion that this plan was part of the larger United Irishmen vision.[4] In this context, the Wexford Rebellion can be seen as part of a larger political upheaval rather than an isolated spat of sectarian violence. The political aspect of this event is reinforced by contemporary commentary authored by an individual signed as Veritas. In this narrative of a planned rebellion the clerical involvement, or lack thereof, becomes more important. The argument that this was part of a larger rebellion planned by the United Irishmen helps in understanding the ways in which the Catholic Church participated, including direct and indirect involvement on both sides.

Out of this comes the 'Patriot Priest' myth. This mythos was bolstered by popular folklore as well as the idea that the Catholic clergy was on the "'right' side in a popular agitation."[5] There was also a non-religious component to this mythologization whereby "legends and myths of Ninety-Eight were rooted in the half-mystical quality of the rebellion

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[2] Daniel Gahan, "The Military Strategy of the Wexford United Irishmen in 1798," in *History Ireland*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Winter, 1993), 28.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Gahan, "The Military Strategy of the Wexford United Irishmen in 1798," 30.

[5] Kevin Whelan, "The Role of the Catholic Priest in the 1798 Rebellion in county Wexford," in *Wexford: History and Society,* eds. Kevin Whelan, (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1987 [i-564],) 296.

itself."[6] However, this myth primarily gained traction prior to and during the centenary celebrations in 1898 rather than in the immediate aftermath of the Rebellion. From 1898 forward this myth has lived on and continued to be associated with the violence of the Wexford Rebellion. That being said, the 'Patriot Priests' have limited grounding in reality. In terms of both the dissemination of political rhetoric and in active fighting, clerical participation was limited.[7]

The senior officials of the Church were against rebellion as a tool for change.[8] In addition to this, there were a number of ways in which United Irish activities were seen as being in opposition to the religious establishment. Kevin Whelan argues that there were five levels upon which the clergy were in opposition to United Irishmen. There was "the spiritual argument" that taking the United Irish oath was contrary to the Roman Catholic doctrine relating to religious loyalty.[9] The "ideological argument" that United Irishmen were inspired by principles conceptually at odds with established religion.[10] The "political argument" that the United Irishmen disturbed "gradual process, destroyed Catholic unity and gave the

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[6] Daniel Gahan, "The 'Black Mob' and the 'Babes in the Wood': Wexford in the Wake of Rebellion, 1798-1806," in *Journal of the Wexford Historical Society* 6, 13 (1990), 101.

[7] Whelan, "The Role of the Catholic Priest in the 1798 Rebellion in county Wexford," 297.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Whelan, "The Role of the Catholic Priest in the 1798 Rebellion in county Wexford," 299.

[10] Ibid.

authorities an opportunity to delay further concessions."[11] The "social argument" that the United Irishmen promoted a divided relationship between the clergy and its people.[12] And finally, the clerical belief that the United Irishmen were controlled by a small, self-serving group intent on only heightening their own positions in society.[13] These five points in relation to clerical involvement in the Rebellion are key because they show that the eleven men who actively participated in the Rebellion did not adhere to them. Thus, these men were not on the same ideological grounds as the rest of the clergy. Furthermore, these five points also articulate the reasons why the Catholic Church as an institution would not have participated on the side of the rebel forces. Despite the lack of institutional support, chapels became locations for United Irish recruitment.[14]

That being said, this recruitment system was not initiated by priests or sanctioned by the Catholic Church. [15] The communal aspect of Catholicism and its physical manifestations in Ireland meant that churches and other religious spaces became areas in which United Irishmen could converse with others in the community and possibly gain their support for the movement. It is interesting to note, however, that in the centenary

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

celebrations the Catholic Church would backtrack on all these arguments and embrace the 'Patriot Priest' narrative.[16]

Numerically speaking, the 'Patriot Priests' were an anomaly when compared to the political engagement and sentiment of the majority of the priests active in County Wexford in 1798. Out of eighty-five priests in the county only eleven actively participated in rebel activities.[17] The anomalous nature of these men can be partially attributed to their familial connections and individual backgrounds. The bishop of Wexford, Bishop James Caulfield, was against the rebellion and various contemporary sources indicate that the "bulk of the clergy were obviously of the same opinion": that the rebellion was a political and religious mistake.[18] The majority of the senior clergy were also older and tended to be on the conservative side.[19] The eleven men who participated did not fall within this conservative bracket nor were they members of the senior clergy. Whelan also states that one of these eleven priests was mentally unstable and therefore does not account for this priest (John Keane) in his argument with regard to the number of active participants.[20] Furthermore, these priests were outside the pale of respectability -insofar as their station would allow. As noted, these priests were not the epitome of the Catholic clerical presence in Wexford. Whelan argues: "the clerical appeal of the

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[16] The "Patriot Priest" narrative is that the Catholic Church, and specifically the priests in Wexford, played a pivotal role in support of the 1798 Rebellion.

[17] Ibid, 296.

[18] Ibid, 298.

[19] Ibid, 297.

[20] Ibid.

United Irishmen was to the marginal men, who had already fallen foul of the official church bureaucracy."[21] Other reasons for this marginality include familial ties to the movement and chronic drunkenness.[22] Among these eleven men, several were intimately connected to the movement in some way. According to Whelan, these men "were drawn from families with close links to the United Irishmen, or who fought when the rebellion commenced (Clinch, the two Murphys, Kearns, Dixon, Synnott)."[23] These familial links were more than just minor ones. In all cases these connections were between close family members as opposed to distant cousins or other distant relations. For example, Powell states that both of Clinch's brothers were United Irishmen, one of which was a captain in his area.[24] Similarly, Father Mogue Kearns also had brothers active in the Rebellion.[25] This destabilizes the narrative of the 'Patriot Priests' as being representative of the involvement of the Wexford Catholic clergy. These participants were marginal members of the church and, as such, were not representative of broader clerical involvement. The insularity of the eleven men who participated works against the narrative of a Rebellion based entirely on sectarian violence as well as the narrative of large-scale clerical involvement in the dissemination of political rhetoric. The eleven Catholic clerics that participated were an anomaly and thus not an adequate measure

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[21] Ibid, 305.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid, 307.

[24] Séamas S de Vál, "Priests of 'Ninety-Eight,'" *The Past: The Organ of the Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society,* No. 20 (1997), 42.

[25] Ibid, 35.

with which to gauge clerical rebel sentiments. The anomalous nature of these men therefore serves to highlight the fact that this was a political upheaval of social order rather than a sectarian one. To that end, the limited number of these 'Patriot Priests' also indicates the overall limited involvement of the Catholic clergy in 1798's rebel activities.

Since the 'Patriot Priest' myth perseveres with little grounding in reality the question then becomes; how did this myth enter into public conscientiousness in such a lasting way? Most of this mythologization occurred during the centenary preparation and celebration of 1798. The 1898 celebrations came at a time when Ireland was defining itself in relation to England and the Crown. Thus, the Catholic Church had to fit itself into these celebrations even if they had not actively participated in 1798. Nuala C. Johnson notes that "[i]f the church was to play a role in the centenary, the interpretation of '98 would have to be radically re-thought."[26] In rethinking and retooling their interpretation of the Rebellion, the Catholic church chose to reposition itself and the Wexford Rebellion "'... exclusively as a struggle for faith and fatherland'".[27] In this environment, the Catholic Church fostered the 'Patriot Priest' myth and embraced it in order to affirm their place in a rapidly changing Irish society - regardless of the actual participation of the Wexford clergy. The ability of the Catholic church to do this, in effect, hinged on the activities of the eleven men who had been condemned one-hundred years prior.

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[26] Nuala C. Johnson, "Sculpting Heroic Histories: Celebrating the Centenary of the 1798 Rebellion in Ireland." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 19, No. 1 (1994), 85.

[27] Ibid.

This is not to say that the entirety of the 'Patriot Priest' conceptualization began during the 1898 celebrations. Early notions of large-scale clerical involvement can be seen immediately after the Rebellion, although the connotations were significantly different. These early ideas can be seen in the "groundless charges and illiberal insinuations of an anonymous writer, signed Verax,"[28] which can be found included in the appendix of a contemporary piece entitled, *A vindication of the Roman Catholic clergy of the town of Wexford, during the late unhappy rebellion, from the groundless charges and illiberal insinuations of an anonymous writer, signed Verax. By Veritas.* Verax asserts that the Roman Clergy were the only persons of authority in Wexford and that everyone killed there was Protestant.[29] He also argues that they were killed because of that fact.[30] This opinion is not backed up by statistics, but it is important for three reasons. The first being that this assertion is made in the direct aftermath of 1798 and is a glimpse into popular sentiment at the time. Specifically, sentiment that was not in favor of the rebel forces or the United Irishmen. Verax himself was notably a "professed enemy of the United Irishmen."[31] What this biased account tells us is that political and religious lines were blurred in the Rebellion's aftermath. More specifically, the difference

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[28] Veritas, *A vindication of the Roman Catholic clergy of the town of Wexford, during the late unhappy rebellion, from the groundless charges and illiberal insinuations of an anonymous writer, signed Verax. By Veritas,* (Dublin: printed by H. Fitzpatrick, No. 2, 1798,) 2.

[29] Ibid, 31.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

between a political uprising and sectarian violence was intermeshed in unique ways.

As Daniel Gahan argues, the 1798 Wexford Rebellion was meant to be part of a larger political upheaval planned by the United Irishmen.[32] However, the Rebellion as seen by Verax and others was that of a sectarian conflict rather than a political one. The interlocking of sectarianism and politics in this event is interesting because it is typified by the involvement of eleven Catholic clerics in an otherwise secular struggle. That being said, their involvement was not sanctioned by the Church, strengthening the argument that the Wexford Rebellion was a political uprising. Secondly, Verax writes about the clergy as if the entire Church in County Wexford was heavily involved in the Rebellion.[33] Again, this is not supported by statistics or the courts martial after the fact. However, the belief that the entire clergy was at fault allows for a populist reading of how the clergy was actually involved.

As previously noted, only eleven clergy members were actively involved in the Rebellion but, even in this early period Verax provides a glimpse into the early foregrounding of the 'Patriot Priest' myth. Verax's statements are a way to conceptualize the participation of the 'Patriot Priests' in terms of how they were perceived by Protestants. Of tertiary importance, Verax's biased assertion is immediately contested by another contemporary anonymous figure - Veritas. In response to Verax a figure signed Veritas publishes both Verax's work and his own in the

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[32] Daniel Gahan, "The Military Strategy of the Wexford United Irishmen in 1798," 28.

[33] Veritas, *A vindication of the Roman Catholic clergy*, 29.

aforementioned contemporary account. This is important because it shows that there was contention to the assertions that Verax was making. This contestation is useful in understanding the various attitudes towards 1798 in the immediate aftermath.

In opposition to Verax, Veritas sets out to vindicate the conduct of the clergy.[34] Veritas argues that the Wexford Rebellion was political and that the clergy was mostly unaware but attempted to help when they could.[35] An example of this is Father Corrin who saved the lives of fifteen prisoners with no regard to their religion, as argued by Veritas.[36] This further contrasts Verax's notion that only Protestants were killed. It is also notable that Corrin participated in the Rebellion in opposition to the rebel forces. According to Veritas, Father Corrin "made every possible exertion to save the lives of all the prisoners," and resolved to "never again say mass for them," should they continue.[37] Veritas also states:

> Catholic Clergy of Wexford stand in a most sad dilemma indeed: for, if on the one hand they had any authority or influence with the rebels, they must be implicated: and on the other, if they did not exert an authority, *which they never possessed* [original emphasis], they are to be charged as passive accomplices in all the horrors there perpetuated.[38]

The examples provided by Veritas highlight the limited participation of the Catholic clergy in the Wexford Rebellion. According to Veritas, the clergy

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[34] Veritas, *A vindication of the Roman Catholic clergy,* 4.

[35] Ibid, 5.

[36] Ibid, 6.

[37] Ibid, 7.

[38] Ibid, 15.

had no ability to participate in a clerical capacity because the Rebellion was condemned by the established Church. Furthermore, Veritas' examples show that participation was not always on the side of the rebel forces: there were clerics who intervened only in an attempt to save lives. This complicates the narrative of the 'Patriot Priest' in that it underscores the limited reality of clerical involvement in 1798 and provides details of participants who opposed rebel forces rather than helped them.

A further destabilization of this myth can be seen in the physical challenges made to Catholic churches in Wexford. If large scale clerical involvement had truly been a factor of the Wexford Rebellion, then it is possible that more churches would have come out of the rebellion unscathed. However, as noted by Edward Culleton, throughout the rebellion "over thirty of the thatched Catholic churches were burned in North Wexford."[39] Thomas Bartlett also remarks that Wexford had "suffered particularly badly;"[40] though there was destruction throughout most of the country. It is unclear, however, from these accounts which party was the perpetrator of these burnings. That being said, the burning of Catholic churches indicates that there was resentment directed towards Catholic clerics - both for their perceived involvement in the Rebellion as well as general sectarian tensions. This resentment also displays the dilemma that Veritas had described the Catholic clergy as being a part of they could neither participate nor stand back without consequences during and after the Rebellion.

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[39] Edward Culleton, "The Evolution of the Catholic Parishes in County Wexford," in *The Past: The Organ of the Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society*, No. 28 (2007), 23-24.

[40] Bartlett, "Clemency and Compensation," 99.

Catholic priests did participate in various ways in the 1798 Wexford Rebellion but, as a whole, the Catholic Church remained outside of this conflict in terms of direct participation. Eleven men actively participated in the Rebellion and were later deemed the 'Patriot Priests' and should be considered aberrant in terms of generalized Catholic involvement in the movement. They were a small percentage of the clergy in Wexford, directly connected to United Irishmen, and were considered to be marginal members of the church prior to the Rebellion. Furthermore, the Catholic Church was ostensibly against the Rebellion and therefore the participation of priests becomes even more complicated in terms of political and religious sentiment of the period. This mythologized narrative makes the story even more complex since the Catholic church accepted the 'Patriot Priest' myth one-hundred years later during the 1898 celebrations.

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A Field of Sacrifice: The Grey Nuns and the Typhus Epidemic of 1847

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The following text describes the Typhus Epidemic of 1847 through the eyes of a fictional Grey Nun, Sister Marianne. In the summer of 1847, thousands of Irish immigrants passed through Grosse-Île, in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence River. Their ships were plagued with typhus, a highly contagious fever distinguished by aches, chills, dark blotches, and stupor. Within two weeks, patients would either recover or succumb to heart failure. Many who did not show symptoms at Grosse-Île fell ill by the time they reached Montréal, where "fever sheds" were set up to quarantine the sick. Nuns volunteered to act as nurses in these sheds, with the Grey Nuns leading the way.

July 5, 1847

Sister Marianne rose early, before sunrise. The smell of death clung to her habit, but she dressed quickly: there was a lot of work to be done. She met her Sisters in the hallway, and together they passed the room where, for days, the moans of pain had been constant. Mass was, as always, attended with devotion. Marianne noted the hurried edge to everyone's movements as they went together to the chapel "to receive the Eucharist that gave them their strength and consolation."[1] Likewise, breakfast was eaten quickly and quietly, and soon enough, Marianne and a group of a dozen of her Sisters exited the Motherhouse into the rain to follow Mother-Superior McMullen to the fever sheds at Pointe St. Charles.

Torrential rain had fallen throughout the summer, making their trek to the sheds swampy and difficult. Still, they "made their journey

[1] Michael Collins, "An Understanding of Nationality through Catholicism: Reflections on the Grey Nuns' 1847 Famine Annals about Caring for Irish Emigrants in Montreal's Fever Sheds," 5.

within twenty minutes"[2] and her Sisters did their best to keep up a cheerful countenance on the way. They had left many Sisters behind at the Motherhouse, suffering under the disease, and Marianne squinted to look at the women who accompanied her.[3] Some faces were more unfamiliar to her than the rest, but no less dear: despite the trials that their house was undergoing, many young women had asked to enter their novitiate[4] and their courage was celebrated among the rest of the Sisters.[5] However, Marianne's mind was split between the bedridden Sisters, who numbered thirteen at this point, and the storm they forged through to reach the locus of disease and death.[6]

As they approached the shed, the rain did not drown out "the groans of the ill and the wails of the dying,"[7] nor did it mask the strong smell of the cadavers. For lack of a proper mortuary, the corpses, which had once been so full of love, now had to be piled on planks and left in the open in the courtyard. They lay there until there were enough to be loaded

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[2] Jason King, "Le Typhus de 1847 / The Typhus of 1847 Virtual Archive," trans. Philip O'Gorman. Annals of the Grey Nuns, *Ancien Journal*, no. 2 (1847), 18.

[3] Jason King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal, "Grey Nuns" Archives & Collections," trans. Jean-François Bernard. Annals of the Sisters of Charity (Grey Nuns), *Ancien Journal*, vol. 1 (1847), 9.

[4] "novitiate, n.". OED Online: "The probationary period undertaken by a novice before taking religious vows."

[5] King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal," 11.

[6] Ibid., 9.

[7] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 18.

into carts and sent to a cemetery.[8] Most of these victims were Irish, fellow Catholics, crowded into the lazarettos, hospital sheds that were ill-equipped to handle their great numbers.[9] "As of mid-June, 6,000 emigrants, brought upriver by three steamers hired by the government, had arrived at the Montréal waterfront, where they sought shelter in the sheds built fifteen years earlier during the cholera outbreak. These were so overcrowded people were forced to lie out on the stone quays without shelter."[10] Having realized that the original shelters would not suffice to hold the number of people arriving every day, the government had ordered a second quarantine station; an additional twenty-two buildings, hastily constructed, that formed a large square, centred around a courtyard, where the dead were left in the open.[11] The space between the sheds, which Marianne and her Sisters had to cross multiple times a day in order to attend to the sick, was filled with mud that often went "up to [their knees],"[12] especially on days such as this, heavy with rain.

The horrors of the outside, Marianne thought as she and her Sisters stepped into the sheds, *pale in comparison to the suffering that*

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[8] King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal," 7.

[9] Colin McMahon, *Quarantining The Past: Commemorating The Great Irish Famine on Grosse-Île*. (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 2001), 1: "During the spring and summer of 1847, the deadliest year of the Famine, 100,000, predominantly Catholic, Irish made their way to [Grosse-Île] aboard lumber vessels, otherwise known as 'coffin ships'."

[10] Donald MacKay, *Flight from Famine: The Coming of the Irish to Canada* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2009), 270, Canadian Electronic Library/desLibris.

[11] Michael Quigley, "Grosse Ile: Canada's Irish Famine Memorial," *Labour / Le Travail* 39 (1997): 209, doi:10.2307/25144112.

[12] King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal," 5.

happens within this terrible place. Marianne was immediately swept away from the rest of her Sisters, all immersed in the "great activity and confusion"[13] that characterized work in the sheds. One of the first tasks was to bring the morning meal to the sick in their care. This meant doctors, nuns, and nurses all running between their patients and the twelve-gallon cauldron of soup (broth mixed with water drawn from the river) that had been boiled over a fire in the courtyard in the early hours of the morning.[14] When the Sisters found that they needed help, the citizens of Montréal had given it without having to be asked. One of Marianne's Sisters, Sister Reid, left the sheds with a wheelbarrow to beg on the behalf of the orphan Irish, and "the butchers and shopkeepers did not wait for her to ask, they presented themselves, and the cart was filled with provisions."[15] There were small amounts of tea, bread, meat, and sweets; some given with charity by local shopkeepers, some sent to the sheds by the government, and some shared by the Sisters of the Congregation, who regretted that they could not follow their Sisters in volunteering at the sheds.[16] Soldiers, too, would meet Sisters at the entrance to the sheds and donate portions of their rations, "without fear of contracting the contagion."[17]

Collecting the first bowl of soup, Marianne stared at the huddled forms of the diseased, lying three or four to a bed, which were made of

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[13] MacKay, *Flight from Famine*, 277.

[14] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 20.

[15] Michael Collins, "An Understanding of Nationality," 8.

[16] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 20.

[17] King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal," 6.

planks.[18] Plague-ridden, the coffin ships had sailed from Ireland, and landed first at Grosse-Île, up the St. Lawrence river, where the sick were detained and the healthy sent on to Montréal. Those people often fell sick on the steamers that carried them down the river, and by the time they landed on the docks of Pointe St. Charles, most ended up in the fever sheds.[19] Now, with hundreds of migrants stretched out on cots, it was often difficult for the nurses to keep track of the dead and the living – it was not uncommon for corpses to lie unnoticed, for hours, amid the bustle of the sheds.[20]

Far worse than the moans of pain, Marianne thought, *are the listless eyes that follow us as we move around the room. They have been utterly demoralized "by the filth, debasement, and disease" of those months passed on the coffin ships and in our sheds… these people, "enfeebled in body, and degraded in mind," have lost heart and will to live.*[21] As she made her way to the nearest cot, the eyes of the woman lying at the edge of it were glazed with fever and delirium, but her arms still

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[18] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 19.

[19] King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal," 2.

[20] Michael Collins, "An Understanding of Nationality," 7.

[21] Thomas Thorner and Thor Frohn-Nielsen, eds., *A Few Acres of Snow: Documents in Pre-Confederation History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 215.

curled around her small infant, refusing to let go. The woman – Kate,[22] if Marianne remembered correctly – had arrived several days ago, from the port at Cork, in Ireland. In the places that dark blotches had not yet spread across her skin, she was pale with fever.[23] She held the child close to her heart, and Marianne knew that one of her Sisters would soon take the infant away, bringing it to the sheds that housed the orphans; where it might be placed with a local family within days.[24]

For now, Marianne kneeled at the side of the cot, drawing Kate's attention. 'Has my husband arrived yet?' she asked. When Marianne shook her head, still cradling her baby, Kate slumped back onto the cot. 'Rows and rows and rows of ships. The smell… doctor took him away. He'll be here soon.'[25] Marianne nodded comfortingly but knew that Kate's husband likely would not survive his stay in the quarantine station at Grosse-Île. She had heard the stories: many of those who assisted in the hospitals on

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[22] Marianna O'Gallagher, *Eyewitness: Grosse Isle, 1847* (Quebec: Carraig Books, 1995), 390-2: One census shows that most emigrants 'conveyed at the charge of the Emigrant fund' from Grosse-Île to the Ports of Quebec and Montréal in 1847 (totalling 35,827) were either 'farmers and agricultural labourers' (11,397) or 'common labourers' (23,239). Katherine ('Kate') is one of these destitute Irish emigrants.

[23] MacKay, *Flight from Famine*, 275: "Beginning with aches, chills and fever, the patient took on the stupor that gave the disease its name. On the fourth day dark blotches appeared, the pulse leaped or was feeble by turns, and within a fortnight a climax was reached in which the patient would either recover or die, usually due to heart failure."

[24] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 28.

[25] Jason King, "Remembering and Forgetting the Famine Irish in Quebec: Genuine and False Memoirs, Communal Memory and Migration," *The Irish Review (1986-)*, no. 44 (2012): 32: "…abt. 40 ships detained there — […] Several died between ship and shore. Wives separated from husbands, children from parents…"

Grosse-Île were volunteers from Montréal for whom "the enormity and ugliness of the situation was just too much; consequently, there was a constant stream of workers leaving on the steamboats"[26] and returning to the city. They brought with them all the horrors of the contagion that stole the life of dozens every day, of the men who dug shallow graves without ceasing,[27] and of people crawling to their deaths in bushes or the beach, rather than resigning themselves to wasting away in the sheds.[28] The stories stoked an atmosphere of hysteria among the locals of Montreal, and rumour of another citywide epidemic spread as quickly as the disease itself. Those who did not pass the quick inspections at Grosse-Île were taken from their families to lie crammed together on cots with the dead and dying alike, in quarters that were as overcrowded as the ones in Montréal.[29]

Kate's face twisted into a frown. 'We were sent to Cork,'[30] she added. 'We were starving, before. Now, we die "like rotten sheep thrown into a pit, and the [minute] the breath is out of our bodies, [we're] flung into the sea to be eaten up by them horrid sharks."'[31] Marianne had heard

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[26] Marianna O'Gallagher, *Grosse-Île: Gateway to Canada 1832-1937* (Quebec: Carraig Books, 1984), 51.

[27] MacKay, *Flight from Famine*, 267.

[28] Thomas Thorner, *A Few Acres of Snow*, 216.

[29] MacKay, *Flight from Famine*, 272.

[30] Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links, and Letters* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press: 1990), 39: "In 1847 Cork and Limerick shared the role as the leading ports of embarkation…"

[31] MacKay, *Flight from Famine*, 287.

this story from many other migrants who had passed through her care – landowners sending away their starving tenants to board the coffin ships, doomed to die during the crossing, and if not, in the fever sheds.[32] As the delirium set in, her fevered patients spoke of hundreds of bodies, "...huddled together, without light, without air, wallowing in filth, and breathing a fetid atmosphere, sick in body, dispirited in heart; […] living without food or medicine except as administered by the hand of casual charity; dying without the voice of spiritual consolation, and buried in the deep without the rites of the Church."[33]

With a few murmured words of consolation, Marianne left Kate to clutch at her infant for what time they had left together, and moved down the rows of cots, wiping sweat from brows and administering doses of laudanum, an opiate that helped with the pain.[34] She passed a physician, "labouring away with […] half a dozen persons speaking to him at once, and two younger gentlemen serving out medicines with great [activity… Nurses] were coming and going in all directions,"[35] adding to the chaos of the sheds. Sister Collins was standing near the entrance to the sheds and arguing with a small group of Protestant ministers, clearly come to "pervert

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[32] Quigley, "Grosse Ile: Canada's Irish Famine Memorial," 202: "In 1847, [future prime minister and absentee landlord Palmerston] […] instructed his agents to exile 4,000 tenants, they were driven, like cattle, to the emigrant shops in Sligo harbour and transported to Canada, where their condition - starving, febrile, and half-naked - provoked distaste and anger."

[33] Thomas Thorner, *A Few Acres of Snow*, 213-4.

[34] MacKay, *Flight from Famine*, 275.

[35] Ibid., 277.

[the] poor unfortunate[s]"[36] in the moments before their deaths. Marianne kept an eye out, especially, for any orphaned Irish who had not yet been transferred to their designated shed. Reverend M. J. Richard, chaplain of the poor, had been the one to request that a shed for orphans be built, "in fear that the Protestants would seize the poor little ones,"[37] and priests around the city had been "urging the faithful to adopt the orphans."[38] The people of Montreal had shown an immense amount of charity towards these children, despite the fear of contagion. French and Irish families alike were quick to adopt them. This was fortunate: already over five hundred orphans had passed through their care, and the Sisters were careful to note down their names and to which families they would be sent.[39]

A harsh cough drew Marianne's attention to a cot nearby, where M. Remi Carof,[40] a priest at the Seminary, was lying. Unable to pass between the cots, which were cramped close together, he would lie between the "dying individuals, to hear their confession."[41] Despite the odour that radiated from the sick bodies and the dirtiness of the beds, his

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[36] Michael Collins, "An Understanding of Nationality," 6.

[37] Ibid., 28.

[38] Quigley, "Grosse Ile: Canada's Irish Famine Memorial," 211.

[39] O'Gallagher, *Grosse-Île: Gateway to Canada*, 54-5: "…there were already 500 orphans in Montreal by June 23." This book also contains the nuns' registry of children who were orphaned during this epidemic.

[40] King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal," 13: Died on the thirteenth of July, "after a few days of horrible suffering due to the epidemic disease that he had caught caring for the plague victims."

[41] Ibid., 13.

faith drove him onward. He was known around the sheds for the devotion with which he attended to the sick, and the joy that he carried with him, even when carrying out the grimmest tasks.[42] The possibility of falling ill was always secondary to his desire to save innocent souls. *He is a good man for certain… though he seems more pensive, and perhaps, more exhausted than is usual,* worried Marianne.[43] Still, when he met Marianne's gaze, he gave her an encouraging smile, which she could not help but return before both turned their attention back to their patients.

Having worked through several of the sheds, it was late in the afternoon when Marianne stepped back into the rain, heading for the nearby farmhouse where Mother McMullen had arranged that the Sisters might take their meals away from the sheds.[44] Walking between the sheds to the farmhouse meant wading through the mud that dragged at her shoes and habit. She found herself fighting the elements the whole way. It was during her struggle back to the sheds that an older nun, Sister Margaret, caught up with her. Exchanging greetings, Sister Margaret leaned towards her and spoke over the rain: 'it is rumoured that we are to stop going to the sheds soon… likely in a few days.' Marianne could not say she was surprised. The number of Sisters who had fallen ill had risen rapidly over the past week and there was already talk of calling a priest to administer

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[42] Ibid., 14.

[43] Ibid., 16.

[44] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 33.

the Holy Viaticum,[45] as several Sisters seemed close to death.[46] And though Marianne could remember a time when they had not been so discouraged, the Sisters that could still journey to the sheds were worn thin. The compassionate Mother McMullen had been the first of their society to lay eyes on the poor people suffering in the sheds in early June: "[hundreds] of people, most of them lying naked on planks haphazardly, men, women and children, sick, moribund and cadavers."[47] Their Mother "was deeply moved, and, understanding with only one glance the duty owed to this community, conceived a bright desire to rush to the relief of this misery with her girls. […] The same day, reverend M.J. Richard, chaplain of the poor, accompanied by Reverend M. Connelly, came to the community to solicit the help of the Grey Nuns in the visiting of ambulances." [48] Having been authorized by the commissioner to go to the sheds, she had then convinced the rest of the Sisters to join her in battle on this "new field of sacrifice."[49] The number of Sisters going to the sheds had tripled in the first few days of June,[50] but a month later, their numbers were dwindling,

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[45] "viaticum, n.". OED Online: "The Eucharist, as administered to or received by one who is dying or in danger of death."

[46] King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal," 11: "On JULY SEVENTH (7), OUR SISTERS STOPPED GOING TO THE SHEDS, and FIFTEEN (15) of our sick received the holy Viaticum; several of them were in great danger of dying."

[47] Ibid., 3.

[48] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 15.

[49] Michael Collins, "An Understanding of Nationality," 4.

[50] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 18.

and the effect of the sheds was evident in the "pale and thinning figures" [51] of the Sisters, who slept little and worked diligently.

'And, you're needed by the docks this evening,' Sister Margaret added, as Marianne forced herself back into the present. 'Another ship arrived at noon, they're ready to disembark.' She shook her head. '"Poor emigrants! They arrive to this strange land after having suffered during the crossing… And what do they find, most of them? A tomb ready to receive them."'[52]

Thanking her Sister with a sigh, Marianne switched course, heading instead to the carts that ran between the sheds and the docks. She climbed into a nearby cart, alongside several physicians and nurses, and soon they were rattling towards the ambulances.[53] By the time they arrived, the emigrant agent had finished his inspection of the steamer – the *Alliance* – and migrants had already begun to crowd onto the shore. The sight, as always, provoked anger and sorrow; they had been huddled together, Marianne knew, in heat and "fetid infection,"[54] filthy, half-naked, and starving, likely numbering over one thousand.

The first group to catch her eye were several children, standing by themselves, looking heart-wrenchingly frightened and alone in the fading light – Marianne saw Sister Collins already moving to collect them. Some men and women were seeking out doctors and attendants and demanding

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[51] Ibid., 33.

[52] Ibid., 12.

[53] "ambulance, n.". OED Online: "A moving hospital, which follows an army in its movements, so as to afford the speediest possible succour to the wounded."

[54] MacKay, *Flight from Famine*, 272.

to know where they could find their spouses, friends, and families, who had been sent ahead at Grosse-Île, while they had been briefly detained. In the hours that followed a steamers' arrival, it was not uncommon to see migrants searching every cot in the fever sheds for their loved ones, only to find the body they were looking for already lying dead in the courtyard. They would cry and sob with grief, abandoned to their pain.[55] Other migrants, who wished to go on to Upper Canada, stood in a cluster on the pier, waiting for transportation. The rest, exhibiting signs of the disease, were being helped towards the ambulances and cots, which would carry them to the fever sheds.[56]

Marianne set off to meet the group of "haggard, vermin-infested, and diseased travellers,"[57] readying her nerves to spend the rest of the day helping them to the carts, treating them in the ambulances, and comforting them when their hopes of reuniting with their loved ones were dashed.

Returning to the Motherhouse in the night was a silent affair. There continued to be, after these many weeks spent working in the fever sheds, no words "powerful enough to retell what they [had] seen."[58] Speaking little to her Sisters, Marianne hurried back to her room, eager to

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[55] King, "Sisters of Charity of Montreal," 3.

[56] Colin McMahon, "Montreal's Ship Fever Monument: An Irish Famine Memorial in the Making." *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 33, no. 1 (2007): 48. doi: 10.2307/25515660.

[57] Mark McGowan, "Famine, Facts and Fabrication: An Examination of Diaries from the Irish Famine Migration to Canada." *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 33, no. 2 (2007): 49. doi:10.2307/25515678.

[58] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 17.

rid herself of her habit, "and of the vermin attached to [it]."[59] She stopped only to check on Sister Limoges and the rest of her Sisters. Dimly lit, the room that housed the sick had no windows, and the raspy breathing echoed eerily in the small space. Marianne stopped to visit every Sister for a few minutes, holding frail hands and exchanging words with those who were awake enough to respond; she said a prayer by the beds of those who remained delirious in the throes of the disease.[60]

Though the hour was after midnight when Marianne finally went to bed, she rose early, before the sunrise. She dressed quickly: there was a lot of work to be done.

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[59] Michael Collins, "An Understanding of Nationality," 5.

[60] King, "Le Typhus de 1847," 36: Sister Limoges "succumbed on the 10th [of July], after cruel suffering."

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"The public be damned!" Grand Central Station as a Segregating Factor in 20th Century New York

Lucas Thow

Lucas Thow is a third-year undergraduate student at Concordia University, completing a Double Major in English and History. With a particular interest in the postcolonial contemporary, he frequently draws on his studies of postcolonial literature to better explore the relationship between people and the sociopolitical context of their era. The rest of his life is dictated by his love for dance music – a passion which has driven him to pursue a career in writing for music publications. He has often cited this dream as an excuse for listening to new music instead of getting started on essays.

"Only Rockefeller Center […] had a similar effect on the development of midtown Manhattan,"[1] claimed Kurt C. Schlichting. He is, of course, referencing the almost unparalleled role Grand Central Station played in shaping the landscape –both cultural and physical– of New York City. Today, Grand Central stands out as one of the more astounding structures in Manhattan; while it currently sits in the shadows of more recently constructed skyscrapers, the building radiates a sense of *grandeur* as only a true example of Beaux-Arts architecture can. When one first walked into the newly constructed terminal in its inaugural year, the building truly would have seemed revolutionary, and this sense of Grand Central Station's relevance is still undeniable today. At the time of its construction, the railway station reshaped the notion of what a "transport hub" could be, all while dramatically setting the standard for urban aesthetics and acting as a catalyst for all future development in the areas between 42nd and 56th Avenue. On top of its urban applications, Grand Central featured numerous pioneering railway technologies and was pivotal in cultivating the localised culture of Midtown Manhattan.

Despite its positive contributions, there was some concern as to whether the democratic ideals of the modern project were in fact realized. Evidence would suggest that while the station certainly improved upon the quality of life for many New Yorkers, Grand Central Station actually contributed to a segregation of the social classes. The station itself, although theoretically open to everyone, was relatively inaccessible to those of lower status. The construction of Grand Central catalysed a massive wave of development in the Lower East side, which effectively

[1] Kurt C. Schlichting, "Grand Central Terminal and the City Beautiful in New York," *Journal of Urban History* 22, no. 3 (1996): 332.

barred the lower classes from the district. On a larger scale, segregation was apparent; Grand Central's construction had great implications on the housing market in New York and contributed greatly to the concentration of the lower classes in the tenement slums of Lower Manhattan. The building has gone through various evolutions, yet the themes of exclusivity and affluence have always been present in some form.

While the version of Grand Central Station that still stands today opened its doors to the public in 1914, its predecessor, Grand Central Depot, welcomed its first visitors on Manhattan's Lower East Side in 1871. The Depot was conceived and funded by Commodore Vanderbilt and immediately marked a new era in transport culture.[2] Residents from all ends of the city travelled to and from Vanderbilt's great accomplishment, as it was the first terminal to consolidate numerous local train lines – namely the Harlem, New York Central, and Hudson River railroads. The fifteen-track train shed alone was enough to draw crowds to the Depot; guests marveled at how the modern arched structure stood seemingly without any support.[3] Travellers were pleased by the reduced travel times and simplified routes made possible by Grand Central ("No More Transfers in Buffalo!" one newspaper headline excitedly noted).[4] The station served as a reference for numerous others around the northeastern United States for the rest of the decade.

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[2] Kurt C. Schlichting, *Grand Central Terminal: Railroads, Engineering, and Architecture in New York City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001): 30-36

[3] Ibid, 38.

[4] Ibid.

The class divide facilitated by Grand Central Depot, however, was apparent from the beginning. Vanderbilt's Depot quite literally acted as a border that would divide the social classes; it sat between the rapidly developing area around Fifth Avenue and the slums of the East Side.[5] To the south of the station was the Murray Hill district, an area described as a "fairly affluent neighbourhood,"[6] while just west of Grand Central lived some of the wealthiest families in New York.[7] The Vanderbilt family themselves were certainly not ones to show any compassion to their neighbours on the East Side, notoriously spending thousands of dollars on trivialities, such as ball gowns, while paying their station workers about one dollar per day.[8]

By 1885, however, the Depot had become, for lack of a better term, inadequate. Fifteen tracks were no longer sufficient to meet the demands of increased railroad traffic,[9] and the station was criticized about everything from its outdated aesthetics to its inconvenient organization of both crowds and trains. At this point, Commodore's eldest son, William H. Vanderbilt had taken control of Grand Central. Notorious for his disregard

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[5] John Belle and Maxinne R. Leighton, *Grand Central: Gateway to a Million Lives* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000): 33.

[6] Kent A. Robertson, "The Use of Grand Central Station as an Urban Redevelopment Tool," *Urbanism Past and Present* 2, no. 2 (1984): 27.

[7] Kent A. Robertson, "The Use of Grand Central Station as an Urban Redevelopment Tool," 27.

[8] Schlichting, *Grand Central Terminal: Railroads, Engineering, and Architecture in New York City,* 49.

[9] Kurt C. Schlichting, "The Visible Hand: The Technological Revolution at Grand Central Terminal in New York," *Railroad History* 9, no. 2 (1984): 40.

for the lower-classes ("The public be damned!" he infamously claimed[10]), William H. did little to improve upon his father's downward-spiralling Depot. His distaste for the general public was reflected in the little attention given to caring for passengers at the station; it was consistently crowded, devoid of any comforts, and no effort was made to encourage a functional flow of travellers. One passenger recalls a common sight at Grand Central: "Just before the train starts – sometimes only ten minutes, the doors are opened and there is a scramble pell-mell. Hats are knocked off, people kicked in the shins, trampled on the toes and pushed this way and that. I have seen women treated shamefully in this way."[11] At the turn of the 20th century, "critics [had] labelled Grand Central the worst rail facility in the country."[12] It was clear that the world of railroad travel was developing quickly, and Vanderbilt's Depot was past its prime.

When the decision was made to replace Vanderbilt's Depot entirely, engineer William J. Wilgus stepped in with plans for a new Grand Central. The new design would make efficient use of the land surrounding 42nd Street; incorporate exciting contemporary technologies, and retrospectively revolutionize the railroad industry. Wilgus' plan was to build vertically – however, unlike the skyscrapers sprouting about Manhattan, Grand Central Terminal would extend downwards.[13] Of course,

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[10] Ibid, 43.

[11] Anthony Raynsford, "Swarm of the Metropolis: Passenger Circulation at Grand Central Terminal and the Ideology of the Crowd Aesthetic," *Journal of Architecture Education* 50, no. 1 (1996): 6.

[12] Schlichting, *Grand Central Terminal: Railroads, Engineering, and Architecture in New York City*, 53.

[13] Tom Lewis, "Dream Depot," *The Wilson Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (2001): 110.

the toxic expulsions of steam engines would be quite literally lethal if left to build up in an underground train shed, and so perhaps quite boldly, the chief engineer proposed a solution: the electrification of the New York train lines.[14] The project would be expensive, but Wilgus assured city officials that it would be paid for in full by selling the "air rights" above the station to prospective businesses[15] – a move that not only made Grand Central possible but catalyzed the development of Midtown Manhattan. Construction began on Wilgus' ambitious project in 1903 and was at last opened to the public in 1914.

Over the course of 11 years, Grand Central was developed and reconstructed with the "crowd" in mind; an approach to architecture and engineering that seemed rather democratic.[16] The early 20th century was a time when travel was changing entirely. Transport was no longer solely a necessity, and the expectation to journey in comfort was a more prominent sentiment among the middle class. Railroad stations were functional places, of course, but equally important was their role as a civic space. Terminals like Grand Central were to be designed for "both ceremony and utility,"[17] which is why the architecture, amenities offered, and ultimately the cultural experience of railroad stations were equally as important as their functionality. The travellers' experience was valued above all else,

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[14] Schlichting, "The Visible Hand: The Technological Revolution at Grand Central Terminal in New York," 42.

[15] Lewis, "Dream Depot," 110.

[16] Raynsford, "Swarm of the Metropolis: Passenger Circulation at Grand Central Terminal and the Ideology of the Crowd Aesthetic," 7.

[17] Sally A. Kitt Chappell, "Urban Ideals and the Design of Railroad Stations," *Technology and Culture* 30, no. 2 (1989): 375.

and "thus the finest spaces at Grand Central were for people, not trains."[18] Grand Central was said to be "a soul-uplifting monument [and] a dramatic entrance to a great city,"[19] as travellers were treated to one of the architectural wonders of the École des Beaux-Arts planning movement,[20] and a marvel in terms of crowd management and space organization. The Terminal's main concourse "embodied an ideal urban space that transformed what we often viewed as the threatening crowd on city streets into the sublimely unified one inside the terminal,"[21] acting as a grand passageway that accommodated masses of visitors with elegance and ease. Entrance to the station was free for all, and both the rich and poor could agree that the Grand Central Terminal was a sight to behold. The terminal was home to private dressing rooms, barber shops, clothing stores, restaurants and various other attractions including the Grand Central Art Galleries – it was rightfully deemed "a destination in itself,"[22] and the sheer amount that the station had to offer earned it the nickname "Terminal City."[23]

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[18] Kenneth Powell, *Grand Central Terminal: Warren and Wetmore* (London: Phaidon Press, 1996): 17.

[19] Lewis, "Dream Depot," 109.

[20] Chappell, "Urban Ideals and the Design of Railroad Stations," 355.

[21] Raynsford, "Swarm of the Metropolis: Passenger Circulation at Grand Central Terminal and the Ideology of the Crowd Aesthetic," 2.

[22] Ibid, 9.

[23] Robertson, "The Use of Grand Central Station as an Urban Redevelopment Tool," 28.

There is no evidence to suggest that the lower-classes were pointedly excluded from visiting and enjoying the amenities offered by Grand Central. Nonetheless, it is apparent that while the station was thought to be conceived with the public in mind, in all actuality it tended towards the educated, upper-class portion of society. Restaurants such as the Grand Central Oyster Bar were by no means affordable to the large majority of New Yorkers, and Leila Mechlin's review of the 1924 Sargent Exhibition hosted at the Grand Central Art Galleries seems to suggest that the gallery was tuned to the taste of the elite. The Galleries were on the topmost floor of the station and operated by a high-society organization with the goal of inciting appreciation for American art the Painters and Sculptors Association.[24] Mechlin describes the portraits being "for the most part of men and women of the so-called upper classes, those who through birth or through fortunate accident or attainment acquired an enviable position in the world,"[25] which contributed to a sense of elitism that would doubtlessly seem unwelcoming to most working-class immigrant families. Essentially, the sense of achievement and culture that the "city" within Grand Central promoted was one that championed the rich and had the potential to alienate the poor, at best. Grand Central's internal segregation problem was admittedly at its worst in the years prior to the terminal's reconstruction. One account speaks of "an immigrants waiting room [being] provided in the basement of the building with an approach from Forty-second Street, thus entirely relieving the main waiting room of this

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[24] Leila Mechlin, "The Sargent Exhibition: Grand Central Art Galleries, New York," *The American Magazine of Art* 15, no. 4 (1924): 188.

[25] Ibid, 169.

class of passengers."[26] While this cruel and degrading division of passengers was left behind along with Vanderbilt's original Depot, the reconstructed Grand Central did inherently favor its white, wealthy guests by providing a sense of culture that was only relatable to those with access to the elite sphere of Manhattan.

Grand Central Station was undoubtedly remarkable in its own right, yet the station's own greatness is overshadowed by the impact that it had on the neighborhood in which it still stands today. Grand Central was just one structure that was conceived as part of the City Beautiful planning movement, which sought to "clean up" Manhattan, in a certain sense. This was the first instance in which a "transportation facility constituted the centerpiece of a grand redevelopment concept rather than just a service component."[27] The goals of the City Beautiful movement were to decrease congestion (both of people and vehicles), improve upon social conditions and ultimately develop an objectively beautiful urban aesthetic.[28] Many goals of the City Beautiful movement were met in the decade that followed Grand Central Station's inaugural year in 1914.

What resulted from the development of the space around Park Avenue and 42nd Street was a "planned, harmonious blend of station, office buildings, hotels and apartment buildings."[29] Visitors to the city, once

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[26] Raynsford, "Swarm of the Metropolis: Passenger Circulation at Grand Central Terminal and the Ideology of the Crowd Aesthetic," 6-7.

[27] Robertson, "The Use of Grand Central Station as an Urban Redevelopment Tool," 26.

[28] Schlichting, "Grand Central Terminal and the City Beautiful in New York," 334.

[29] Ibid, 340.

having exited the station, were treated to views of some of the most prestigious establishments New York had to offer. The air space above Grand Central's underground train platforms was home to a set of luxurious hotels, including the Ambassador, the Commodore and the Waldorf-Astoria,[30] providing newly arrived elites with a multitude of options for a comfortable stay – a simple prospect which had not previously been possible due to the air pollution caused by steam engines.[31] The streets around the terminal had been redesigned to accommodate private carriages and, for the first time, cars, which would have only been owned by the wealthy. Private social clubs such as the Yale Club, New York Yacht Club and the University Club all sought to have their headquarters in Midtown as well, creating a further sense that the neighbourhood was not for everyone.[32] Park Avenue was transformed into "the most prestigious residential district in the nation,"[33] as the former ugly and decayed housing units were replaced with an elegant new "series of dignified luxury apartments and residential hotels,"[34] aimed at those who held high office in the corporations that planted themselves around Grand Central.

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Robertson, "The Use of Grand Central Station as an Urban Redevelopment Tool," 29.

[32] Belle and Leighton, *Grand Central: Gateway to a Million Lives,* 69.

[33] Schlichting, "Grand Central Terminal and the City Beautiful in New York," 340.

[34] Robertson, "The Use of Grand Central Station as an Urban Redevelopment Tool," 29.

The planning initiative successfully enhanced the Midtown Manhattan landscape, yet critics claim that "the City Beautiful concept did not take into consideration the social needs of the New York community."[35] The select few who could afford to frequent the hotels, boutiques and restaurants around Lexington Avenue certainly rejoiced at the luxurious additions to the neighbourhood, but this accounted for only a very small percentage of the city's population. For the most part, lower and middle-class New Yorkers slowly found themselves being confined more and more to the tenement slums in which they lived, and ultimately losing access to a large portion of Lower Manhattan. New York reformist Benjamin C. Marsh was apt in his argument that "vastly more [important than the development of luxury infrastructure] is the securing of decent home conditions for the countless thousands who otherwise can but occasionally escape from their squalid, confining surroundings to view the architectural perfection and to experience the aesthetic delights of the remote improvements."[36] Despite the obvious need for social aid that Marsh suggested, city planners turned a blind eye to the struggling working class, and instead focused on "beautifying" New York City's newest posh area. The city seemed to care more about further pleasing those in places of privilege than actively finding a solution to the immensely problematic tenement housing issue that had only grown worse since immigrants first began congregating in Manhattan. The development that came alongside Grand Central Station was gentrification in its fullest form; the cultural and physical landscape of Lower Manhattan had become utterly inaccessible to the very working-

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[35] Harvey A. Kantor, "The City Beautiful in New York," *New York Historical Society Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (1973): 170.

[36] Kantor, "The City Beautiful in New York," 170.

class immigrants that had built Grand Central Station, and funds that could have alleviated stress on overcrowded areas were redirected towards the City Beautiful movement.

Midtown Manhattan definitely saw the greatest physical transformation of all with the addition of the new railroad station; the area had been overcome with the City Beautiful aesthetic and the architecture of the École des Beaux-Arts. Likely even more significant, however, is the lasting effect that Grand Central Station had on New York City's social landscape as a whole. The terminal district contributed to decentralization, yet in a rather unconventional way. While the poor were forced out of Midtown Manhattan and into increasingly concentrated slums, it was in fact the upper-class echelon of New York that fled outwards from Madison Avenue. This selective manner of decentralization can, in all fairness, be attributed to none other than William J. Wilgus' suggestion to electrify the railways of New York. The middle and upper-class New Yorkers could afford to move to the less densely populated outskirts of town, as they had the means to pay the train fare to Manhattan each morning,[37] and "soon the communities in Westchester and in Fairfield served by the new "electric zone" became synonymous with affluence and exclusivity."[38] Contrarily, most New Yorkers survived on no more than a dollar per day, and simply could not shell out the twenty-five cent fare charged by the Harlem Railroad. The wealth imbalance essentially meant that well-off families could afford to escape the squalid conditions of the early 20th century inner-city, while it would have been unfeasible for the poor to commute to

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[37] Schlichting, *Grand Central Terminal: Railroads, Engineering, and Architecture in New York City*, 184.

[38] Ibid.

and from work each day. Grand Central Station and the increasing number of trains that passed through it contributed to the expansion of the Greater New York area, but only a select number of residents realistically benefited from it by being able to make the move outwards.

For some, Grand Central Station would have been nothing less than an absolute pleasure to have serving New York City. The splendor of the Beaux-Arts architecture and the urban aesthetic revolution undergone by the blocks surrounding the station certainly contributed to the experience of living as an affluent New Yorker. Of course, commuting, too, would have been easy in the new era of transportation that Wilgus' designs facilitated. While it is certainly fair to celebrate architectural and civic achievements such as Grand Central, it is important, if not vital, to assess their downfalls. From the time that Vanderbilt's original Grand Central Depot was constructed, working classes of New Yorkers were excluded from the exciting new developments. The terminal itself served as a barrier marking the divide between the tenements of the East Side and the extravagant manors lining the West.

Upon its redevelopment in the first decade of the 20th century, the new terminal had little to offer to the workers who made no more than one dollar per day constructing the very station that would serve as a place of leisure and luxury for the upper-class. The art galleries, restaurants, and shops contained within were aimed at pleasing the station's wealthier visitors. The Midtown redevelopment that followed Grand Central's construction, too, serviced only those with money and further contributed to overcrowding in the tenement slums. Finally, the station incited a wave of selective decentralization that allowed New York City to expand outwards, while immigrants and workers were left to live in the wretched

inner-city conditions. While in contemporary times, the station appears to have met its democratic goals, hints of a slant towards the elegant still remain. Grand Central Oyster Bar is now only one of the numerous expensive dining options in the terminal's main concourse, and one can still spend a day shopping in designer boutiques or relaxing in a spa. The real estate around Madison Avenue remains at a premium price, and – while it is open for anyone who wishes to come and see – the fascinating example of Beaux-Arts architecture has been restored but has ultimately remained unchanged.

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An Oral History of the Transformation of the Millinery Trade in Quebec, Late Twentieth to Early Twenty-First Century

Chloé Houde

Chloé Houde just completed her bachelor's degree in the Public History Honours program at Concordia. She will be pursuing a Master of Museum Studies in the fall at the University of Toronto with the intent of working in the field of museums and heritage. Chloé has a deep interest in Canadian history, art history, and oral history, which she hopes to explore further in her future endeavours as a graduate student and as a (hopeful) curator someday. She was first introduced to the world of Quebec millinery during her internship at the Musée des maîtres et artisans du Québec last summer, which was an incredibly enriching experience. Chloé would like to express her gratitude to Thérèse Végiard and Lucie Grégoire for sharing their stories with her, as well as the editors of *historiae* for the opportunity to be published and for producing such a wonderful volume.

Before the relative decline of wearing hats around the 1960s, hats and the millinery trade constituted an important facet of fashion and had done so for hundreds of years. With a long tradition originating in Western Europe, especially France, the millinery trade established itself in New France in the seventeenth century.[1] Over the next few hundred years, it would experience various changes and transformations within the context of various historical events and global fashion trends, such as industrialization, globalization, the emergence of the popularity of women's hats, and the gradual abandonment of hats in the last half of the twentieth century. Milliners have experienced these transformations first hand, and the changes in the trade have often left their traces in their careers and work. The history of millinery has been well recorded in Europe, but less so in Canada and more specifically Quebec. Quebec has a rich history of millinery dating from the beginnings of French colonization, but there has been a lack of study and scholarship on this topic in recent decades. The late 1980s saw efforts to record and diffuse this local history, but the knowledge and traditions embedded in the millinery trade have always resided with milliners and their craft.

This paper will explore a more recent history of millinery in Quebec from the people who experienced its transformations on a personal and professional level. I decided to conduct oral history interviews with Thérèse Végiard and Lucie Grégoire, two milliners with decades of expertise, in order to understand their experience. These interviews provided a world of insight into a slowly disappearing craft, the multitude

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[1] Lionel Groulx, "Note sur la chapellerie au Canada sous le régime français," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 3, no. 3 (1949): 384.; *Les Chapeaux féminins d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, Women's hats yesterday and today*, exhibition catalogue (Montreal: Musée du Château Ramezay, 1989), 12.

of events and phenomena that have brought on this decline, and the efforts made to keep this tradition alive. With this paper, I argue that the millinery experiences of Lucie Grégoire and Thérèse Végiard reveal a closer understanding of the processes that dictated the slow decline of millinery as a traditional craft and the ways the trade has had to diversify itself in order to keep going. More specifically, milliners have kept performing their craft in mainly two ways: as artisans and as artists. I will demonstrate how Thérèse and Lucie's different paths exemplify this, but I will also explore how these two categories and their experiences overlap in considerable ways. I will start with a short history and historiography of Quebec millinery, followed by an introduction of my interviewees and an in-depth analysis of their interviews contextualized within recent millinery history.

As stated above, the millinery trade in Quebec was linked to European tradition. In the days of the French colony, the hat trade in France was inextricably linked to the fur trade in New France, due to the high quality felt that beaver pelts produced.[2] Hats were made for men by men, as the job was considered difficult and hats made specifically for women had not been popularized yet.[3] Indeed, women often wore men's hats when travelling or hunting, otherwise wearing bonnets or hoods.[4] Several hatters were established in the French colony from the seventeenth century onwards, more specifically in Montreal and Quebec City.[5] In 1736,

[2] "Les chapeaux féminins," 13.

[3] Ibid, 12.

[4] Ibid, 12, 18.

[5] Groulx, "Note sur la chapellerie," 384.

a royal decree ordered the destruction of the small hatmaking trade that had established itself in the colony; this effectively ended hatmaking activities in New France under the French regime.[6] Various reasons are cited for this event, mainly the desire of the French metropole to control the hatmaking trade, as well as the Compagnie des Indes' monopoly on the fur trade forbidding manufactured products in the colony.[7] This event shows the first instance of decline in the millinery trade in North America due to global events and the economy, showing that more recent declining developments are not a new occurrence.

The transformation of the territory into a British colony in 1763 had an impact on the trade and hatmaking slowly started back up again, this time linked to the British economy.[8] Around this period, millinery started establishing itself within the realm of women's fashion.[9] Indeed, when recounting the short history of millinery from the beginning of the French colony, I mainly used the word "hatmaking" to qualify these activities, since they were focused solely on making men's felt hats. "Millinery" as a trade has its origins in the late eighteenth century with "marchandes de mode" who began influencing fashion by decorating women's headwear. This historical distinction in French is expressed with "chapeliers" and "modistes." Women's hats became more and more

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[6] Groulx, "Note sur la chapellerie," 384-385.; "Les chapeaux féminins," 15.; Hélène Paré, "Trésor d'archives: Le Livre de paye d'une chapellerie montréalaise au début du XIXe siècle," *Material History Review/Revue d'Histoire de la Culture Matérielle* 56 (2002): 8-9.

[7] "Les chapeaux féminins," 15.; Groulx, "Note sur la chapellerie," 400-401.

[8] Paré, "Trésor d'archives," 9-10.

[9] "Les chapeaux féminins," 17.

popular and milliners started borrowing techniques from hatmakers, like working with felt and incorporating traditional hatmaking techniques, over the course of the nineteenth century.[10] The "modiste" craft evolved closely with that of dressmaking and sewing, especially in Quebec where many milliners displayed talents in these various trades.[11] Millinery eventually developed into its own trade as hats were popularized and valued for women. In fact, millinery was a craft that was considered a respectable job and a good skill for young women to invest in at the turn of the twentieth century.[12] Many guide books were published at this time to encourage women to take up the trade or develop these skills at home.[13] This gave women the opportunity to develop valuable skills that allowed many a degree of autonomy in work and life.

Industrialization only slightly affected the millinery trade with a few technological advancements in machinery and manufacturing models, since the process of making hats has always been hand-made and rooted in traditional techniques.[14] However, industrialization did widen the market for hats. In the twentieth century, most large department stores had their

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[10] Ibid, 21.

[11] Mary Anne Poutanen, "For the Benefit of the Master: The Montreal Needle Trades during the Transition, 1820-1842," Master's thesis in History (Montreal, McGill University: 1985), 10.

[12] Nancy Christie, "Women in the Formal and Informal Economies of Late Eighteenth-Century Quebec, 1763-1830," *Gender & History* 29, no. 1, (2017): 113.

[13] For a comprehensive list of these guidebooks, see Christina Bates, "Women's Hats and the Millinery Trade, 1840-1940: An Annotated Bibliography," *Dress (Costume Society of America)* 27 (2000): 49-58.

[14] Colin McDowell, *Hats. Status, Style, and Glamour* (New York: Random House Incorporated, 1992), 58.

own millinery departments and smaller, independently owned, millinery shops could be found all over Montreal, many owned and run by women. Around the 1960s, hats fell out of favour in the fashion world. This led to the diminishing demand for hats and the closing down of many manufacturers and millinery shops all over Quebec.[15] Still, many milliners continued the craft independently and within different fields, which is where we will situate the interviewees for this particular project.

The sources I used for this short history of millinery in Quebec are the main resources that can be found specifically on the subject. Many can be found in wider studies about early Canadian industries such as those of Lionel Groulx and E-Z Massicotte, written around the 1940s and 1950s. A more concerted effort to record this history can be seen in the 1980s, when Jacqueline Giroux wrote her biography of Yvette Brillon, a renowned Montreal milliner and the only biography written about a Quebec milliner.[16] The 1980s also saw a retrospective exhibition from the Château Ramezay Museum on the topic of women's hats (accompanied by a greatly informative catalogue), and a few articles published by Christine Godin about the experiences of women in the Quebec millinery trade.[17] These last three resources include interviews with Quebec milliners such as Mireille

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[15] Jacqueline Giroux, *Yvette Brillon : femme de cœur et femme de têtes* (Longueuil: Société historique du Marigot de Longueuil, 1989), 93-94, 98.

[16] See Jacqueline Giroux, *Yvette Brillon : femme de cœur et femme de têtes* (Longueuil: Société historique du Marigot de Longueuil, 1989).

[17] See *Les Chapeaux féminins d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, Women's hats yesterday and today*, exhibition catalogue (Montreal: Musée du Château Ramezay, 1989), 12.; Christine Godin, "Les femmes au chapeau: une mode empreinte de la coutume," *Cap-aux-Diamants* 4, no. 2 (1988): 25-28.; Christine Godin, "Créer des chapeaux: la pratique du métier de modiste," *Cap-aux-Diamants* 4, no. 2 (1988): 51-54.

Racine, Jeanne Martin-Connolly, Darie Gaudreault, Anita Pineault, and others. This shows how there was an effort made to preserve this history in the 1980s through the practice of oral history. Other efforts were made in the early 2000s with works by Hélène Paré, who examined the logbooks of a Montreal hatmaking manufacturer from the 1800s, and those of Mireille Racine, who organized a retrospective on hats for an exhibition held in Quebec City.[18] The rest of the closely relevant sources I found focused on the millinery trade in Ontario and New England.[19] This scholarship has not been sustained, and there is a lack of recent study, which is where I situate my project.

Traditional craft skills and knowledge, like those embedded in the millinery trade, are most effectively passed down through oral transmission and practice. Following in the footsteps of the few resources I found from the 1980s, I recognized that using oral history to explore millinery history in Quebec could yield enriching narratives and explore experiences that could contribute to preserving and understanding this deteriorating tradition. Thérèse Végiard and Lucie Grégoire's experiences, although different in many aspects, both add to the more recent history of the trade in Quebec in significant ways and reveal the processes behind the transformations in the trade from the past few decades. The goal of this research was not to extract historical facts from the interviews; rather, it was to interpret the experiences of two milliners in the recent Quebec

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[18] See Hélène Paré, "Trésor d'archives: Le Livre de paye d'une chapellerie montréalaise au début du XIXe siècle," *Material History Review/Revue d'Histoire de la Culture Matérielle* 56 (2002): 7-20.; Mireille Racine, *Le Silence des chapeaux* (Sainte-Foy: Division de la culture, des loisirs et de la vie communautaire de l'Arrondissement de Sainte-Foy-Sillery, 2006).

[19] See the works of Christina Bates and Wendy Gambler, respectively.

context to see how they have experienced wider transformations in the trade.

Thérèse Végiard first began working in the millinery trade in 1960, when a friend recommended she start working with her for Anita Pineault. At the time, Anita Pineault was a renowned milliner and she manufactured hats for various stores, including stores in Montreal, New York City, and Paris. While working there for five years, Thérèse went from first working at the tables, to then working as a "garnisseuse," and finally as a "contremaîtresse." She had previously studied in fashion but learnt how to make hats on the job. This experience led to her being hired by Radio-Canada in 1972 to head their millinery department, creating hats for costumes in all of their productions. She worked there for twenty-five years before being offered a severance package from the company, which was reorganizing its departments at the time. She then started working independently, making hats for customers, movies and television, and theater productions, as well as working for the Casino de Montréal and the Cirque du Soleil over the years. She also taught millinery in a few schools, and still today teaches at Collège Lionel-Groulx in a theater production program. Thérèse has also participated in many "expo-ventes" and "salons," where she exposes and sells her creations. These are often hosted by cities or organizations, such as le Cercle des fermières. Thérèse has had a rich path and has been able to practice millinery in various fields, such as fashion, teaching, and costumes.[20]

Lucie Grégoire entered the millinery trade later on, in the 1990s. She first was an art teacher and she took fashion and sewing classes on the side due to personal interest. She was introduced to millinery with these

[20] Thérèse Végiard, interview by Chloé Houde, 15 November 2018, audio, 59:35.

classes and made a few hat collections that she sold with no intention of becoming a full-time milliner. Her interest in making hats solidified when she moved to France, where she held an exhibit at the Musée du chapeau in Chazelles-sur-Lyon and met many traditional hatmakers and people in the fashion industry. She was able to acquire traditional millinery skills through internships at the museum and from milliners, who she qualifies as "des vrais chapeliers." Over the last few decades, she has conducted many research-creation projects on hats, has been featured in museum exhibitions in Quebec and abroad, worked on hats for costume productions, as well as making custom hats and offering millinery courses. Lucie's path is considerably different than Thérèse's, but she has also been able to practice millinery in various fields, such as fashion, art, and teaching.[21]

At first, I thought the differences between their paths would be too wide to reconcile, but there are many similarities within their varied careers that showcase some larger phenomena in the millinery world, which the differences end up demonstrating as well. First of all, neither of them ever thought they would become milliners. As Thérèse shared with me, "j'pensais pas m'en aller dans ça, parce que c'est une chance que j'ai eu."[22] She attributes her career in millinery to the opportunity she had to work with Anita Pineault: "Dans le fond, c'est grâce à elle si j'ai continué là-dedans."[23] Similarly, Lucie shared with me that, initially, she had never thought she would become a milliner: "[Il] était pas question pour moi de

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[21] Lucie Grégoire, interview by Chloé Houde, 23 November 2018, audio, 1:18:47.

[22] Végiard, interview.

[23] Ibid.

laisser l'enseignement pour faire des chapeaux ou faire d'la couture."[24] She attributes pursuing her career in millinery to the many people she has met over her lifetime and the opportunities she got, mainly in France: "c'est sur que si j'était pas passé par là-bas pour rencontrer tout ce beau monde-là, pis faire une exposition au Musée, pis faire des affaires…" She thinks her career would not have been the same had she not gone to France and pursued her interests there, since she had a teaching career in Quebec already.[25]

The main difference between their two accounts can be explained by the fact that Lucie pursued a career that was more focused on the artistic side of hats, while Thérèse generally focused on making more traditional hats. This distinction, however, is blurry since they both make custom hats, they both teach, and they both participate in costume production, which can be very creative or very traditional depending on the project. Anne Monjaret, in her text "Les modistes: de l'artisan à l'artiste," discusses the transformations that happened in the millinery trade in Paris and differentiates between "modiste-artisan" and "modiste-artiste."[26] She defines milliners as "des artisans de la mode" whose knowledge is passed down through generational transmission, but goes on to explain that the decline in hats of the 1960s brought on a new age that created a distinction between

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[24] Grégoire, interview.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Anne Monjaret, "Les modistes: de l'artisan à l'artiste: les mutations d'un corps de métier à travers le context de production," *Éthnologie française* 2 (1998): 235-246.

"chapeau classique" and "chapeau artistique."[27] Monjaret's text is rooted in the Paris context of the individualization of the trade, which is invariably different than the Montreal context, although some similarities can be found. She explains that the main difference between a modiste-artisan and a modiste-artiste is that the artisans are much more concerned with tradition and mastering techniques, whereas the artists are more concerned with artistic sense and originality.[28] Monjaret is rigid in this comparison, but both Thérèse and Lucie hold traits from both. While Thérèse began her career by making more traditional hats and continues to do so with custom orders, she has been able to explore the artistic side by working in costume production in various fields, such as movies, television, theatre, and the circus. Lucie has participated in many museum exhibits and has conducted research-creations that have yielded very artistic hats (she even qualifies some of her hats as "chapeaux-sculptures"[29]) but has also made traditional hats for costume production and for custom orders.

The blurring of these boundaries, so rigidly presented by Monjaret, are due to the differences in context in Paris and Montreal. Monjaret explains the context as such:

> Le nombre restreint de professionnels exerçant à Paris, les divergences s'exprimant sur la définition du métier et l'individualisation de la production renforcent l'idée d'éclatement de la profession, et nous font dire qu'aujourd'hui il n'existe plus de corps de métier de modistes qui s'exprimerait dans une cohésion

[27] Monjaret, "Les modistes," 236, 239.

[28] Monjaret, "Les modistes," 242.

[29] Grégoire, interview.

> professionnelle déterminant une identité collective, mais des professionnels de la mode qui ont des intérêts multiples et individualisés.[30]

In the Quebec context, it can be said that there is today an individualization of hat production and that milliners are fashion professionals with multiple and individual interests. However, I am not sure it can be said that there was ever a collective identity dictated by a "corps de métier." Hatmaking and millinery have existed in Quebec for centuries but have always been the effort of individuals working in the trade and sometimes sharing knowledge and skills with each other over the years. The millinery trade used to be much bigger in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Montreal, and more widely Quebec, but never as big or as collective as the one in Paris or France more generally. The global thinning out of the trade due to lack of demand for hats in the 1960s fractured the already non-collective group of milliners that existed in Quebec. This had the effect of dividing the trade into an artistic and traditional side in Paris. In Quebec, however, this had the effect of forcing milliners to diversify into various fields in order for the trade to continue. As some Quebec milliners have specialized in a more artistic or traditional side, most have had to embrace and practice both. This is most obvious in the context of hats in costume production, which requires the skills to make every kind of hat imaginable for every kind of project. I am not positing that this phenomenon is unique to Quebec, but simply that the experiences of Thérèse and Lucie exemplify the wider trend of milliners broadening the fields of their work to be able to continue within their trade.

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[30] Monjaret, "Les modistes," 245.

When asked what they thought was the reason behind the decline of hats in the 1960s, Thérèse and Lucie both talked about the influence of the Church. Previously, it had been an obligation to wear hats to church, so much so that Thérèse explained how some milliners would wear their new creations to church every week to advertise their products.[31] Lucie brought up that changes in car design made it impractical to wear hats while driving; headrests now made it impossible to wear brimmed hats in cars.[32] She went on to say how there was also a generational factor and that many people saw hats as being something grandmothers wear, meaning that until recently hats were out of fashion in part due to being seen as outdated.[33] Both women noted how fashion changed around the 1960s, making hats unfavourable. Fashion is cyclical, and both have noticed a slow return for interest in hats. Lucie, however, remarked that she had expected it would come back with more force.[34]

The general decline of hats from the 1960s onwards affected the trade in different aspects. Lucie shared stories of learning traditional crafts from "des vrais chapeliers" in France when she did internships at the Musée du chapeau in Chazelles. When I prompted her to explain what she meant by "vrai," she said: "des hommes qui ont travaillé en usine toute leur vie."[35] She went on to qualify them as men who knew the traditional skill

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[31] Végiard, interview.

[32] Grégoire, interview.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

of felting hats, who worked in difficult conditions with hot materials. This is the traditional process of hatmaking for men's hats, what in French would be historically called "chapelier," and not "modiste." Thérèse was taught millinery in an environment that still involved these traditional techniques; indeed, she explained that Anita Pineault's manufactory was divided between men who worked with the machines, felting and blocking hats, while the women worked at the tables, sewing and adding garnishes to hats. They both remarked that the physical labour demanded for hatmaking was very difficult, which is why it was reserved for men. The closing down of these manufactories led to the slow loss of this kind of hatmaking knowledge since these skilled men were getting older and were not able to transmit their skills to new apprentices as they had traditionally done. Hatmaking and millinery skills have historically been passed down in these working environments, which is a process that has been halted and is disappearing due to factories closing down.

Lucie shared a few poignant anecdotes with me about her experiencing first-hand this kind of loss of knowledge transmission. She recounted an instance where she had acquired a machine to sew straw and had contacted an experienced milliner to show her how to use it, but she had not wanted to show her. As Lucie puts it, "elle a pas voulu, fait que je l'ai pas appris."[36] She also recounted another instance:

> Un moment donné on m'dit, le dernier casquettier sur St-Laurent ferme, pis il vend toutes ses affaires. Oh, j'vais faire un tour parce que, plein de monde me demandaient des casquettes, pis j'ai pas la machine pour coudre la visière. Ça prend la machinerie spéciale! Alors j'y vais pis là j'dis au propriétaire : « Ben moi, j'vous achèterais cette machine-là,

[36] Grégoire, interview.

> mais faudrait me montrer comment elle fonctionne, me montrer comment faire une casquette. » Jamais voulu! […] Fait que là t'es quand même pas pour t'engueuler avec mais c'est tellement poche là![37]

This first-hand experience of loss of knowledge had Lucie speaking passionately about the subject, and she even reflected upon her own importance as a millinery teacher as she concluded that anecdote by saying, "imagine si j'était pas là pour enseigner la chapellerie."[38] It is unknown to her why these skilled artisans had not wanted to share their knowledge with her, but the practical knowledge attached to these specialized machines and equipment for making hats was now lost to her and future generations she would teach. In her own words, "à chaque génération, à chaque fois, on en perd, on s'appauvrit."[39]

The shutting down of old milliners' stores and the closing down of millinery programs in schools is how Lucie and Thérèse acquired lots of their equipment and materials. Wooden hat blocks are the basis in the creation of many hats, and both of them have extensive collections of blocks that they have mostly built up by acquiring them from others who have left the trade. Thérèse showed me a large closet she had that was full of hats and told me she had gotten rid of many since she did not have the space for them. She said she has blocks from many periods, such as the 1940s, which she uses when making hats for historical costumes in movies, television, or plays.[40] Lucie has an equally impressive collection of hat

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[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Végiard, interview.

blocks, some of which she says she has never used because they are only for specific types of hats.

This phenomenon of milliners and millinery programs shutting down was a consequence of the decline of the popularity of hats, and the resulting decline in their demand in Quebec. This also led to the loss of many professions that were closely linked to the world of millinery. Lucie enumerated the many jobs that were inextricably linked to millinery that were lost, such as the "formier" who makes felt, the people who braid straw to make hats, the "plumassier" who prepares feathers for hats, the "fleuriste" who makes flowers out of fabric, the "rubanier" who makes ribbons, and many more. As she put it, "c'est des métiers, […] c'est un monde, toutes des affaires qui se perdent."[41] Thérèse also recounted how she would buy feathers to make hats from a supplier, "ils en avaient des belles. Les plumes de coq, les plumes de faisans, ah, écoute, t'avais envie de toutes les acheter quand t'allais là! Mais c'est dommage, y'en a plus, probablement parce que quand le chapeau a tombé, les gens n'en avaient plus besoin."[42]

The loss of these specialized professions linked to millinery also mirrored the loss of suppliers that would provide milliners with their materials. Lucie and Thérèse remembered how the last wholesalers who only carried millinery material closed down in the 1990s because it became too expensive for them. In Thérèse's words: "Ici y'en a plus. C'est dommage, on a plus les matériaux, on a plus rien." Now she imports her materials from the Czech Republic, Italy, and France. Lucie also imports

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[41] Grégoire, interview.

[42] Végiard, interview.

from there, and in her words: "Ça coûte trop cher aujourd'hui, avoir des inventaires."[43] Because Lucie and Thérèse import their materials individually, the hats they make are more expensive. Thérèse recounted that at a recent exposition, a woman told her that her hats were expensive. She replied, "C'est cher, oui, mais moi j'les importe mes affaires, j'importe mes feutres, mes pailles, […] c'est pas la même qualité que vous allez trouver au Wal-Mart et puis, c'est pas du tout la même chose."[44]

Lucie talked about how she received similar comments when she first started in the trade, about her hats being too expensive. She went on to explain how it was difficult to make affordable hats back then, even when Canada had quotas to protect the garment market and clothing manufacturers used to be located here. Indeed, clothes manufactured in Canada were the norm until the 1960s, when East Asian countries started emerging as manufacturing centers.[45] At the time, quotas and agreements were implemented to protect local markets, such as the Multi-Fibre Arrangement in 1974. Over time, these quotas were lifted with the advent of the Free-Trade Agreement in 1989 and the World Trade Organization beginning in 1995, which affected the local clothing and garment industries in Canada.[46] This global trend of globalization and liberalization had an impact on local milliners, whose prices were being beaten by outsourced

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[43] Grégoire, interview.

[44] Végiard, interview.

[45] Diana Wyman, "Trade liberalization and the Canadian clothing market," *Canadian Economic Observer*, December 2006, last modified 23 April 2014, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-010-x/01206/9545-eng.htm.

[46] Ibid.

labour in developing countries. As much as changing fashion had a role in the decline of hats, the industrialized and globalized world of the early twenty-first century had a part in making the survival of milliners more difficult.

Another effect of liberalization and globalization in the twenty-first century is the emergence of fast fashion instead of prêt-à-porter items. As Deborah Leslie explains, "While such items constitute high value for money, they are often low quality and therefore considered part of a new trend towards disposable fashion." [47] This now widely popular model of fast fashion has also negatively impacted the millinery trade. Lucie recounted an instance where two women had been surprised at the high cost of the custom hats she was making for them. When she explained that the hats would last them for four to five years, they changed their minds because of the quality of the garment they were buying.[48] Hat materials are also recyclable, can be modified over time, and are highly customizable, making them a perfect accessory to last the wearer a few good years. In this instance, global trends in fast fashion have affected the personal careers of milliners in Quebec.

Federal and provincial government decisions also affect local milliners. Lucie explained how defunding in the arts by the Canadian conservative government in the 2000s contributed to budget cuts in theater, which meant budget cuts in costume departments for the making of hats.[49]

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[47] Deborah Leslie, et al, "Crafting an Antidote to Fast Fashion: The Case of Toronto's Independent Fashion Design Sector," *Growth and Change* 45, no. 2 (2014).

[48] Grégoire, interview.

[49] Ibid.

On the provincial level, Lucie has had difficulty securing funding from the government for various projects because her business is considered to be "for-profit." In the past, she has gotten grants from le Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and from the Conseil des arts du Canada for her many research-creation projects and internships, but this is because her projects are art-based. She has contacted the Ministère de la culture and Patrimoine Canada more than once to request subsidies because she is preserving a disappearing trade through her classes, but the for-profit model of her work means they cannot subsidize her. Lucie has told them, "Le jour où j'mets les clés dans la porte là! Ben c'est pas grave, y'aura plus d'enseignement de la chapellerie au Québec, les gens vont devoir aller en Europe pour l'apprendre. […] C'est pas grave, y'aura plus rien."[50] Lucie explained to me that because her profession does not fit into the government's categories for subsidies, they say they cannot help her. She has asked for them to make exceptions, but nothing has changed yet. As she puts it, "C'est de l'ouvrage, se mettre à brasser ça là, […] pour finir par me faire dire non."[51] Millinery has transformed itself over the years to be able to continue in various fields, but these changes do not fit the criteria the government has set up to preserve culture and patrimony in the country. The millinery trade is therefore not protected or helped by the government, leaving its preservation to the people who still practice these skills despite these difficult conditions.

On a much smaller scale, Thérèse shared with me how she has participated in many salons, expo-ventes, and Cercles de fermières over the

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

years. These organizations and events support local crafts and artisanal work, such as millinery. However, she recently could not join an event that was being held by a municipality because another milliner was already signed up to expose there.[52] This demonstrates how diversity within the field is difficult to attain when efforts to share her work are prevented.

However, both Thérèse and Lucie have taught millinery for years. Many millinery courses within colleges have stopped being offered, but Lucie has continued this transmission of knowledge independently as she teaches in her studio. Thérèse nowadays teaches millinery for a theater production course. She remarked how the context in which she taught millinery depended on the school:

> Ça dépend, quand j'enseignais à Marie-Victorin, eux autres c'était plus industriel, […] c'était plus ça qu'ils visaient, pis au Collège [Lionel-Groulx], c'est plus théâtre. Pis quand j'ai enseigné à l'école Larose, ben là eux autres c'était plus haute couture. Fait que c'est un p'tit peu différent.[53]

This demonstrates how the diversification that millinery has gone through over the years in order to keep existing has translated into the different contexts in which it is taught.

Many younger milliners are joining the millinery scene in Montreal, and Lucie has taught a few of them. She says she is not afraid of competition, or else she would not be teaching them the trade.[54] She said that for a long time there was no competition at all since there was no money to be made. Hats, however, have started re-emerging in popular

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[52] Végiard, interview.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Grégoire, interview.

fashion after having been confined to high fashion for decades. Celebrities are bringing hats back in fashion as a ready-to-wear accessory. Lucie remarked that even though she is happy that there is a "relève" with these newer milliners, a generational loss of knowledge has still happened and continues to happen.[55]

The experiences of Thérèse and Lucie's careers demonstrate a multitude of facets of the millinery trade in Quebec from the 1960s until today. There are many intricate reasons for the decline that were caused by changing fashion and social norms, such as the non-obligation to wear hats to church in the 1960s. More subtle reasons, such as changing cars and generational taste, also had something to do with it. This decline brought on a slew of consequences that affected the trade, such as the closing down of millinery wholesalers, the disappearance of professions linked to the millinery trade, and the obligation of milliners to import their products from other countries, making their hats more expensive. These latter reasons are also products of wider globalization and liberalization trends that have outsourced labour to make the clothing industry cheaper, which in turn has created the fast fashion trend that has negatively impacted the trade.

By conducting these interviews with Thérèse and Lucie, I was able to analyze their experiences and better understand how the millinery trade has transformed in Quebec over the years, and how local milliners have been affected. By continuing to work in the trade as artisans, artists, and a mix of both, millinery has been able to survive in the Quebec context by diversifying itself and integrating into the fields of art, high fashion, craftwork, and costume production.

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[55] Ibid.

Moreover, this history has not been preserved or studied in a sustained manner, meaning that lots of these processes and traditions are being lost. Yvette Brillon is the milliner who is remembered the most in popular memory due to the biography that was written about her in 1989; efforts to record other important milliners need to be undertaken in order to preserve this history and share it with a Quebec public. Oral history as a methodology was well-suited in carrying out this project, as had been done by other historians of millinery in the past, since it allowed knowledge about the millinery trade and its many transformations to be conveyed directly by those who have lived through it and continue to do so even today. Although Thérèse and Lucie's paths were different, the changes in the millinery trade affected them both in similar ways. These similarities shed some light into the most recent developments that have occurred, especially in the last few decades. Hundreds more milliners could be interviewed to continue this endeavor of preservation and transmission, and perhaps an intergenerational link could be created through this process to prevent further generational loss of knowledge.

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Mapping Memories of Africville:
Stumbling Along the Path Towards Participatory Research

Danielle Mahon

Danielle Mahon is in her fourth and final year of undergraduate study at Concordia University. Her journey through the History Honours program involved a special interest in social and oral history in particular. She is proud to have learned from historians and colleagues that prioritizing community collaboration, both within and outside of the academic world, is essential to democratizing our histories. Moreover, her studies in History helped contextualize ongoing realities of racial and environmental injustice in her own hometown of Halifax, Nova Scotia. As such, she aims to pursue her Juris Doctor at McGill University in order to support community members on issues of environmental racism, housing rights, and land expropriation.

Growing up in Halifax, the history and legacy of the destruction of Africville, a small town situated along the southern shore of the Bedford Basin, was rarely mentioned in our history textbooks. It was not until I left my hometown that I learned about Africville and the emotional fallout of displacement. Africville was a community of about four hundred people and eighty families, formed in the mid-nineteenth century by Black Loyalists.[1] Africville residents were relocated in the 1960s, when the community was demolished to make room for urban development projects. In the aftermath of relocation, three former Africville residents started a commemorative movement. These individuals, all women, formed the Africville Genealogy Society (AGS) in 1982, an organization aiming to reconnect displaced residents. They held annual reunions beginning in 1983 on the former community site, which was turned into a park in 1985. The society has since expanded their heritage work, having opened a museum, with plans to build an interpretive centre in the coming years. Curious to explore the society's connection between memory, community and place, I conducted interviews with two of the founders, Brenda Steed-Ross and Linda Mantley. Initially, I was interested in studying the history of women and activism in Africville. However, the project's focus shifted from a historical study to a collaborative project, influenced by Michael Frisch's concept of "shared authority."

"Shared authority" aims for collaboration between interviewee-interviewer, both during and after the interview, directing academics

[1] Ted Rutland, *Displacing Blackness: Power, Planning, and Race in Twentieth-Century Halifax*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 3.

towards a more democratic type of oral history practice.[2] This meant embracing the meaning behind the historical event, and working with my interviewees on equal grounds. For my participants, the continuation of their culture and heritage was intertwined with their relationship to the former Africville site. Drawing on concepts of shared authority, counter-mapping, and social regeneration, this project represents a move towards participatory research. The outcome of the interviewee-interviewer collaboration was a cartographic piece: a narrated digital memory map.[3] By embedding audio of Brenda and Linda's life story interviews into the memory maps, community presence is embodied in cartography; humanizing development maps of Africville.

Shared authority was not built into my initial methodology, it was something I had to experience in the interview. Indeed, I believed my academic gaze and the fact that I was an outsider to the community meant that collaboration was impossible. Prior to the interview, I viewed the women's life stories as archival sources which could add to the historiography of the community, as historical 'facts.' Initially, I approached the project with a certain distance, one informed by the academic tendency to document history. I noticed there was a gap in the historiography: What were women's roles in rebuilding the community? To answer these questions, I set up a group interview with two of the founding women of the AGS. I anticipated answers about the society's origin story.

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[2] Stacey Zembrzycki, "Bringing Stories to Life: Using New Media to Disseminate and Critically Engage with Oral History Interviews," *Oral History* 41, no. 1 (2013): 99, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41806385.

[3] Danielle Mahon, "Mapping Memories of Africville," last edited February 5th, 2018. https://dmahonn.wixsite.com/africvillememorymap.

Why form the society in 1982? Why were women the ones to focus on genealogy? Their responses to these more direct questions resulted in vague answers. "Women, they're the talkers. They can talk," laughed Linda.[4] I was perplexed by the lack of a clear-cut answer. What I came to realize throughout the interview was that I had misunderstood the process of life story interviewing. It was not a space for me to glean raw data about these women's engagement in community life. Their recollections were creating meaning behind the events; their memory was "not a passive depository of facts."[5] So, it was imperative that I gave space for them to discuss what was important to them - what they wanted to express to me. These moments of intersubjectivity in the interview came out strongly during a 'memory mapping' exercise.

'Memory mapping' was a creative technique developed by a visual artist from Montreal, Marlene Creates. She interviewed residents in a small Labrador town, trying to understand the way residents conceptualized their connection to land, nature, and memory. The memory mapping approach seemed relevant to use with participants deeply affected by industrialization and urban development. In her exhibit, "The Distance Between Two Points is Measured in Memories," Creates wrote that "...land is not an abstract physical location but a *place,* charged with personal significance..."[6] For the interviewees, land was never mentioned in the

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[4] Linda Mantley interviewed by Danielle Mahon. Interviewed on October 19th, 2018. Halifax, Nova Scotia. Interview in the possession of the author.

[5] Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different?" in Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories* (Ithaca: SUNY Press, 1991), 69.

[6] Marlene Creates, et.al, *Marlene Creates: Landworks 1979-1991,* (St. John's, Nfld.: Art Gallery, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1993).

abstract. It was always grounded in life story, in lived experience, in local knowledge about the neighbourhoods and their families. Throughout the group interview, neighbourhood terms like "up the road" and "around the turn" were mentioned frequently. They wanted to discuss the history of the Africville that they grew up in, the history of their respective neighbourhoods. What the mapping exercise revealed was my preoccupation with objectivity in research was negating the participants' relationship to place. Like topographical maps, which demand a type of detailed, quantitative understanding of place, I was not considering the subjective importance of connection to the land.[7] If I was to embrace the meaning behind place for community members, I had to move away from objective analysis. Creates' work revealed new possibilities for the oral history project, which emphasized the participant's emotional attachment to place.

The memory maps represented landscapes of emotion, family networks, and social meaning in relation to the physical site of Africville. Community mapping, created by and for the members of the neighbourhoods, "affirms and legitimizes locally derived knowledge" and thus make political statements about land expropriation and urban development.[8] Once I moved away from my preoccupation with facts, I searched for moments of meaning that were identified in the interview space. For example, Linda would reiterate the impetus behind the annual reunion: to "bring the people back together." Her statement demonstrated a

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[7] Creates, *Marlene Creates: Landworks.*

[8] Parker, "Constructing Community Through Maps? Power and Praxis in Community Mapping," *The Professional Geographer* 58, no. 4 (October 2006): 471, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9272.2006.00583.x.

stark proclamation against the objective analysis of the past by choosing to retell history through a reenactment of Africville's social and cultural tradition.

The reunions held an essential performative function in linking culture and tradition to physical space.[9] The picnics held during the reunions were supposed to mimic those that families used to have in the community church. The socialization of former residents on the place they spent their youth reinforced old connections. Stories were exchanged, and younger generations were given the opportunity to learn about their heritage. Even the Africville museum, opened in 2011, was modelled after their church, which was the first structure destroyed in the demolition. From its very inception, the AGS was making political statements against the injustices of development projects by reenacting the memory of community gatherings each year. Linda described their work as "a community affair," one that "deals with the past, present, and future affairs of Africville…keeping [their] culture and heritage alive."[10] Despite their insistence that their work was not political, they were making a powerful statement about the human impact of land expropriation. In trying to share authority, I wanted to combine my understanding of their engagement work as activism and their emphasis on Africville as a tight knit, rural community into the creation project. The memory maps offered a space to represent both viewpoints.

The intention to use the memory maps as a discursive platform was informed by counter-mapping practices. Maps are expressions of

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[9] Linda Mantley interview.

[10] Ibid.

power that are situated within a deep history of capitalist cartography, which often privileges white, upper-class geographic perceptions.[11] These racialized geographies were entrenched in the commercial land maps of Africville. Ted Rutland has argued that Halifax's urban renewal plans were shaped by racialized notions of land-use. In the post-war urban renewal era, city officials identified Africville for "slum clearance." The displacement of residents was justified under the belief that "slum clearance would *benefit* the people whose lives it would disrupt and displace."[12] To illustrate his point, he presented maps of the north end urban development plan, laid out in Halifax Regional Municipality's 1945 "Master Plan." In the map of Africville, the homes were replaced with the A. Murray MacKay bridge - improved transportation was one of the tenets of the redevelopment plan, alongside slum clearance.[13] Counter-mapping explores how maps could be created by communities to represent themselves and stake claims to resources.[14] For Brenda and Linda, their memory maps' representations of land-use highlighted the presence of family homes and outdoor areas of play - using memory to claim their relationship to the land. These drawn images thus subvert the dehumanizing tendency of real-estate and survey maps to erase the

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[11] Erin McElroy et.al. "The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project: Counter-mapping and Oral History toward Bay Area Housing Justice," *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 108, no. 2 (2018): 380, DOI: 10.1080/24694452.2017.1365583.

[12] Rutland, *Displacing Blackness,* 124.

[13] Ibid., 125.

[14] Nancy Peluso, "Whose woods are these? Counter-mapping forest territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia," Antipode 27, no. 4 (1995): 383, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.1995.tb00286.x.

appearance of marginalized communities.[15] On their own, however, the memory maps lacked the context that personal story can provide. In order to emphasize the personal impact of relocation, the memory maps needed to incorporate life story somehow.

The memory maps make powerful statements about displacement by having residents at the center of the map-making process. By composing maps that document history, places of value, and land-use traditions, communities can imprint their existence in a a visual form which resists their historical marginalization.[16] The group interview highlighted the emotional impact of community displacement, something which the memory maps lacked. The missing representation of relocation was a limitation of the memory map exercise, which focused on a temporal snapshot of Africville, pre-relocation. I wanted to bridge the gap between these stories of the Africville of Brenda and Linda's youth and the emotions felt during and after the relocation. Drawing connections between an Africville remembered pre-and post-relocation could be accomplished by embedding the life stories into the illustrations of their memory maps. Brenda and Linda's description of relocation expressed a visceral sense of loss as well as a steadfast determination to uphold the culture and traditions of Africville. By including both the narratives of forced relocation and daily life in Africville, the memory maps became tools for teaching community-based knowledge.

My digital exhibit was inspired by the society's work in regenerating community memory through public education. Like the

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[15] Parker, "Constructing Community Through Maps?" 475.

[16] Ibid., 470.

District Six museum in South Africa, which concentrated on maintaining intergenerational dialogue through public education and storytelling, the AGS uses public education strategies to transmit memories across generations.[17] Working from Field's suggestion that oral historians "can contribute to forging public space where people write, talk, perform, and represent their memories," I chose to create a website for the memory map narratives that could supplement the Africville Museum's digital archive. I consulted with participants about creating a narrative map to see if they thought the website could fit with their heritage projects. Once I had the approval of the participants, I constructed the website to fit in line with the public education format of the Africville museum. The museum exhibit told the story of Africville in the form of recorded oral recollections, dotted throughout a walkable timeline of Africville's history. Surveyed maps of the land were displayed alongside listening booths, family photographs, and artifacts from households. The artifacts and maps stood in conversation with one another, illustrating the multiple discourses around Africville's past: capitalist redevelopment, a community neglected by city officials, environmental racism, land expropriation, and a long-established communal settlement. The museum curation was not presenting what Field calls a "sanitized construction" of history, one void of engagement with social justice discourse.[18] The exhibit refused to propagate a history of Africville separated from political discourse by representing the political

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[17] Sean Field, "Beyond 'Healing': Trauma, Oral History and Regeneration," *Oral History* 34, no. 1 (2006): 40, http://www.jstor.org/stable40179842.

[18] Ibid., 33.

alongside the cultural. [19] It challenges current and past progressionist narratives of redevelopment by upholding the *lived* experience of displacement and environmental racism.

The focus on genealogy and mapping was central to the exhibit, and these themes informed how I chose the audio clips. I selected stories of family life that highlighted the interconnectivity of neighbours and the descriptions of living in a rural community dealing with industrial pollution first-hand. Stories of 'home' signified a powerful resistance to the state construction of Africville as commercial and industrial land. I chose displacement stories that communicated the link between emotional fallout and community engagement:

> Brenda: "[People] Far as the United States were moved. Some, you know, families who branched out to the United States, out west: Quebec, Ontario, all over the place. You know, different parts of uh [inaudible], Lower Sackville and things like that. Dispersed.
>
> Danielle Mahon: Yeah...yeah. Dispersed. So that's..
>
> Brenda: And that's why the Africville Genealogy Society was so important. To bring the people back together again so we would be able to identify with people from Africville and their descend- and *our* descendants. [20]

Here, Brenda identifies the 'regenerative' work of the AGS with a story of transnational displacement. It signified a stark rebuttal to the long-standing history of government neglect by refusing to let the personal connections

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[19] Ibid., 40.

[20] Brenda Steed-Ross interviewed by Danielle Mahon. Interviewed on October 19th, 2018. Halifax, Nova Scotia. Interview in the possession of the author.

that defined life in Africville dissipate. I wanted to use displacement clips like this one, which demonstrate the ongoing work it takes to keep community ties intact. On the website, the clips are situated under photographs of Africville Park, taken only a few days after the interviews. These photos document the Africville museum, a former resident's trailer with "Africville protest" spray-painted on its side, and a view of the Bedford Basin from the park trail (see end of article). These images are placed alongside displacement stories to represent the work done by the AGS in reclaiming their relationship to land and community. Displacement can then be associated with the strength of community and symbolize its regenerative successes. Place-making is a vital component of the society's work, and attachment to place is embodied in social relations, in storytelling, in tradition and public education.[21] It is not enough for the mapping narratives project to identify sites of community presence and loss. The efficacy of the creation project lies in its capacity to contribute to the society's broader framework of place-making. By presenting an accessible, digital narrative map, this project aims to contribute to the 'post-memories' of following generations of community members.[22]

My motivation in creating a digital platform for the mapping narratives project was to prioritize accessibility. The forms in which audiences consume and relate to story need to be considered in equal measure with the interview praxis. If not careful, oral historians can fall

[21] McElroy et.al. "The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project," 385.

[22] Fields, "Beyond 'Healing,'" 40.

into the trap of accumulating recordings that are never listened to.[23] Moreover, it was important to my participants that their stories reach an audience, a public, and contribute to the public knowledge of life in Africville. According to Linda Shopes, the political potential of oral history lies in its ability to offer new interpretations about the lives of those marginalized, ignored, or misconstrued in our collective record of the past. These interpretations unveil the operations of power and respect agency, helping to cultivate awareness and inspire understanding.[24] Prioritizing access to story via digital platform thus offers the opportunity for newcomers to oral history to learn from the expertise of community members like Linda Mantley and Brenda Steed-Ross.

This project was the result of many weeks of reckoning with my misconceptions of oral history praxis. My concern over accuracy during the interview colored my interpretation of the process as a type of data collection. Once I turned away from interpreting participants' responses as "facts," I could begin analyzing the interview as a window unto the personal. The oral history interview then becomes a site for creating meaning which is negotiated between interviewer and interviewee. Recognizing the significance of events to the lives of those who lived through them is a step towards the goal of shared authority. The mapping narratives website was constructed to highlight community building efforts, to be a platform for community engagement with former residents'

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[23] Michael Frisch, "Three dimensions and more: oral history beyond the paradoxes of method," in Sharlene Nagy Hess-Biber and Patricia Leavy (eds), *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, New York: Guilford Press, (2008): 223.

[24]Linda Shopes, "'Insights and Oversights': Reflections on the Documentary Tradition and the Theoretical Turn in Oral History," *The Oral History Review* 41, no. 2 (Sept 2014): 267.

stories, and to be easily accessible for a variety of public audiences. It was designed in the tradition of university-research and community collaboration, and to reinforce the Africville Genealogy Society's legacy of maintaining cultural and social connection to land. The narrated memory maps were designed to highlight community in cartographies of Africville. The focus on a communal approach extends into possibilities of a future mapping project, which could reflect the interests, needs, and knowledge of community members. The project has the potential to turn into an interactive map where former residents and their descendants can add their stories, photos, and other memories onto a digital mapping platform. Interactive maps can foster dialogue between generations by making histories more accessible. While this project might move on from memory mapping techniques, its ethos will remain reflexive and community based, pursuing what psychologist Henry Greenspan has termed "knowing with" participants, rather than "knowing about" them.[25]

[25] Henry Greenspan et. al., "When Is an Interview an Interview? Notes from Listening to Holocaust Survivors," *Poetics Today* 27, no. 2 (2006): 448, doi: 10.1215/03335372-2005-012.

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Analyzing Eastern and Western Dichotomies: From the Debate on Islam and Science to David Cameron's Multiculturalism

Zackery Liberty

Zackery Liberty graduated this year with a bachelor's degree in honours history. Initially moving to Montreal for the music scene, he quickly found a passion for history while taking a variety of introductory courses at Concordia. His historical research has focused on the socio-political effects that various religions have had in the modern period. With particular attention to Christianity, he has examined the ways in which region has mobilized people politically and acted to segregate. Zac has also acted as Social Coordinator for Students of History at Concordia for five consecutive semesters, planning networking events for history undergraduates. Before pursuing higher education, Zac will be taking time off to travel and gain work experience. In his free time, he enjoys playing music, socializing, and organizing events. He enjoys short walks on the beach, and long goodbyes.

On February 5, 2011, British Prime Minister David Cameron gave a speech at the Munich Security Conference outlining the failings of state multiculturalism. From the onset, Cameron attempted to make clear that, at least in his mind, Islam and extremism were more incompatible than, say, Islam and the West. Yet, he quickly continued to suggest that the extremism he aimed to combat was the Islamic one: "Nevertheless, we should acknowledge that this threat comes in Europe overwhelmingly from young men who follow a completely perverse, warped interpretation of Islam, and who are prepared to blow themselves up and kill their fellow citizens."[1] While he separated the concepts of terrorism as inextricably linked to Islam, he paradoxically continued to state that terrorist threats are overwhelmingly Islamic ones. Cameron situated himself as a centrist, both condemning the racism of the 'hard right' and the problematic leniency of the 'soft left.' However, his speech suggests that the true issue is a lack of cultural cohesion between Muslims living in Europe and the societies that they are a part of; taking aim far more at the left than the right. Considering young Muslims, Cameron stated: "In the UK, some young men find it hard to identify with the traditional Islam practiced at home by their parents, whose customs can seem staid when transplanted to modern Western countries. But these young men also find it hard to identify with Britain too, because we have allowed the weakening of our collective identity."[2] Cameron's use of 'modern' to differentiate the Islam of the East with the progressive, and presumably secular, culture of the West is not a new

[1] David Cameron, "Speech on Radicalization and Islamic Extremism" (Speech, Munich, February 5, 2011), https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference.

[2] Cameron, "Speech on Radicalization and Islamic Extremism."

phenomenon, but one that has reverberated through time and space as Orientalism; "a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience."[3]

Cameron's condemnation of the United Kingdom's version of multiculturalism can be contextualized by centuries of debate concerning the nature of Islam in relation to the West. On March 29 1883, Ernest Renan, a French intellectual, gave a lecture at the Sorbonne entitled "Islam and Science." As the title suggests, the lecture concerned the relationship between Islam and science; two ideological frameworks that Renan deemed to be completely incompatible. Islam represented pure dogmatism, which in turn limited the civilizational development of the Orient. Months after Renan's lecture, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani issued a response which was published in the *Journal des Détas.* Afghani's response was curious as it simultaneously conceded some points to Renan while also defending Islam. It should be noted that the temporal context which Renan and Afghani occupied was unique. European imperialism had reached its grand stage as much of the Orient was taken under Western influence. France took Tunisia in 1881, and England declared Egypt a protectorate in 1882. While interactions between East and West had taken many forms over thousands of years, power had never manifested in such a way before. It is in this context of domination in which Renan and Afghani pen their thoughts concerning Islam. This paper will examine the seeds of the Eastern and Western dichotomies present in the 18th century debate on Islam and Science in relation to Cameron's speech, in order to contextualize and analyze contemporary constructions of the 'Ethnographic state', and its characterization of Islam in relation to the West.

[3] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism,* (New York: Pantheon Books,1978), 1.

Furthermore, the 'other' will be examined as a developmental process in which Eastern and Western divisions remain intact despite linguistic shifts in political and social discourse. The regard of civilization as a linear development is one that has persisted since the Islam and science debate and continues to place the East and West in a dichotomous clash of civilizations narrative.

Before discussing the various external factors relating to Renan and Afghani's debate, their respective points of view must be clarified. An important aspect of "Islam and Science" is that Renan concedes that the Islamic Orient were the champions of science and philosophy for a period: "from about the year 775, until towards the middle of the 13th century, that is to say for around 500 years […] during this time, the Muslim world had been superior in terms of intellectual culture to Christendom."[4] While Islam continued to exist during this period, Renan suggests that its adherents were barely Muslim.[5] Islam acts as an "iron ring around [a Muslim's] head, making it absolutely closed to science."[6] Therefore, Renan suggests that Islam is the antithesis of science despite the fact that the Islamic world led scientific thought for five centuries. He explains this by arguing that during that time, leaders were less Muslim. This reasoning conveys that a religious person's faith is quantifiable; making religious fundamentalists theoretically more Muslim, or Christian for that matter, than religious moderates. Though Renan critiqued religious dogma, he was

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[4] Ernest Renan, "Islam and Science: A Lecture" (lecture, La Sorbonne, Paris, March 29, 188), trans. Sally P. Ragep (McGill University, 2011), 3.

[5] Renan, "Islam and Science: A Lecture," 4.

[6] Ibid., 2.

in no way an atheist. Ringer and Shissler write: "On the contrary, he often spoke of the fundamental importance of religion and religious feeling, which he believed represented the best part of the human condition."[7] Renan's work suggested that Christian societies were superior in terms of freedom and innovation; Protestant ones being best.[8]

Afghani also had religious convictions; born into a religious family and raised with a religious education. He lived through the Tanzimat period in which the Ottoman government liberalized its economy and society due to European pressure. Much about Afghani remains mysterious. While he claimed to be an Afghan, strong circumstantial evidence suggests that he was a Persian by birth and upbringing.[9] Despite the debate concerning his nationality, as a Muslim, Europe's powerful presence in the Orient meant that his community was in danger.[10] Along with his contemporary, Muhammad 'Abduh, Afghani published eighteen numbers of an Arabic periodical during his time in Paris. Albert Hourani writes: "It was devoted partly to an analysis of the policy of the Great powers in the Muslim world […] and partly to an exposition of the inner weaknesses of Islam and an exhortation to Muslims to take thought and cure them.[11] This may offer some insight into Afghani's agreement with

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[7] Monica M. Ringer and A. Holly Shissler, "Al-Afghani-Renan Debate, Reconsidered," *Iran Nameh*, 30, 3 (2015), XXIX.

[8] Ringer and Shissler, "Al-Afghani-Renan Debate, Reconsidered," XXXIII.

[9] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939,* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 108.

[10] Ibid.,103.

[11] Ibid., 110.

some of Renan's points concerning the limitations of Islam: "this religion tried to stifle the sciences and it was marvelously served in its designs by despotism."[12] However, he defends Islam by suggesting that the problematic aspects of it were simply expressions of the religion and not necessarily intrinsic elements of it: "After reading this talk one cannot refrain from asking oneself if these obstacles come unique from the Muslim religion itself or from the manner in which it was propagated in the world."[13] Consequently, the limitations of the Islamic world were not inherent of the religion itself but a manifestation of the people who practice it. Afghani goes on to suggest that because Christianity is older, it has had more time to mature and emerge out of anti-scientific thought. To this Afghani writes, "I cannot keep from hoping that Muhammadan society will succeed in breaking its bonds and marching resolutely in the path of civilization someday after the manner of Western society."[14] The fact that both Renan and Afghani regarded the West as superior in this way conveys both the pervasive nature of Orientalism and the view of civilization as a linear progression.

Renan, being an Orientalist, exhibits many of the theories that Edward Said presents in his book, *Orientalism*. Said refers to the Orient as the mistress of the Christian West, which quite literally implicates it as an accessory to the Western experience.[15] While Renan is vastly critical of the

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[12] Jamal al-Din Al-Afghani, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*, translated by Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 6.

[13] Ibid., 3.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Renan, "*Islam and Science: A Lecture*," 3.

Islamic world, he concedes that for five-hundred years it championed scientific thought. Renan also differentiates Arabs and Persians in regard to their natural cognitive potential. Arabs were naturally warlike, prone to religious orthodoxy, and suspicious of science. Persians on the other hand, were more capable due to their ties to the ancient Greek world.[16] The racialization of civilizational progress in this example demonstrates Renan's persistent bias. The Orient only borrowed their scientific prowess off of their Occidental predecessors. While they were able to hold on to it for centuries, knowledge eventually wound up back in the rightful hands of Europeans. Once again, the Orient is defined by its relationship to the Occident. In this case, it acted as an intermediary between the glory of the ancient and modern Occident. Moreover, the Persians were prosperous due in part to the presence of Nestorian Christians, who occupied important intellectual roles such as physicians, logicians, and geometers.[17]

An important facet of this debate is the mutual feeling that the Christian Occident is ahead of the Muslim Orient in terms of civilizational development. As previously mentioned, Afghani hoped that the Occident could one day emerge out of infancy and catch up to the West. In the era of colonialism, the practice of 'universal history' sought to make sense of increasing cultural and racial diversity.[18] Sudipta Kaviraj writes: "While earlier European thinkers, like Voltaire or Montesquieu, arranged this evidence on a lateral range of diversity, a powerful new strand of thinking

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[16] York A. Norman, "Disputing the 'Iron Circle': Renan, Afghani, and Kemal on Islam, Science, and Modernity," *Journal of World History,* 22, no. 4 (2011): 695.

[17] Renan, "*Islam and Science: A Lecture*," 4.

[18] Sudipta Kaviraj, "The Curious Persistence of Colonial Ideology," *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical & Democratic Theory* 21, no. 2 (2014): 186.

[…] placed them on a hierarchical scale of civilization."[19] Similar to the racial implications of social Darwinism, this theoretical framework allowed for the classification of peoples on a scale of development. The Orient no longer represented different types of civilization, but earlier stages that Europe had already surpassed. Ideas concerning the nature of religion as a shared human phenomenon developed into religion being conceived on evolutionary terms as well. Renan also re-conceptualized Christianity as a spiritual commitment to God's intent for the evolutionary progress of mankind.[20] In this way, Christianity became the embodiment of progress while Islam was relegated as a stage within Christian history.

Given that Europeans created these hierarchies to classify race and civilization, it is unsurprising that they usually placed themselves at the top of the list. European superiority was often cited in order to justify imperialism. 'The white man's burden:' colonization could be justified as a method of bringing uncivilized peoples into European modernity. Furthermore, competition was also used to justify colonization. As Alexis de Tocqueville writes in his "Second Letter on Algeria," if his nation did not dominate Algeria, another Western power would.[21] York suggests that Afghani's response may have been written out of fear that Renan's views on Islam and Semitic Arabs as inferior to Aryan Europeans and Iranians could justify colonization;[22] which he vehemently opposed. Namik Kamal,

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Ringer and Shissler, "Al-Afghani-Renan Debate, Reconsidered," XXXI.

[21] Alexis de Tocqueville, "Essay on Algeria" in *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, trans and ed. Jennifer Pitts (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 60.

[22] Norman, "Disputing the 'Iron Circle,'" 695.

a Muslim intellectual, also wrote a response to Renan's "Islam and Science." In contrast with Afghani, Kamal challenged the notion that Europe was inherently superior and more developed than Islamic society. Kamal's *Refutation of Renan*, which was never translated into a Western language, argued that Europe was not an example that Muslims should blindly emulate.[23] He suggested that Western fixation on dominating the natural world led to a megalomaniacal society that endangered itself and those around it. To Kemal, Renan's text was little more than imperial propaganda.[24] The linear framework in which civilizations were classified was completely subjected to European notions of progress. Kamal's critique of the West's obsession with dominating the natural world conveys the fact that different cultures have different standards for progress. The fact that Afghani willingly subscribes to a Western framework for progress reveals the pervasive nature of Orientalism. Therefore, Afghani willingly defines himself within a European Western experience.

It must be noted that both Renan and Afghani are limited in their scope of historical knowledge. Kaviraj writes that many Europeans of this period wrote with a combination of little information and grand generalizations. "European writings about the non-West in this form were and exercise in non-comparative, but contrastive history. […] attention to some large, supposedly essential features of Asian societies set the stage for closer and detailed exploration of the history of Europe."[25] Hence, European exploration of the Orient was meant to reveal more about

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[23] Ibid., 696.

[24] Ibid., 697.

[25] Kaviraj, "The Curious Persistence of Colonial Ideology," 186.

themselves. European societies were hot and historical while Oriental ones were cold and unchanging.[26] This is evident in Renan's writing as he speaks of Islam as a religion incapable of change or progress. It is in this way that he positions Islam as such an enemy that it is not even good for its own adherents. Their arguments concerning Islam are largely a reflection of their respective sentiments concerning late nineteenth-century European colonialism. Renan and Afghani's debate surrounding Islam demonstrates the persistent colonial and Orientalist ideologies of the nineteenth-century, rather than revealing any innately ignorant qualities of the religion itself. How have these understandings of Islam continued pervasively across time and space?

Since the age of high colonialism that Renan and Afghani occupied, the division between East and West remained intact in public and political consciousness, despite the evolution of geo-politics. Paul A. Silversetin's *Algeria in France* examines how the struggles within Algeria spread into France, creating a transnational political terrain.[27] The multiracial nature of modern France is largely due to its historical relationship with its colonial extremities: "After World War II, as many as 350,000 Algerian men worked in the French manufacturing and construction industries in Paris, Lyon, and Marseille, contributing greatly to France's thirty years of spectacular postwar growth."[28] Despite the inarguable contribution that France's colonial subjects had on the

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race, and Nation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 3.

[28] Silverstein, 4.

prosperity of the metropole, Silverstein demonstrates the selective 'othering' that occurred during times of political and economic distress. During times of economic instability throughout the 20th century, debates often targeted immigrants and their access to French nationality and on the legitimacy of Muslim difference.[29] The title *Algeria in France* alludes to a larger point: That the discourse present in the Islam and science debate, concerning the nature of Western influence as a far-flung phenomenon, shifted to conceptualize the Orient within the Western physical landscape; especially in the post-colonial context.

Silverstein examines the role of terrorism in public debates and state policy. A failed attack on a high-speed train line in August of 1995 acted to both affirm anxieties concerning Algerian presence in France and warn against future immigration. Islamic expression, manifesting in cultural practices such as headscarves, had already created controversy.[30] The attack, carried out by a second-generation Algerian allowed for anxieties to be directed not only at new immigrants, but at French citizens of foreign backgrounds. In reality, Algerian political terrorism is not a phenomenon independent from France's national narrative. While it is politically beneficial for the metropole to shed political responsibility of its extremities in the post-colonial era, the effects of colonialism remain tangible. The political instability that led to the Algerian civil war, and the terrorism that surrounded it, is a direct result of French imperialism. The subsequent demonization of the Algerians within France's borders was an effort to shed responsibility of imperial repercussions. Additionally,

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[29] Ibid., 5.

[30] Ibid., 1.

situating the 'other' as a threat within the state, as opposed to an entity existing in the geographically 'pre-modern' world, added the effect of characterizing Muslim presence as an invasion of sorts. The 'clash of civilization' narrative becomes immediately pertinent to the public as they navigate society. Innocuous cultural expressions, that could previously have passed unnoticed, become symptoms of the 'other.' The attempt to shed responsibility for the imperial past has the effect of characterizing those that are still dealing with its implications as pre-modern.

Silverstein includes an anecdote about a man named Gilles-Salah; born from a European mother and an Algerian father. He grew up being educated in France and Geneva while spending his summers with his father in Algeria. When Silverstein first met him, he went by the name Gilles; only learning much later that his family called him Salah.[31] The preference for a French passing name in a European context is an obvious attempt at self-assimilation. As Gille's life continued, he became increasingly "disenchanted with everyday life in Geneva, which, in spite of its large foreign population, struck him as a cold, bourgeois, "Germanic" city."[32] Encountering racism as a barrier for social and economic mobility, Gilles increasingly turned to Muslim orthopraxy: "He quit drinking and began referring to himself exclusively as Salah."[33] Gilles' story personifies Islam in a Western context. While he attempted to incorporate himself into the dominant culture in his youth, Western social and institutional barriers based on identity left him disillusioned; actually provoking him to

[31] Ibid., 17.

[32] Ibid., 19.

[33] Ibid.

internalize a culture that he could identify with. For Gilles, French and Swiss cultures were as integral to his heritage as Islamic Algerian ones. In many ways, Gilles is a personification of Silverstein's main point: "Issues of racism and anti-racism, integration and multiculturalism, state intervention and minority activism, that are central to this book are themselves trans-national phenomena, occurring simultaneously across a larger space that unites European metropoles to their former colonial peripheries."[34] The relationship between East and West, as Gilles' experience conveys, is far less a dichotomous clash of civilizations, and far more a process of integration and rejection, during which identities are formed. In his speech, Cameron suggests that the left propagates a problematic multiculturalism in which cultures are left to exist side by side — and not coexist — in British society. Yet, what we see in Silverstein's anecdote is that public rejection of foreign presence prevents those who are ostracized from being able to comfortably integrate into society. Paradoxically, the very solutions that Cameron suggests, and the attitudes that surround them, are the same ones that create these cultural pockets.

Cameron also suggests that Muslims primarily define themselves by their political identity, and not the societies that surround them; theoretically hindering their ability to relate to their fellow European citizens. This representation of Islam as more religious than its theological alternatives is one which Gil Anidjar discusses. He asks the question in his article titled "Secularism: How did the Orient come to occupy or announce the place of religion?"[35] Anidjar answers this question by suggesting that

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[34] Ibid., 20

[35] Gil Anidjar, "Secularism," *Critical Inquiry* 33, no.1 (2006): 58.

Europeans occupied a position of authority, in which they were able to define religion and secularism: "The secularized religion […] which was the privileged agent of Orientalism, is after all not just any religion. Nor was it just any theology or culture. It was Christianity, and more precisely, Western Christendom."[36] During the Enlightenment, when European thinkers began to embrace reason and secularism, the Islamic East was used to symbolize the opposite. In this way, Orientalism and secularism are applied in tandem as the religiosity of the orient is defined by the Christian occident. Anidjar goes on to point out a level of hypocrisy in European secularism. Europe created and defined secularism "at the very moment it was freeing itself, spreading its gentle and loving white wings ever further in a world unsuspecting of enchantment or disenchantment, on the efficient heels of earlier missionaries."[37] Hence, the notion of the secular spread through the same colonial frameworks that had previously been occupied by Christian missionaries.

Interestingly, in discussing Orientalism, Edward Said, has been critiqued for having a Eurocentric Bias.[38] Despite the fact that Said does not directly address the Orient, but rather the portrayal of it, critics have suggested that he presents Orientalist inauthenticity without supplementing any actual authenticity.[39] Zehra Mehdi, a psychotherapist interested in the

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[36] Anidjar, "Secularism," 58.

[37] Ibid., 60.

[38] Hande Tekdemir, "Critical Approaches to Edward Said's Orientalism," *Social Sciences Review of the Faculty of Sciences & Letters University of Uludag / Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 18, no. 32 (2017): 142.

[39] Tekdemir, "Critical Approaches to Edward Said's Orientalism," 147.

intersection of religion and politics, found in her study of Islam in India that even in an Oriental context, Islam has been positioned as incompatible with secularism: "In the secular national state of India, the phobia isn't of Islam; rather, it is of religion. The religion is identified as Islam."[40] India has characterized Islam as the religious opposition to its identity as a secular state. Just as Afghani internalized Orientalism in his regard of the West as more advanced than the East, Secularism — inextricably linked to Orientalism — has been used to 'other' Muslims even within the Orient.

In his work "The Othering of Muslims", Derek Silva demonstrates how radicalization discourses are the result of sociolinguistic and historical developments. Correspondingly, these discourses are complex, and are often influenced by media portrayals of radicalization, which once highlighted political and economic differences but now place the spotlight on Islam.[41] As a result, radicalization now symbolizes a conflict between the East and the West; Islam being the dominant actor in the dispute. By placing Islam as the focal point of conflict, government discourses — represented by Cameron's speech — theorize how Muslims become radicalized and create subsequent counter-radicalization policies.[42] Silva writes: "Discursive strategies depict British Muslims as the alien 'other' through continuous reference to "un-Britishness" and "deviant"

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[40] Zehra Mehdi, "Phobia of Religion: Religion as Islam a Political Argument and a Psychoanalytic Inquiry of Islamophobia in India," *International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies* 14, no. 3 (2017): 222.

[41] Derek Silva. "The Othering of Muslims: Discourses of Radicalization in the New York Times, 1969-2014," *Sociological Forum* 32, no.1 (2017): 138.

[42] Silva, "The Othering of Muslims," 139.

behaviours."[43] Public and political consciousnesses are then reaffirmed and made militant in the consumption of media that overshadows everyday Muslim behaviour with select cases of extremism. These portrayals propagate the narrative that Islam represents the pre-modern within the modern state.

Silva suggests that there is a larger strategic goal at play in positioning Islam as a preeminent threat to the West. Rather than religious or cultural differences having any real significance, Silva claims that the real source of Western anxiety lies in the possibility of an economic power shift to the Orient. Rather than airing socio-economic anxieties publicly, religious characteristics of Islam are intentionally problematized by governments and media outlets because: "cultural differences are more easily depicted than complex economic or political disagreements"[44] In Silva's mind, the clash of civilizations narrative serves mainly to perpetuate the Orient as an economic subordinate to the West. He supports this claim by pointing out that Islam only became the main threat in Western imaginations after the Cold War.

By comparing Cameron's speech as a contemporary example with the Islam and science debate, it becomes clear that many similarities remain. Renan, when considering the relation between Islam and science, used language relating to racial and cultural superiority. In most Western countries, it is no longer acceptable to single out groups of people on the basis of race. While Cameron vocally opposes racism, it is important to consider whether the shifts in political language racialize Islam in a similar

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[43] Ibid., 140.

[44] Ibid., 141.

way. Cameron also vocally disagrees with the quantification of faith. He suggests devoutness does not correlate with extremism. This separates him from Renan's writing, which suggested that less Islam allowed for more scientific thought. However, Cameron points the finger at moderate Muslims who abstain from violence, yet secretly applaud the values that Muslim extremists propagate. He calls upon moderate Muslims to reform internally. This appeal to Muslims is similar to that of Afghani, who also called for internal reform. In a way, Afghani's nineteenth century writing positions himself as the ideal in Cameron's speech on multiculturalism: A Muslim who has internalized Orientalism and perceives the West as a more 'modern' entity.

The relationship between the East and the West has long been portrayed as a dichotomous one; where the Orient occupies a lower rung on the ladder of civilization. This belief is not only conveyed in the Islam and science debate between Renan and Afghani, but in subsequent government policy and media portrayal of Islam. While language has shifted over time, the portrayal of Muslims as an 'other' within Western state borders persists. Silverstein, in refusing to rely on a clash of civilizations narrative outlines a more comprehensive conception of Islam and the West. Understanding Islam and the West as a transnational phenomenon effectively breaks down the dichotomy and the 'modern' and 'premodern' distinctions that it suggests.

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