

JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND CULTURES

**A peer-reviewed online journal dedicated to pioneering new research
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University of Birmingham

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Acknowledgements

The journal editors would like to express their deepest appreciation to the JHAC committee members: Amy Edwards, Andrew Jones, Andrew Limm, Beth Spacey, Edward Rouse, Geoffrey Humble, Jamie Perry, Helen Coy, Kelly Waterhouse, Patrick Longson, Rebecca Crites, Rebecca Jones, Robert Brown, Sam Humphries, Stephanie Appleton, and Tom Penfold.

They would also like to thank staff and academics at the University of Birmingham, School of History and Cultures for their ongoing support and encouragement. Special thanks also go to our anonymous peer-reviewers for their patient and considered feedback.

Daisy Payling, Holly Ellis and Saima Nasar

Protests against Amalgamation in Colonial Ewedome, British Mandated Territory, 1920 to 1948

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The issue of amalgamation has featured prominently in recently scholarly works on the discourse on ethnic identity and chieftaincy disputes in the southern section of British Togoland. This article examines the various protestations that characterised the implementation of the policy of amalgamation and the reactions of the colonial government. Almost all existing scholarly literature on Britain's African empire emphasises the relative weaknesses of the colonial state, particularly in the pre-World War II period. There are pertinent examples from West Africa that demonstrate the weakness of the colonial state in terms of its capacity to alter social and economic behaviour amongst its subjects. First was the drawn out and only semi-effective process of ending the trade in slaves and the practice of domestic slavery in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹ Second, the colonial state had difficulties in establishing an effective system of taxation in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whether taxes of people or of goods. In fact, in the southern section of British Togoland, direct taxation did not come into effect until 1945. Similarly, until 1931 there was no direct taxation in the Gold Coast, except the collection of town rates in Accra, Cape Coast, and Sekondi.² Third was the role of local farmer initiative, rather than state policies or agencies, in the major transition from a slave-exporting economy to an economy based on the export of agricultural goods. In West Africa many farmers became cash croppers in their own right and by their own volition. For example, until the 1920s, African initiative was key in cocoa production in the Gold Coast, and as Reid puts it, the 'colonial state was relatively unimportant in bringing about socio-economic change in the Gold Coast'.³

It is against this background of limited state power to intervene in everyday life that historians have come to understand the shifts in policy regarding local/indigenous authority. Whilst there are prominent examples of African rulers who were exiled at the onset of British colonial rule (notably Prempeh I of Asante kingdom), by the 1930s the British had evolved a strategy of 'indirect

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¹ It is on record that some Africans chiefs, particularly in Asante and Dahomey, vehemently opposed the abolition of the slave trade, and with the introduction of 'legitimate trade', the use of slave labour actually increased across the West African region. See Richard J. Reid, *A History of Modern Africa: 1800 to the Present* (Oxford, 2009), p. 32; Gilbert Erik and Reynolds T. Jonathan, *Africa in World History: From Prehistoric to the Present* (New Jersey, 2008), p. 198; John Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 154-155.

² RAG/H Gold Coast Confidential Report, 13 October 1931. ALL RAG papers cited in this article are at the Regional Archives of Ghana, Ho. [Hereafter, RAG/H].

³ Reid, *History of Modern Africa*, pp. 177-178. See also Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: the Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 21; Erik and Jonathan, *Africa in World History*, p. 289.

rule' which was justified partly in terms of its lower costs to the British taxpayer, and partly in terms of the need for African societies to pass through 'transitional

phases' of social and political development which would make selective use of 'tradition' under tutelage. In this respect, Native Authority became an important feature of the policy of indirect rule.

This article focuses on Ewedome because the region makes a particularly interesting case study. In the era of the slave trade in West Africa, Europeans called the region between the Volta and the Bight of Benin the Slave Coast, and Ewedome formed part of its hinterland.⁴ The Danish were the first Europeans to have contact with Ewedome, and in the early eighteenth century, they gave the name Krepil to the area occupied by the northern Ewes. By the nineteenth century, the area began to appear in European sources as Krepil or Crepee.⁵ But the name 'Krepil' was unsatisfactory because it was a Danish corruption of the name Peki. Peki was arguably the most influential political unit in this region, but Krepiland was more than just the state of Peki, the exact delimitation of which historians find difficult.⁶ The Ewe-speaking people call the area occupied by the northern Ewe 'Ewedome', which is more accurate if one wants to focus on the northern Ewe.

Ewedome was ethnically and linguistically diverse, and was a true 'frontier' or 'refuge' region throughout the pre-colonial period. Although the Ewe were the dominant ethnic group, the area had a large number of Guans and so-called Togo remnant groups. The area was first colonised by the Germans, and thus the local inhabitants did not think only in terms of the models of rule that the British put in front of them, and the British were not working with a blank sheet of paper. For these reasons, coupled with the peculiar status of the region as a League of Nations Mandate, developments in Ewedome and responses to British political initiatives were rather different from those of the Gold Coast, and without a decent understanding of this it is difficult for scholars to analyse properly the nature of decolonisation and the postcolonial state in this 'fringe' of modern-day Ghana.

Ewedome in 1932

When Britain took over the administration of Ewedome region, following the expulsion of the Germans, there was a conspicuous absence of 'big chiefs' as compared to much of the Gold Coast.⁷ The grant of a tribunal to every chief and sub-chief by the Germans exacerbated the problem.⁸ The net result was a multiplicity of divisions with a stupendous number of tribunals: 243 were counted

⁴ Robin Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa 1550-1750: The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on an African Society* (Oxford, 1991), p. 14.

⁵ G. E. Metcalf, *Great Britain and Ghana: Documents of Ghana History, 1870-1957* (London, 1964), p. 441.

⁶ Law's description of Krepiland includes Anlo and the coastal town of Keta. Akyeamong refers to Krepil as the 'northern Eweland'. See Law, *Slave Coast*, pp. 14-15; Emmanuel Akyeamong, *Between the Lagoon and the Sea: An Eco-Social History of the Anlo of Southeastern Ghana, c. 1850 to Recent Times* (Athens, OH, 2001), p. 41.

⁷ RAG/H RAO 134/2, Statement by Governor A. Ransford Slater to the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission, October 1928; NA CO 746/7, Annual Report to the Permanent Mandate Commission, 24-25 October 1938. All CO papers cited in this article are at the National Archives, Kew, London. [Hereafter, NA CO].

⁸ Any head of family who had left the parent village and founded a new one was allowed by the Germans to style himself a sub-chief. See NA CO 746/7, Annual Report to the Permanent Mandate Commission, 24-25 October 1938.

in 1920.⁹ Admittedly, it was impossible to give every head chief of every division in Ewedome the same powers as were given to a paramount chief in the Gold Coast. Consequently, a special Native Administration (Southern Section of British Togoland) Ordinance of 1932 was passed.¹⁰ This replaced the 1924 ordinance which had allowed the continued application of the German system of direct rule in the territory. Specifically, the ordinance provided for the appointment of Native Authorities (NAs) and prescribed their powers and duties. Divisional and state councils were to be constituted, as well as native tribunals with well-defined powers and jurisdiction. These councils would then complement efforts by the colonial government in matters such as the administration of justice in the territory. The ordinance sought to place the native administration of southern Togoland on a proper statutory basis, analogous to that which had been provided in other territories such as Tanganyika, the Gold Coast and Nigeria.

If the British colonial government was to be successful in implementing the 1932 ordinance in Ewedome in tune with the dictates of indirect rule and local government, then she had to commit fully to restructuring the fragmented region. This would culminate in the creation of large states with 'big chiefs' comparable to paramount chiefs in the Gold Coast. Large political units, it was envisaged, might be able to direct a well-defined policy for the mutual benefit of all divisions in the territory. In addition, as Hailey pointed out, amalgamation of small chiefdoms was to create states of sufficient size and population to allow for the establishment of local government on a proper basis.¹¹ By the provisions of the ordinance, the term 'state', which hitherto applied loosely to all divisions, could no longer be used. The British government insisted that the term 'state' could only be applied to amalgamated areas. Therefore, states that had existed prior to amalgamation in Ewedome were designated as divisions, and their divisions became sub-divisions.

One of the benefits of amalgamation was that the paramount chief's tribunal was given greater powers to hear cases which hitherto went to the District Commissioner. Treasuries were also to be established so that the NAs would be empowered to act as agents of development in the provision of such facilities as clinics, schools and roads. Since the increased powers would be given to amalgamated divisions, it followed that those divisions which did not amalgamate would lose whatever powers they already had.¹² Divisions which agreed to amalgamate were given a British flag, not only to commemorate their amalgamation but also to serve as a symbol of authority.¹³

By 1932, it became obvious that the colonial government had envisaged the creation of three amalgamated states in Ewedome. Captain C. C. Lilley, the architect of the policy of amalgamation in the southern section of British Togoland, was said to have gone through the German archives and discovered a German document which had pencilled Awatime, Ho, Kpando, Hohoe and Buen chiefs as the seniors in the southern section of British Togoland.¹⁴ Hohoe was, however, less significant in the pre-colonial history of Ewedome and did not feature prominently in the early research conducted by colonial officials. It was in the 1920s that Hohoe assumed significant importance in Ewedome because of its position as a cocoa marketing centre, though the

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ PRAAD/A ADM39/1/559, Native Administration Ordinance to Togoland, Case No.2/35/31, 1932. ALL PRAAD/A papers cited in this article are at the Public Records and Archives Administration, Accra. Ghana. [Hereafter, PRAAD/A].

¹¹ Lord Hailey, *An African Survey: A Study of Problems Arising in Africa South of the Sahara* (London, 1938), p. 479.

¹² PRAAD/A ADM39/1/25, Amalgamation of Divisions, 23 October 1931.

¹³ PRAAD/A ADM39/1/216, Ho-Kpando District Affairs, Case No. 154/32, Petition by Togbe Delume III, 14 July 1932.

¹⁴ It is important to note that Buem which lies north of Ewedome was not originally an Ewe-speaking area, although it was increasingly populated by Ewe-speaking migrant farmers in the inter-war period.

cocoa did not come from Hohoe itself.¹⁵ Therefore the focus was on Awatime, Asogli (Ho) and Akpini (Kpando) as the seats of the amalgamated states (NAs). In the words of Debrunner, 'the kings of Ho, and Kpando had distinguished themselves particularly in the resistance against Asante and now exercised a kind of leadership based on the reputation they had won'.¹⁶ Awatime, though a small state, also wielded a lot of political influence in the nineteenth century.¹⁷ Therefore, a clear picture had emerged in by the 1920s as to how many NAs should be created in Ewedome.

Reactions to the Political Reorganisation

Criticism of the 1932 ordinance in the Gold Coast press was severe.¹⁸ A government report quoted the press as having regarded the ordinance as a sinister move to impose direct taxation using chiefs.¹⁹ Section 3 of the ordinance, which gave the Governor power to constitute any administrative area or appoint any chief, was subjected to the most severe attack. The contention was that the ordinance gave the colonial government unfettered powers to control the NAs. Specific reference was made to the provision allowing the governor to regulate orders issued or issuable by the NAs, which in the view of the press would reduce chiefs to the status of government appointees.²⁰ Even among the colonial administrative officers, there was some scepticism. De Hart, the acting Attorney General, questioned the feasibility of introducing such a highly complex and technical legislative instrument in a territory composed largely of an illiterate population.²¹ Arguably, it was one thing being successful, as a chief, in exercising jurisdiction and administering justice under native custom, but it was quite another making written bye-laws in accordance with the tenets of an ordinance whose language and technicality a chief could not comprehend. In Ewedome itself, protest against the policy was spontaneous, particularly from divisions that were to amalgamate with the so-called Paramount Chiefs. Mass meetings were held throughout the smaller divisions to elicit the views of the people regarding the ordinance, after which 23 *Fiagawo* and *Fiawo* met to petition the Secretary of State for the Colonies.²² They called for the withdrawal of the ordinance.²³

The real difficulty was that the authority of some chiefs was seen to be enhanced, while others feared that their status was being reduced.²⁴ Opponents of the policy further argued that the subordination of a stool's territorial independence was not needed to achieve the political and

¹⁵ The point is also made in Paul Nugent, *Smugglers, Secessionists and Loyal Citizens on the Ghana-Togo Frontier: The Lie of the Borderlands since 1914* (Athens, OH, 2002), p. 53.

¹⁶ Hans W. Debrunner, *A Church between Colonial Powers* (London, 1965), p. 19. It is important to note that Debrunner's work was based on oral traditions that he collected in the territory from 1959-1960. Asante (often spelt in colonial documents as 'Ashanti') was one of the powerful Akan kingdoms that emerged in the forest zone in the pre-colonial era. It invaded the area east of the Volta River (including Ewedome) in 1869.

¹⁷ Lynne Brydon, 'Constructing Awatime: Question of Identity in a West African Polity, c. 1690s to the Twentieth Century', *Journal of African History*, 49 (2008), pp. 23-42.

¹⁸ NA CO 96/705/8, Report on an Ordinance of the British Sphere of Togoland (Southern Section), Amendment Ordinance 1932, 29 June 1932.

¹⁹ Section 36 of the ordinance proposed the introduction of a Native Revenue Administration Ordinance.

²⁰ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/653, Acting Attorney General's Report, 1932.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² PRO CO 96/705/8, Petition from *Fiawo*, 25 September 1932. *Fiagawo* is an Ewe word for 'Paramount Chiefs', whereas *Fiawo* means 'chiefs'.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Togoland Native Administration Ordinance, 1932. Sections 19 and 41.

administrative reconstruction of the territory.²⁵ It was contended by the divisional chiefs, sometimes referred to as 'smaller chiefs', that the position of the paramount chief of a state should be that of *primus inter pares*.²⁶ Another contention of the smaller divisions was that the definitions of terms such as 'sub-Divisional Chief', 'Paramount Chief', and 'State', as well as the interpretations of those terms in the text of the ordinance, implied and postulated subordination of one independent stool or division to another stool or division. For example, there was some confusion with regard to the definition of the term 'Paramount Chief' and *Fiaga*.²⁷ *Fiaga*, which is the Ewe equivalent of an Akan 'Paramount Chief' or *Omanhene*, had existed in the region long before amalgamation. The differences were that the territorial area of jurisdiction of the *Fiaga* was relatively small and the stool of a paramount chief (*omanhene*) in the Akan areas owned lands, whereas in the Ewedome area most land was family-owned. Again, 'a state' in the traditional sense referred to a *duko* in Ewedome. However, as we observed earlier, so far as the ordinance was recognised, 'a state' was a number of *duko* (pl. *dukowo*) coming together and owing allegiances to one central paramount authority. This obvious problem of terminology persisted throughout the period of NAs and constituted a major source of disagreement well into the post-independence period.

Similar to the concern raised by the Gold Coast press, the divisional chiefs objected to the provision which gave the Governor the power to appoint and dismiss NAs and to prescribe their powers.²⁸ The government noted that the purpose of this particular provision was to define the executive functions of the NAs. Another ground of protest was the fact that the tribunals established under the ordinance would be subject to the supervision of administrative officers, and liable to supervision if they were found to have abused their powers or to be incapable of administering justice impartially.²⁹ The fact that the NAs were new and were required to administer a complex legal regime made supervision necessary. The lack of such supervision in the Gold Coast Colony accounted for the growing unpopularity of the 1927 Native Administration Ordinance among the people of Ewedome.³⁰ A close examination of the ordinance, however, shows that the chiefs generally had greater freedom and power in exercising their judicial functions under the 1932 ordinance than they had had under the Germans. In the German period, no authority was conferred on chiefs to enforce judgement; such enforcements were permissible only with the approval of a political officer who had absolute discretion in the matter.³¹ The 1932 ordinance, on the other hand, vested the power to enforce judgement in the chiefs. This enhanced the status of the chiefs by substituting the right of effective jurisdiction for the arbitration powers which they had possessed under the Germans.³² However, this was not enough to placate the divisional chiefs, who were determined to hold their own against the policy.

²⁵A similar situation occurred amongst the Ga people of Accra when the Native Authority Ordinance of 1927 was introduced. See John Parker, *Making the Town: Ga State and Society in Early Colonial Accra* (Portsmouth, NH, 2000), p. 227. A 'stool' is a symbol of authority of a *Fia* or *Fiaga* (a 'chief' or a 'paramount chief').

²⁶The main argument against the policy of amalgamation was that the position of paramount chief was not made rotational. See Katharine Alexandria Collier, 'Ablode: Networks, Ideas and Performance in Togoland Politics, 1950-2001' PhD Thesis (University of Birmingham, 2002), p. 24; Nugent, *Smugglers*, pp.126-146.

²⁷Report of Agyeman-Badu Committee of Enquiry into Chieftaincy Affairs in the Volta Region, 5 December, 1973.

²⁸Togoland Native Administration Ordinance, 1932.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰PRO CO 96/705/8, Petition, 25 September 1932.

³¹CO 724/2, Annual Report on British Togoland 1920-21, p. 21.

³²*Ibid.* Part IV.

Another source of protest was in relation to section 32(2) of the 1932 ordinance, part of which read:

‘Any native proved to be in possession of stool property who, after being ordered by the state council to deliver up the stool property, fails to do so shall be guilty of an offence, and shall, on conviction by a State Council, on which the necessary jurisdiction is hereby conferred, be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for any term not exceeding six months...and the one would be ordered to deliver the said property within one month from the date of such order and on failure to comply with such order his private property may be attached and sold to recover such value.’³³

On the face of it, this clause looked innocuous, but an understanding of the events which informed its insertion explains why it generated so much indignation. From the beginning of British control over the area, the institution of chieftaincy began to witness a gradual change towards greater authority and power. This was in sharp contrast to the German period when the institution was not altogether an enviable one, so people did not see the need to contest the stools. The coming of the British triggered an increase in chieftaincy disputes.³⁴ In some cases, people hid stool property in order to prevent the enstoolment of a chief whose selection they had opposed.

A typical example was in Ho-Dome, where a dispute arose in 1930 regarding the right of succession to the stool. The stoolfather (*Zikpuitor*), being dissatisfied with the decision of the elders, hid the stool.³⁵ When all efforts to locate the stool proved futile, a new stool had to be consecrated for the newly elected chief.³⁶ A similar incident occurred at Kpedze in 1932 where the original stool was removed by those who had custody of it because they objected to the chief elected.³⁷ This trend provided the basis for the necessity of inserting section 32(2) into the ordinance. It was the intention of the British government not to interfere in any way with the choice of a chief, if the choice was unanimous. At the same time, when there was a considerable dissension among the divisions as to who to elect as a chief, the government was bound to intervene to some extent, in the interest of law and order. Aside from protests emanating from the provisions of the ordinance, the ‘smaller chiefs’ took strong exception to the principles that were to govern the formation of large states. One such principle was that government would not give legal recognition to the amalgamation of a division with a state, unless the said division was unanimously in favour of amalgamation.³⁸ To achieve unanimity on the issue of amalgamation in

³³ The Native Administration (Southern Section) Ordinance of 1932, p. 13.

³⁴ PRAAD/A ADM39/1/285, Amalgamation of Divisions, Case no. 2184/32, Chieftaincy Dispute in Alavanyo, 1944.

³⁵ The Stoolfather or *Zipkuitor* is the head of the family which produces the chief and he is the custodian of the stool. The proximity of the stoolfather to the stool made him a very powerful person in the chieftaincy set-up. See Michael Verdom, *The Abutia Ewe of West Africa: A Chiefdom that never was* (Berlin, 1983), p. 92.

³⁶ See detail of this incident in PRAAD/A ADM39/1/281, The Asorgli State, Case no. 194/1932.

³⁷ PRO CO 96/705/8, Togoland Native Administration Ordinance, 1932, Official Government Despatch, No. 867, 8 December, 1932.

³⁸ PRAAD/A ADM39/1/338, Amalgamation of Chiefs, 13 July 1946; RAG/H RAO 0014, Confidential Correspondence, Appendix B. Unamalgamated Divisions, 8 September 1932. Detail about the commonalities in the amalgamation ceremonies is found in Benjamin N. Lawrance, ‘Bankoe v. Dome: Traditions and Petitions in the Ho-Asogli Amalgamation, British Mandated Togoland, 1919-39’, *Journal of African History*, 46 (2005), pp. 243-267.

Ewedome proved to be very difficult because many of the divisions were disturbed by internal strife emanating from the policy. Factions emerged within divisions as a result of struggles for political power. There were also disagreements over which particular state the divisions should amalgamate with.³⁹ In 1931, for instance, the chief of Goviefe, Sasraku VII, petitioned Captain Lilley against the decision of the chief of Woadze to amalgamate with Dagadu of Kpando. Sasraku, who claimed to be the paramount chief over Have and Woadze divisions, wanted all divisions under him to amalgamate with the Ve territorial area.⁴⁰ The decision of the chief of Woadze to go contrary to the wish of the chief of Goviefe generated tension between the two divisions.

Similarly, in 1932, the chiefs, elders and people of the various divisions of Wli state sent a petition to Lilley at Kpando in which they expressed their objection to the decision of their paramount chief to amalgamate with Gbi (Hohoe). The people of Wli claimed that traditionally, they had had a long relationship with Dagadu of Kpando, and that it was their wish to amalgamate with Akpini state under the paramountcy of Dagadu. They went further, destooling their paramount chief and enstooling another person. This generated chieftaincy disputes in Wli traditional area.⁴¹ In the same vein, the paramount chief of Ve was destooled in 1932 for amalgamating with Dagadu, because some divisions in Ve objected to amalgamation with Kpando.⁴² Again, the decision of the paramount chief of Adaklu to amalgamate with Ho instead of Peki created tension between the paramount chief of Adaklu and his subjects. In Aveme area, while some of the citizens cited proximity as one of the reasons why they preferred to join Kpando (Akpini), others objected. Those who opposed the idea made reference to a land dispute between Kpando and Aveme which led to conflict between the two states in 1926.⁴³ In addition, some divisions had chieftaincy disputes which made unanimity unachievable. A typical example was Asogli state. Chieftaincy disputes in Ho division had their origins in 1930, when Lilley made Howusu, the sub-divisional chief of Ho Dome, the paramount chief of Asorgli state. Consequently, Togbe Afede of Ho-Bankoe lost his position as the head chief of Ho division from 1930 to 1958.⁴⁴ Howusu himself had serious problems when he was enstooled in May 1930. The stoolfather refused to give him the stool because he did not recognise Howusu's right to be a chief. Consequently, a new stool had to be made for Howusu.⁴⁵ It therefore came as no surprise when, in October 1930, thirteen head chiefs agreed at a meeting in Tanyigbe to elect Togbe Afede as their paramount chief of Asorgli state, in defiance of Lilley's directive.⁴⁶ The Ho incident became one of the contentious issues which made amalgamation of other divisions with Asogli a source of great resentment.

Protests against the use of Oaths

One principle which generated great controversy and protest was that 'amalgamation was recognised only if native custom of a particularly binding nature had been performed by the

³⁹ RAG/H No. 48/21, Address by Captain Lilley to the Chiefs of Ho Division, 28 October, 1931.

⁴⁰ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/338 Amalgamation of Chiefs, 13 July 1932.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² PRAAD/A ADM39/1/338, Amalgamation of Chiefs, 13 July 1946.

⁴³ PRAAD/A ADM, Amalgamation of Divisions, Aveme Native Affairs, 1937.

⁴⁴ In 1958, following the findings of a Commission of inquiry into the dispute, the paramountcy was given back to Ho-Bankoe and Afede has since been the head of Asogli State. See Inquiry into the Chieftaincy Dispute in Ho in 1958. For details on the origin of the dispute, see PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/456, Quarterly Reports, Ho District. This incident was also recounted in Barbara J. Callaway, 'Local Politics in Ho and Aba', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 14 (1970), pp. 121-144.

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/025, Report on the Ordinance of 1932, 17 May 1932.

divisions concerned.⁴⁷ Before the advent of colonialism, no customary observance of a binding nature had ever existed among the various independent divisions. It was not a common practice for any chief within a 'state' (*duko*) to contemplate performing a custom that would bind him and his town or the whole 'state' to a chief of another division. However, considering the importance which the inhabitants attached to oaths, the colonial officials found it expedient to use them as an important instrument for forming and cementing large states for the purpose of local government.

Generally, there were two types of oaths among the Ewes: the chief's oath and the so-called fetish oath.⁴⁸ In this article, the focus will be on the chief's oath, discussion of which will illuminate why the use of oaths to enforce amalgamation became highly contentious. A chief's oath can be described as an act of making reference to a disaster or tragedy that befell a particular ethnic group, state, town or even a chief. The disaster could take the form of a defeat in war or the tragic death of a chief, either through a strange illness or through assassination. In most cases, the day on which the disaster occurred became a taboo. A chief's oath could also originate from the ritual performances involved in instituting a stool. A stool could therefore have one or more oaths.⁴⁹ Any reference made to those disasters was tantamount to swearing an oath which had very serious implications for the one who swore the oath, the state, and the chief whose oath was sworn. In the traditional Ewe worldview, veneration of ancestral spirits was essential. The power and respect that every chief enjoyed among his people was due largely to the fact that the chief occupied the stool which housed the ancestral spirits. Swearing a chief's oath was therefore a very serious matter because it had the potential to evoke the wrath of the spirits of the ancestor(s) involved in the said disaster. Therefore, the swearing of the oath would bring supernatural sanctions down upon the head of either the individual who swore it or the individual against whom it was sworn, depending on the outcome of the dispute.

In very dire circumstances, people could resort to the oath in order to save their lives, institute an action or prove their innocence. For example, if someone had been wronged, or someone accused someone else of an offence, then swearing of an oath underlined the seriousness of the accusation, forcing the accused to respond (often by swearing their own oath) or to concede their guilt. Thus, if anybody who was accused of a crime said, '*meka Hoawo fe fie* (literally meaning 'I swear by the evening of Ho'), or '*meka Dagadu fe Kwasida*' ('I swear by Dagadu's Sunday'), 'he/she was making a very solemn declaration of his/her innocence'.⁵⁰ The chief whose oath was sworn was then obliged to investigate the allegation. In the same vein, if two people were involved in a quarrel and one of them felt his or her life was in danger, he or she could swear the oath of any stool.⁵¹ Once the oath was sworn, the quarrel had to stop immediately because the swearing of oath introduced a new dimension into the dispute; the matter at stake ceased to be a mere quarrel between the two individuals, and instead, it assumed importance at the state level. Both parties had to present themselves to the chief whose oath was sworn for the matter to be investigated.

A chief could also swear an oath for two main reasons. First, he could use the oath of his stool as an instrument of enforcing his orders, which under normal circumstances could be

⁴⁷ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/545, Memorandum on Amalgamation in British Togoland.

⁴⁸ The word 'fetish' is a complex word, incorporated into the local usage from the Portuguese word *feitico* and commonly used to refer to anything to do with the African spiritual realm, but still retaining problematic and sometimes derogatory overtones.

⁴⁹ C. K. Welman, *The Native States of the Gold Coast: History and Constitution Part 1 Peki* (London, 1924), p. 49.

⁵⁰ Ibid. The evening of Ho refers to the eve of Asante invasion of Ho in 1869 and Dagadu's Sunday is in reference to the day Dagadu III lost his two sons in a blazing fire.

⁵¹ People could swear the oath of a stool outside their town if they felt that they would not get a fair hearing in their own town or if they had any reason to believe that the oath in their town was not potent enough.

disobeyed by his subjects. Second, a chief could swear an oath pledging his allegiance to his superior chief. This happened particularly within a *duko*, where sub-chiefs in charge of villages swore an oath of allegiance to the chief of their parent settlement. The senior chief would reciprocate by swearing his own oath to affirm his commitment to protecting the subordinate chief. In such cases, the swearing of the oath was preceded with elaborate ritual performances. Chiefs could not swear an oath without holding and stretching out the 'oath-sword' (*atamkayi*), the most visible symbol of the authority of a chief.⁵² The swearing of an oath of allegiance by Delume, the paramount chief of Ve, to Dagadu IV, the paramount chief of Kpando, to mark the entry of Ve into the amalgamated Akpini state vividly illustrates the seriousness attached to a chief's oath and its relevance in cementing the formation of large states in Ewedome. On 24 July 1946, after Delume had failed to form his own amalgamated state, he finally decided to join Akpini state.⁵³ Before Delume swore Dagadu's oath to pledge his allegiance, a sheep was slaughtered and Delume dipped his left foot and his linguist stick into the blood of the sheep. This ritual signified the admission of Delume into Akpini state. Both chiefs then drank palm wine from the same calabash as a sign of unity. Dagadu then dipped his finger into the blood of the sheep and touched the tongue of Delume with the blood. The significance of the ritual was that it reminded Delume of the need to remain truthful. It was also meant to serve as a seal of the whole transaction. Delume then held the 'oath-sword' in his hand, stretched it towards Dagadu and proceeded to swear the oath of allegiance thus: 'If Dagadu called me either by day or night and I failed to respond to his duties or I disobeyed him, then I shall be guilty of Dagadu's Sunday (*Dagadu fe Kwasida*)'.⁵⁴ Dagadu also got up, took the 'oath-sword' and assured Delume of his resolve to protect Ve traditional area at all times.⁵⁵

By swearing the oath of Dagadu, Delume was in fact subordinating himself, all stools in Ve area, and the people of Ve to Dagadu and his stool. Thenceforth, the people of Ve had to do the bidding of Dagadu. While there was nothing in the Native Administration 1932 ordinance by which the territorial rights of a particular stool were conveyed to another stool, the swearing of oaths of allegiance and the rituals associated with it tended to subordinate one stool to the other. The swearing of an oath, together with the definition of 'state' as contained in the ordinance, sought to confer on the so-called big chiefs greater powers of *principe principium* over 'smaller chiefs'. In the traditional sense, such greater powers could only be exercised by the 'big chiefs' if they had acquired the territories of the smaller divisions, either by right of conquest or through cessation. Therefore, the explanations given by Lilley and other administrative officers - that the oath of allegiance conferred no right on the paramount chiefs of amalgamated states over the lands of the stools subordinated to them - was difficult for the smaller chiefs to fathom.⁵⁶

The Government Reaction to the Protests

It became apparent that amalgamation was not going to be achieved easily, and that the government could not rely on the goodwill of the people to achieve total amalgamation. Although by 1932 the government was able to start creating the three amalgamated states it had envisaged for Ewedome (Akpini, Awatime and Asorgli), total amalgamation was some way off. There were still fourteen divisions in Ewedome which refused to join any of those states. The total population

⁵² The stool itself was not to be seen in public. In fact, in some localities, even chiefs were not allowed to see the stool.

⁵³ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/338, Amalgamation of Chiefs, 13 July 1946.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

of unamalgamated states at the time was 32,534.⁵⁷ Lilley expressed his frustration in 1936 when he said 'I have been preaching this doctrine of amalgamation for some years and it was just two years ago that my preaching met with some success.'⁵⁸ Meanwhile, the delay in the full implementation of the policy slowed down the development of the territory. In 1937, for example, the colonial government was accused of doing little to improve amenities in the Togoland mandated area.⁵⁹ It was reported that it took almost as long to get a reply from Ho to a letter posted at Accra as it did to get one despatched to London.⁶⁰ Kpando had no telegraphic or telephonic communications with the outside world. Mails were sent from Accra to Ho and Kpando through Adidome, an Ewe town in Gold Coast Colony, by runners on foot.⁶¹ There was no hospital in the area.⁶² The plan was that, when established, the NAs could be empowered to begin addressing the developmental needs of the territory.

Initially, the government decided to go ahead with the implementation of the policy despite the protests, with the view that its implementation would alleviate the disquiet among the chiefs and those who had already agreed to amalgamate. Meanwhile, the policy received support from the members of the Permanent Mandate Commission.⁶³ But as protests against the policy grew, the government was forced to re-examine the ordinance and the principles under which amalgamation was to proceed. This led to the postponement of the formal application of the ordinance from July to October 1932.⁶⁴ There seems to be a clear case of misunderstanding of some terms in the ordinance itself, owing largely to language limitations. Linguistic difficulties had always been a problem for colonial officials in the region. Often, one came across many shades and gradations of the English language which had no exact counterpart in the local language, as in the people's conception of 'state' as against its interpretation in the ordinance. This created some confusion amongst the inhabitants.⁶⁵ It was also realised that mere persuasion was not enough to achieve total amalgamation in Ewedome.⁶⁶ This was not due to any weakness in the persuasive power of the administrative officers. Rather, it was partly as a result of the extraordinarily fierce local patriotism. It was clear that the divisions were resolutely protective of their age-old loyalties and were not in the mood to brook any interference in their domestic affairs. Some degree of coercion was necessary if the policy of creating large states was to be effective.

As a first step, an amendment to the ordinance was effected in 1936. One of the key issues in the amendment was the enforcement of amalgamation, aimed at forcing 'stubborn' divisions to amalgamate.⁶⁷ It gave a further boost to the power of the chiefs by making it possible to arrest anybody who refused a directive to appear before a NA, Provincial Commissioner or Administrative Officer.⁶⁸ In addition, unanimity would no longer be required before giving legal recognition to

⁵⁷ Figure computed from the 1931 census.

⁵⁸ RAG/H, Address by Captain C. C. Lilley to the people of Takla, 23 October, 1936.

⁵⁹ *The West African Review*, 120 (September, 1937), p. 39.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ CO 724/2, Annual Report on British Togoland 1920-21, p.33.

⁶² *The West African Review*, 120 (September 1937), p. 39

⁶³ See PRO CO 96/705/8, Notes on the petition from Natural Rulers Society. 25 September 1932.

⁶⁴ PRO CO 96/705/8, From the Acting Governor of the Gold Coast to Secretary of State of the Colonies, 8 November, 1932.

⁶⁵ RAG/H RAO 755/155/124, Dispatch from the DC, Kpando to the Commissioner of the Eastern Province, Koforidua, 1932.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ PRO CO 96/728/9, Togoland Native Administration Legislation, Amendment to 1932 Ordinance, 22 August 1936; RAG/H, Supplement to the Gold Coast Government Gazette, 10 July 1936. (Not Filed).

⁶⁸ PRO CO 96/728/9, Togoland Native Administration Legislation. Amendment to 1932 Ordinance, 22 August 1936.

amalgamated states. Once there was a definite majority in support of amalgamation in a division, the process could go on. This particular amendment proved quite successful, as it lessened the tension on divisions where the people were divided on the issue of which particular state they should join. We observed that some divisions were unable to amalgamate because a minority was apparently opposed to the policy.⁶⁹ Consequently, Aveme was allowed to join Akpini state in 1941 although only two-thirds of the population were clearly in favour.⁷⁰ Also as a result of this new directive, only ten divisions remained unamalgamated by 1941.

In 1936, divisions which refused to amalgamate were debarred from exercising jurisdiction over their own subjects by means of a tribunal, until those divisions became members of a state. Cases that arose in those divisions had to be sent directly to the District Commissioner.⁷¹ From the traditional point of view, judicial power was the basis for efficient government. Therefore, the decision by the administrative officials to prevent unamalgamated states from exercising legal jurisdiction over their subjects was found to be an effective means of bringing 'recalcitrant' divisions to heel. Indeed, Taviefe finally succumbed to amalgamating with Asorgli state in 1941 as a result of this directive.⁷² Similarly, Adaklu, which refused to amalgamate with Ho, was forced to join Asorgli state in 1945 for want of a tribunal.⁷³

Apart from the grant of tribunals, colonial officers also resorted to the use of resource allocation as an instrument to coerce divisions to amalgamate. For instance, divisions such as Anfoega, Gbi, Have, Kpedze, Tsrukpe and Ve which refused to amalgamate were denied the supply of gun-powder and social amenities such as water, clinics and grants for education.⁷⁴ Another case in point was the decision taken by Lilley in 1935 to stop the construction of a bridge between Have and Vakpo.⁷⁵ This was in reaction to Have's refusal to amalgamate with Kpando. The bridge was to be built across River Dayi, but when the people of Have insisted that they would not join Kpando to form Akpini state because of a long standing dispute between the two states, Lilley called for work on the bridge to stop. All materials were removed from the site. However, the construction of the bridge was of utmost importance to the people of Have. Thus, they had no choice other than to amalgamate with Kpando (Akpini).⁷⁶

Formation of Atando State

In 1938, Abutia, Adaklu, Anfoega, Gbi, Goviefe, Tsrukpe and Ve, together with non-Ewe states such as Likpe, Nkonya and Santrokofi, formed what they called the Natural Rulers' Society (NRS). This group had its origins in a meeting in 1932 of 25 divisions protesting against the ordinance. Since then, the number had dwindled in size to ten, following the amendment of the ordinance in 1936. The NRS intensified their protest from 1936, in apparent reaction to the decision by the colonial officers to close down tribunals of divisions which had not amalgamated. Another of their objectives was to protest against Lilley's return to the district in 1938.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the group

⁶⁹ RAG/H RAO 221/3, Amalgamation of Chiefs-British Togoland, 1935.

⁷⁰ RAG/H RAO 33/45, Akpini State Affairs, 1933.

⁷¹ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/76, Eastern Province Political Conference, Appendix C, June 1936.

⁷² PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/280, No. 475/2185/32, Agotime Native Affairs, Amalgamation of Taviefe with Asogli State at Agotime Kpetoe, 8 March 1943.

⁷³ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/74, Report on Amalgamation of Divisions, 1945.

⁷⁴ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/662, Joint Welcome Address by the Independent States to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 15 October 1949.

⁷⁵ Ibid. PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/74, Report on Amalgamation of Divisions, 1945

⁷⁶ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/74 Report on Amalgamation of Divisions, 1945.

⁷⁷ Captain Lilley had gone to England for treatment and was due to return to the district in 1938.

was of the view that the provision that paramount chiefs of amalgamated states were to be considered as first among equals was contradictory. As one chief rightly said, 'if someone is going to be first the rest of us are going to be second'.⁷⁸ In 1940, the NRS decided to petition the Acting Commissioner of the Eastern Province, stationed at Dodowa in the Gold Coast Colony. The NRS suggested that a federation with a rotational presidency would uphold the sacred right of self-government, leaving every division perfectly free to regulate its internal affairs, but subject to the constitution of the federation. The amalgamated state, in their view, was 'a completely strange and novel form of political union which was suited for a conquered state'.⁷⁹

In 1941, the Commissioner, apparently despondent about the refusal of some of the smaller states to amalgamate, advocated the breaking up of amalgamated states altogether in the entire southern section of British Togoland. The pessimistic view of the other officials, particularly those working in the territory, was that any act of recognition of a confederation would result in attempts to break up the already established states. The officers therefore insisted it was not in the interests of the colonial government to show any sign of weakness in administering the mandated territory. Conceding to the NRS' proposal would negate the government's intention of fostering state consciousness among the Ewe states. Worse still, the proposal by the NRS for a confederacy instead of a centralised state would mean that the divisions which would form the confederacy would have a constitution fundamentally different from other states in the southern section of British Togoland. Two problems confronted the officers: firstly, how to protect the newly formed states from breaking up, and secondly, how to deal with the unamalgamated divisions. There were two options that the officers could explore. First, they could wait with the hope that the unamalgamated divisions would change their mind and join one of the states. In this way, the officers would not be forced into making any changes to the policy towards any particular group of divisions within the same territory. Besides, if the three existing states proved to be viable NAs which delivered material benefits to the people, they might have an impact on the attitude of the diehards. The obvious disadvantage of this option was the likelihood that the officers would wait in vain.

Second, the officers could allow the unamalgamated divisions to form a state of their own, in default of a better solution. This second option was a difficult one, in view of the differences that existed among the members of the NRS. The group was heterogeneous, with different laws, customs and languages, which made any attempt at affecting a sympathetic union between them a difficult proposition. It did not look likely that the non-Ewe states in the NRS, such as Nkonya, Santrokofi and Likpe, would want to cooperate with Ve, Gbi, and Anfoega. Even among the Ewe states, Ve wanted to be seat of such a state, something Gbi and Anfoega opposed. Anfoega was situated very close to Kpando but it refused to join Akpini state because Dagadu II had orchestrated the German attack on Anfoega in 1894.⁸⁰ Anfoega also felt that by virtue of its contribution to the British war effort in 1914, its head chief should be considered as a paramount chief. Eventually, the officers decided to go with the first option and concentrate their energies on improving the workings of the already established NAs. The independent divisions were left on their own. Their chiefs had certain duties as NAs but they did not have legal means of exerting their authority, because their tribunals were closed down. All civil and criminal cases emanating from those divisions had to go to the Magistrates' courts at Ho or Kpando. The situation remained unchanged

⁷⁸ RAG/H RAO 048/ 20, Native Affairs, Ho District, 25 September 1932.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ For details on the German attack on Anfoega, see David Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry and Krepi Politics', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 15 (1974), pp. 201-216.

until 1949, when the government agreed to allow Ve, Gbi, Likpe and Santrokofi to form Atando Native Authority. The hope was that Anfoega would also change its mind and join the new state.⁸¹

The irregular Atando NA was therefore a confederacy in its structure and operations. The members rejected the term 'paramount chief.' No division was made to swear allegiance to any other division. Instead, they elected a president among themselves to preside over the state. The president had no suzerain power except that of *primus inter pares*.⁸² In this case, there was no subordination of one division to another. The president would hold office for three years, after which he would be eligible for re-election. Federal meetings were to be held quarterly, but the president could call an emergency meeting at any place within the federal divisions. The formation of Atando in 1949 finally brought the process of amalgamation in Ewedome to a close.⁸³ It must, however, be noted that total amalgamation was still not achieved because Anfoega division refused to join any of the states right up to when the NAs were abolished in 1951.⁸⁴ Three main factors accounted for the colonial government's decision to recognise Atando state. First, Sir Alan Burns, who took over as governor of the Gold Coast in 1941 was dissatisfied with the policy of amalgamation. In his words 'the policy as regards Native Authorities had gone astray.'⁸⁵ He noted a similarity between institutions among the Ewe and those of Iboland in Nigeria and came to the conclusion that the administrative officers were making the same mistake in Togoland that they had made in Iboland, in trying to impose upon the territory a native administration which was not native to the area. Burns therefore became sympathetic towards the NRS. Second, it was observed that the combined population of Gbi, Likpe, Santrokofi, Ve at the 1931 census was 17,521. This figure was considerably more than the number considered sufficient for Awatime NA to be recognised. There was therefore no need to prevent the above states from forming a NA. Third, the idea of setting up a committee following the 1948 disturbances in the Gold Coast, to investigate into constitutional matters and to make recommendations for implementation, made the pursuit of amalgamation in Ewedome a less important issue in the political scheme of things.

Conclusion

The British officials were sincere in their bid to follow pre-colonial political organization and affiliations in creating NA areas in Ewedome. Their research into the history and ethnography of the region led to a reasonable understanding of local realities. Nevertheless, it became obvious that it was one thing for the chiefdoms to develop loyalties of their own, and quite another to force them to form states with binding legislations that they did not have a hand in formulating. Lentz noted that though the officials were sincere in their attempt to formulate policies based on their knowledge of the societies, 'a gap existed between ethnographic knowledge and colonial practice'.⁸⁶ From the protests against the policy, one is inclined to tender that if the seat of the paramount chief had been rotational, the policy would have met less resistance. Tribunals were

⁸¹ Buem Native Authority in the north of Ewedome was also created under the NAO of 1932, making four NAs in the southern section of British Togoland.

⁸² PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/545, Petition from Independent Divisions to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 19 October, 1945.

⁸³ PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/93, Federation of Divisions in Togoland under UN Trusteeship. Formation of Atando Native Authority, 1947.

⁸⁴ For the intransigence of Anfoega, she was denied government grants throughout the period of the existence of the NAs. See Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 131.

⁸⁵ PRO CO 96/780/4, Native Administration, Allan Burns to G.H. Creasy, 9 December 1944. See also Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 128.

⁸⁶ Carola Lentz, *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana* (Edinburgh, 2006), p. 74.

eagerly sought after by every chief because they enhanced the status and power of chiefs and their elders, not to mention the financial inducement that the tribunals offered. The policy encountered difficulties because the cultural heterogeneity of Ewedome, even among the Ewes, gave rise to conflicting interests and tensions.

Be that as it may, the policy of amalgamation cannot be dismissed as a failure. To this day in Ewedome, as in the whole of the present-day Volta Region of Ghana, amalgamation endures as a viable option. Several divisions amalgamated to operate one divisional (Traditional) council. Despite the problems evinced by the implementation of the policy, the relative success laid the structure for the new local councils that were to follow in 1951, and signified the nature of the British colonial government's contribution to the development of the area. The delay in completing the process was inevitable, for the British administrative officials 'had to lead and the people to follow, often reluctantly'.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ RAG/H, Memorandum on the Administration of the Southern Section of British Togoland, 1946 (Not Filed).

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Thy Will be Done: Divine Directive in Anglo-American Church-State Debates

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Throughout the medieval and early modern period, both church and state institutionalized religious uniformity.¹ In both Europe and America, religious coercion remained the accepted social and political practice as authorities continued to persecute minorities for religious ‘error’ throughout the Western world.² During the next few centuries, many thinkers challenged several cultural, political, theological and epistemological norms. One of the most remarkable cultural transformations during this period was the development of religious freedom. Although Enlightenment thinkers challenged and sometimes changed norms by bringing new ideas into social and political practice, modern philosophers borrowed the medieval and early-modern justification for religious *coercion* and applied it to their arguments for religious *freedom*. A theological imperative that religious and political leaders relied on for centuries to justify continued religious coercion – ‘God wills it’ – became the very tool that modern reformers used to legitimate a philosophy of religious liberty.

This conservative approach allowed a radical idea to assume mainstream form. Although some of the most radical figures during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries called for religious liberty, many failed to attain any significant social or political influence during or after their lives. The main figures of what Jonathan Israel has called the Radical Enlightenment – Baruch Spinoza, Pierre Bayle and Denis Diderot – believed that ‘philosophic reason was the only guide as to what was true and what was false in the universe and therefore the only true and reliable guide in human life’.³ Wanting a universalism that they assumed necessitated a secular epistemology, these men failed to adopt an argument that gained significant popular support because they left little or no room for theological argumentation. Instead, leaders of a more moderate strain of the

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¹ See S. Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250–1550, An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); B. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

² Although the Netherlands and England instituted more liberal policies than elsewhere, coercion remained the accepted social and political policy. On Continental intolerance, see O. Grell and R. Scribner, (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); J. Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670–1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); B. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). For English intolerance, see O. Grell, J. Israel and N. Tyacke, (eds.), *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); J. Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558–1689* (London: Longman, 2000); A. Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500–1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); On American intolerance, see J. Corrigan and L. Neal, (eds.), *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010). For a trans-Atlantic approach, see A. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); P. Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

³ J. Israel, ‘Radical Enlightenment, Mainstream Enlightenment and the World of Today’, (paper presented at Erasmus University Rotterdam, November 8, 2006). See also J. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Enlightenment – John Locke, William Penn and James Madison – who believed that reason was an essential though not totalizing authority, incorporated theology into religious freedom discourse.⁴ As Israel noted, these moderates thought ‘reason [was] good for some things like science, but ruled large parts of reality to be outside the scope of reason – spirituality and the world of divinity above all – and, as an inevitable consequence, ruled that many things must therefore be decided on the basis of tradition, authority, Revelation and theological truth’.⁵ One value that fell into this latter category was religious freedom. Even though the God of those in the Enlightenment tradition differed from Protestant theologians in important ways – the former believed revelation was seen in the natural world, the latter in both the natural world and in His revealed Word – by resting their discourse on a theological truth, mainstream Enlightenment figures counter-intuitively reasoned that religious liberty was a necessary component of true religion, paradoxically making it a divine imperative. Consequently, they helped establish a newfound religious freedom in the modern world.

Religious freedom in the modern sense did not gain much intellectual or social capital until Anglo-American reformers developed theological justifications for it during the early seventeenth century.⁶ Reformers as diverse in politics, religion and philosophy as Martin Luther, William Penn and Thomas Jefferson, used an early modern, theological argument in order to advance a liberal policy of religious freedom. Despite holding different religious beliefs, many advocates of religious liberty agreed on a fundamental point that had its roots in Reformation theology – freedom of conscience was a precondition for the authentic expression of faith necessary to gain salvation.⁷ ‘True religion’, whichever one it might be, therefore required freedom of choice in worship and belief. Borrowing from dogmatists who insisted that God demanded traditional orthodoxy in matters of faith, seventeenth-century radical Protestants as well as eighteenth-century deists consistently invoked the will of God to justify their demands for religious freedom. This idea consequently prohibited coercion and undermined the ‘right way of worship’ that divines like John Cotton and John Donne demanded of their congregants.⁸ It was this theological imperative that allowed John Murton, the co-founder of the Baptist faith in England, to claim in 1615 that ‘persecution for cause of conscience, is against the Doctrine of Jesus Christ’,⁹ and for Jefferson likewise to assert a century and a half later that ‘all attempts to influence’ conscience were a ‘departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion’.¹⁰

Although rationalists complemented this argument with Enlightenment epistemologies, it is important to note that this argument had no equivalent outside of the Protestant tradition. Even liberal Catholics in England and America such as Joseph Berington and John Carroll, who agitated

⁴ H. May, *The Enlightenment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp.11, 48.

⁵ Israel, *Radical Enlightenment, Mainstream Enlightenment, and the World of Today*.

⁶ Although Anglo-Americans first instituted religious liberty politically, the idea goes back perhaps thousands of years. See S. Cobb, *The Rise of Religious Liberty in America: A History* (New York: Noble Offset Printers Inc., 1902), pp.20-22. John Courtney Murray once referred to Thomas Aquinas as the ‘first Whig’ in arguing that the origins of religious liberty are rooted in medieval Catholic political theory. See J.C. Murray, *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960), p.28.

⁷ C. Fatovic, ‘The Anti-Catholic Roots of Liberal and Republican Conceptions of Freedom in English Political Thought’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 66 (1), (January, 2005), p.46.

⁸ See also G. Gillespie, *Wholesome Verity Reconciled with Christianly Liberty* (London, 1644); T. Edwards, *Gangraena* (London, 1646); J. Cotton, *Bloudy Tenent Washed and Made White in the Blood of the Lambe* (London, 1647); S. Rutherford, *A Free Disputation against Pretended Liberty of Conscience* (London, 1649).

⁹ J. Murton and J. Ivimey, *Persecution for Religion Judged and Condemned, First Published in London, in the Year 1615* (London: Wightman and Cramp, 1827), p.73. He continued to argue that it was ‘to fight against God to compel any, contrary to their consciences’.

¹⁰ J. P. Boyd, L. H. Butterfield, C. T. Cullen and J. Catanzariti, (eds.), *Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), p.1:545.

for religious freedom, did so on different terms. Indeed, Catholic thinkers from Aquinas to Michel de Montaigne had argued for religious freedom, but they did not formulate their justifications using the divine imperative. Instead, they made utilitarian arguments to preserve social order. In his essay, 'Of Liberty of Conscience', Montaigne, for example, insisted that religious intolerance in sixteenth-century France led to 'more prejudice to letters than all the flames of the barbarians' combined, which stymied learning and progress. He reasoned that if governments decided 'to give the people the reins to entertain every man his own opinion' in matters of faith, they could 'mollify and appease [the masses] by facility and toleration', thereby promoting social harmony.¹¹ Few Anglo-American Catholics, even by the early nineteenth century, formulated their arguments for religious freedom in theological terms.¹² Catholics who relied on Biblical justification typically argued not that God demanded religious freedom, but that the civil and spiritual worlds were separate.¹³ American Catholics in the United States who helped draft the First Amendment and wrote eloquently on the need for religious freedom like Daniel, Charles and John Carroll, though submerged in the same Protestant and Enlightenment culture, never justified religious liberty in theological terms. Instead, like Montaigne, they insisted that it was a societal good and that "true" religion would emerge only in a free marketplace of ideas.¹⁴ This contrast can be explained in a number of ways, but the most obvious reason is that the Catholic Church was unequivocally opposed to liberty of conscience until the twentieth century. Speaking out on religious freedom was therefore dangerous for Catholics and inconsistent with church doctrine.¹⁵

Few scholars have traced this theological argument which helped establish religious liberty in the West.¹⁶ Rather than highlight reformers' shared emphasis on the divine will of God, church-state historiography has instead separated Enlightenment from religious figures in an attempt to

¹¹ W.C. Hazlett, (ed.), *The Works of Michel de Montaigne* (New York: Edwin C. Hill, 1910), pp.6:129-136.

¹² The lone exception of which I am aware is Mathew Carey, who published over a dozen tracts on religious liberty, and claimed that restrictions on conscience were 'a violation of the will of God'. He also reasoned that 'any attempt to restrain or control the religious opinions or religious practices' of men was 'a direct invasion of the prerogative of the Almighty, and the exercise of a most unwarrantable tyranny over conscience'. M. Carey, 'Immorality of Traffic in Ardent Spirit', *American Temperance Society* (Philadelphia, 1832), p.1; Carey, *A Brief View of the Policy of the Founders of the Colonies of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, West Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and Carolina, as Regards Liberty of Conscience* (Philadelphia, 1828), p.1.

¹³ Following Augustine's *City of God* and the John 18:36 teaching that 'His Kingdom is not of this World', Bishop John Carroll, for example, routinely argued for religious freedom on civil grounds, but stressed the difference between civil and religious toleration. He advised distinguishing 'between *theological* or religious intolerance, which is essential to true religion, and *civil* intolerance'. See T. Hanley, (ed.), *The John Carroll Papers, 1755-1791* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), p.2:121. Emphasis in original.

¹⁴ In colonial Maryland, where the Catholic Lords Baltimore protected religious worship for all Christians, they argued on utilitarian grounds that it would be best for commercial interests and social harmony. See T. Hughes, (ed.), *History of the Society of Jesus in North America: Colonial and Federal, Documents*. (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1907), pp.257-260. For a brief explanation on the Carroll family, see J.R. Stoner, 'Catholic Politics and Religious Liberty in America', in D. Dreisbach, M. Hall and J. Morrison, (eds.), *The Founders on God and Government* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), pp.251-271.

¹⁵ The Papal Bull *Mirari Vos* in 1832 explicitly condemned religious freedom, which made official long-held practice.

¹⁶ Important works that have missed this point include P. Miller, 'The Contribution of the Protestant Churches to Religious Liberty in Colonial America', *Church History*, 4 (1), (March, 1935), pp.56-66; W. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent, 1630-1833: The Baptists and the Separation of Church and State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); T. E. Buckley, *Church and State in Revolutionary Virginia, 1776-1787* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977); J. Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); J.C.D. Clark, *The Language of Liberty, 1660-1832: Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); F. Lambert, *The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West*; C. Beneke, *Beyond Toleration: The Religious Origins of American Pluralism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*.

place credit on either 'side'.¹⁷ During the nineteenth century, historians like George Bancroft argued that the 'establishment of liberty of conscience' was 'the fruit not of philosophy, but of the love of Protestantism for "the open book"'.¹⁸ In a seminal essay that challenged this narrative, Perry Miller argued that during the eighteenth century, deist philosophers began to supplant theologians as the most radical force in American politics. Miller insisted that Protestant churches advocated for religious liberty as a response to 'the towering danger of scientific rationalism and deism'. He concluded that religious liberty developed 'because the leadership was taken by a rational aristocracy, shot through with deistical beliefs, willing to see any number of religions have their freedom because they believed in none of them'.¹⁹

Miller separated Protestant and Enlightenment thinkers, focusing on *who* led the movement for religious freedom instead of *why* they reached their position. Distinguished scholars have followed this path by obscuring the continuity between early modern and modern thought. For example, in his book on the origins of religious liberty in America, Thomas Curry argued that John Leland used his Baptist tradition to reach his liberal position on religious freedom. Curry went on to claim that 'Madison and Jefferson reached much the same conclusions from more secular starting points'.²⁰ Thomas Buckley's work on the struggle for disestablishment in Virginia similarly concluded that each side 'had a distinctive perspective, for while the rationalists emphasized natural rights...the evangelicals stressed the need for man to be free to respond to God's call'.²¹ Modern philosophers like Madison and Jefferson, however, did not 'emphasize natural rights'. In the 3,500 words they published on religious liberty, 'natural rights' appeared only twice. Instead, they repeatedly argued that religious liberty was a divine imperative, just as did their seventeenth-century predecessors. In fact, Jefferson specifically separated 'natural rights' from God-given rights by writing that 'our rulers can have authority over such natural rights only as we have submitted to them. The rights of conscience, [however,] we never submitted, we could not submit. We are answerable for them to our God'.²²

Despite recent contributions to church-state historiography, many scholars have missed how Enlightenment philosophers adopted a theological framework for advancing religious freedom because they have focused on broad theological differences between radical Protestants and rationalist deists. These scholars have been too quick to assume that the gaps between early

¹⁷ For those who separate secular and Enlightenment from religious ideas on this issue, see Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, pp.263-265; Lambert, *The Founding Fathers*, p.3. Regarding Jefferson's Virginia Statute, Butler argued that 'Enlightenment conceptions dominated the words of the act' and it was 'rooted' in 'a secular concept of "citizenry"'. Lambert wrote that, in contradistinction to the Planting Fathers, the 'Founding Fathers had a radically different conception of religious freedom' because they were 'influenced by the Enlightenment'. The secular approach to the eighteenth century was recently lamented in J. Gregory, 'Introduction: Transforming "the Age of Reason" into "an Age of Faiths": or, Putting Religion and Beliefs (Back) into the Eighteenth Century', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 32 (3), (2009), pp.287-305.

¹⁸ G. Bancroft, *History of the United States of America: From the Discovery of the Continent* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1888), p.5:121.

¹⁹ Miller, 'Contribution of the Protestant Churches', pp.62, 59, 64.

²⁰ T. J. Curry, *First Freedoms: Church and State in America to the Passage of the First Amendment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p.219.

²¹ Buckley, *Church and State*, pp.179-180. Despite my criticism here, Curry and Buckley have been among the strongest voices in bringing two otherwise disparate intellectual traditions – radical Protestantism and Enlightenment rationalism – together. For those who make sharp distinctions, see W.L. Miller, *The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic* (New York: Knopf, 1986); R. Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1988); L. Levy, *The Establishment Clause: Religion and the First Amendment* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); I. Kramnick and R. Moore, *The Godless Constitution: The Case against Religious Correctness* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997); P. Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002).

²² T. Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), p.159.

modern and modern ideas in other areas – politics, natural philosophy, commerce, metaphysics, indeed, Christian orthodoxy – applied to religious freedom as well.²³ Rather than abandoning ‘sacred’ in favour of ‘secular’ or ‘Enlightenment’ arguments, successful eighteenth-century Anglo-American reformers seamlessly weaved theological reasoning into their otherwise rationalist discourse.²⁴ In order to break down religious authority, they had to adopt distinctly religious rhetoric.²⁵ Thus the most effective reformers during the latter half of the eighteenth century, like James Madison, were able to synthesize longstanding arguments for religious liberty by incorporating secular, utilitarian, and Enlightenment arguments into a larger theological framework which was itself situated within a larger political context.

Just as important to the divine imperative argument being made here is how that argument fit into the broader geopolitics of the eighteenth century. There were two main reasons why the divine imperative was so appealing to such a diverse group of thinkers. First, it consolidated multiple strains of thought, including Protestant, Enlightenment and radical Whig ideas. Second, it both reflected and helped give shape to a general political trend of making God the guarantor of human rights. It is no coincidence that religious freedom discourse spiked during moments of increased tension in England – the Civil War in the 1640s, the Glorious Revolution and the American Revolution – when individuals were challenging definitions of rights, liberties and citizenship. Precisely because the government was denying individuals certain liberties, reformers argued that freedom of conscience, assembly, press, speech, etc. all came from a source above the law of man, thereby placing these freedoms outside the reach of the monarchy or parliament. As a consequence of their desire for these liberties, many thinkers of various backgrounds argued that rights and liberties emanated from God. The most essential and ‘sacred’ of all these liberties, the reformers argued, was liberty of conscience.²⁶

Early Modern Conceptions of Religious Freedom: From Luther to Williams

Most people in early modern Anglo-America associated religious liberty with irreligion and moral decay.²⁷ Radical Protestants throughout Europe, however, developed arguments for religious liberty during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that reconciled conflicts between liberty of conscience and social stability.²⁸ No less a figure than Martin Luther began linking God with liberty during the early stages of the Reformation. Luther’s writings demonstrate one of the earliest examples of how radicals used sincerity, commanded by God, as a justification for religious freedom. Despite the restrictions Luther placed on liberty of conscience for those with whom he

²³ One scholar claimed that despite significant differences in other areas, all Enlightenment thinkers ‘shared one fundamental feature; they all strictly precluded any appeal to the supernatural’. See D. Staloff, *Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson: The Politics of the Enlightenment and the American Founding* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005), p.13.

²⁴ These labels are used in C.S. Grenada, ‘Faith, Reason, and Enlightenment: The Cultural Sources of Toleration in Early America’, in C. Beneke and C.S. Grenada, *The First Prejudice: Religious Tolerance and Intolerance in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p.37. His essay is a notable exception to my critique here. He argues that modern discourse was ‘less innovative than imitative’ of earlier arguments.

²⁵ For general examples see P.L. Steiner, ‘Benjamin Franklin’s Biblical Hoaxes’, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 131 (2), (June, 1987), pp.186-187; E.H. Davidson and W.J. Sheick, *Paine, Scripture, and Authority: The Age of Reason as Religious and Political Ideal* (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Lehigh University Press, 1994); T. Buckley, ‘The Religious Rhetoric of Thomas Jefferson’, in Dreisbach, *The Founders on God and Government*, p.65.

²⁶ See for example J. Locke, *The Two Treatises of Civil Government* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2011), p.105; [J. Dickinson,] *An Address to the Committee of Correspondence in Barbados* (Philadelphia, 1766), p.4; A. Hamilton, *The Farmer Refuted* (New York, 1775), p.2:80. All of these address divine law, which was in some ways different from what philosophers called ‘natural law’. For the differences and similarities between natural and God-given liberties, see B. Tierney, *The Idea of Natural Rights: Studies on Natural Rights, Natural Law, and Church Law, 1150-1625* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Scholars Press for Emory University, 1997).

²⁷ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, p.48.

²⁸ See P. Benedict, ‘Un roi, une loi, deux, fois: Parameters for the History of Catholic-Reformed co-existence in France, 1555-1685’, in Grell and Scribner, (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, p.69.

differed, he insisted in 1523 that 'each must decide at his own peril what he is to believe' because God did not send others 'to heaven or hell on my behalf... How he believes is a matter for each individual's conscience [to decide]'.²⁹ He railed against those who 'put themselves in God's place [and made] themselves masters of consciences and belief' because he insisted that 'faith is something that God works in the spirit'.³⁰ A century later, Anglo-American polemicists produced a flood of literature that future generations of ministers, theologians and philosophers consulted when making the case for liberty of conscience. The London pamphlet debate between John Cotton, the leading Puritan minister in early America, and Roger Williams, founder of Rhode Island colony, represented the larger array of tracts produced by the Leveller party during the English Civil War.

The issue Cotton and Williams debated was whether or not one's conscience was capable of error. William McLoughlin explained that for Cotton and most Puritans in the middle of the seventeenth century, 'liberty of conscience meant freedom from persecution for those who believed in and practiced the true Christian religion'.³¹ Cotton held that any individual's actions that were incompatible with scripture (as interpreted by Cotton) demanded punishment if 'his errors be fundamental'.³² Cotton later added that Williams believed that 'to compel men in matters of worship is to make them sin. If the worship be lawful in itself, the magistrate compelling him to come to it, compelleth him not to sin, but [rather] the sin is in his will that needs to be compelled to a Christian duty. If I do make hypocrites', he continued, 'yet better be hypocrites than profane persons. Hypocrites give God part of his due, the outward man, but the profane giveth God neither outward nor inward man'. Cotton echoed the justification for religious coercion that Christian theologians and monarchs had expressed for centuries – God wills religious orthodoxy.³³

These debates erupted in the 1640s, when Britons fought over religious equality during England's civil war and defections and immigration threatened Congregational hegemony in New England.³⁴ Williams' first pamphlet, *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience*, was the model exposition on liberty of conscience in England and America for a generation. Attempting to justify his own exile from Massachusetts in 1636, he reasoned that an orthodox conscience was 'not required nor accepted by Jesus Christ'. Instead, 'the will and command of God' was for civil and ecclesiastical authorities to permit even 'anti-christian consciences and worships' to 'all men in all nations'. Those who denied religious liberty to others also 'denie[d] the principles of Christianity'.³⁵ Over a century later, James Madison made the same argument in different language. He insisted that attempts to control one's conscience were 'a contradiction to the Christian Religion itself'.³⁶ Williams and Madison believed this because they adopted the values of freedom and sincerity that

²⁹ M. Luther, 'On Secular Authority: How Far Does Obedience Owed to it Extend?' in H. Höpfl, (ed.), *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.12, 25.

³⁰Ibid., pp.1, 12.

³¹McLoughlin, *New England Dissent*, p.92.

³²Cotton, *The Bloudy Tenent, Washed*, p.24.

³³ Cotton quoted in McLoughlin, *New England Dissent*, p.93. John Norton, another Puritan divine, repeated the traditional Congregational understanding of liberty of conscience in 1659. 'Conscience is Gods vice-[regent] in the soul. God is the absolute and primary judge, conscience is a secondary & subordinate judge'. From here Norton reasoned that sincere belief was only acceptable to God if following the 'true' religion. See J. Norton, *The Heart of N-England Rent at the Blasphemies of the Present Generation* (Boston, 1659), pp.51-52.

³⁴ N. Carlin, 'Toleration for Catholics in the Puritan Revolution', in Grell and Scribner, *Tolerance and Intolerance*, p.219; See also, S. Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); M. Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

³⁵ R. Williams and W. B. Underhill, (eds.), *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience Discussed; and Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered* (London: Hanserd Knollys Society, 1848), pp.1-2.

³⁶ G. Hunt, (ed.), *The Writings of James Madison* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1906), p.2:187.

many radical Protestants applied to religion. Williams' intentions were of course different from those of Enlightenment rationalists.³⁷ Yet they both premised their argument on a theological notion that God willed his subjects to have free choice in matters of faith. Several other British reformers aligned with the Leveller Party during the English Civil War: for example Henry Robinson, Richard Overton, Henry Danvers, Edward Baber and William Walwyn.³⁸

While Williams used radically conservative arguments to challenge the Puritan establishment in New England, English Levellers petitioned for liberty of conscience during the English Civil War. What began as a political struggle between monarchy and parliament quickly assumed religious significance as Levellers agitated for social and religious equality.³⁹ Although many reformers began incorporating secular, utilitarian arguments into their justifications, none strayed far from the fundamental notion that God willed free choice in matters of faith. Citing the Bible as his authority, religious and political radical William Walwyn affirmed that 'when the question is about liberty of conscience, the scripture tells me, everyone ought to be fully persuaded in his own mind, and that whatever is not faith, is sin'.⁴⁰ Walwyn's theology suggested that because 'God onely perswades [through] the heart', those who practiced 'compulsion and enforcement' were acting 'contrary to the rule and practice' of 'the will of God'.⁴¹ Representative of many Levellers' theological reasoning, Walwyn's colleague Richard Overton similarly claimed that because 'God only knoweth the heart', and since He is the 'immediate Lord over the inward', coercion of any kind ran counter to 'God's prerogative'.⁴²

During the first half of the seventeenth century, Murton, Williams, and the Levellers challenged authorities like Cotton in America and parliamentary conservatives in England by claiming that God preferred sincere error over coerced truth. Placing at the cornerstone of religious liberty, these reformers helped reconcile previously incompatible ideals – social order, morality, and religious freedom.⁴³ Later in the century, individuals as diverse in faith and politics as William Penn and John Locke argued for their own understandings of religious liberty. While some believed religious freedom meant exemption from taxation to the state church, others insisted that it only meant the freedom to worship in private spaces. Regardless of how they defined their terms, however, those arguing for religious freedom insisted that God demanded that His subjects be granted the ability to choose freely in matters of faith.

An Old Idea in New Form: Penn, Locke, and Eighteenth-Century Religious Freedom

The period after the English Civil War began with an experiment in religious freedom under Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth. Though it only lasted until 1660 and by no means satisfied the demands of the most radical reformers like Williams or Walwyn, the breakdown of royal authority allowed more liberal rhetoric into the British press. Moreover, after the Thirty Years' War and the English civil wars, political interests including national security and social stability pushed aside religious concerns. These two developments allowed new intellectual strains into church-state discourse. What resulted was a medley of arguments for religious freedom that would have

³⁷ E. Morgan, *Roger Williams: the Church and the State* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1967), p.142.

³⁸ See H. Robinson, *Liberty of Conscience* (London, 1644) and *A Short Answer to A.S.* (London, 1645); R. Overton, *An Arrow against all Tyrants* (London, 1646); H. Danvers, *Certain Quaeries Concerning Liberty of Conscience* (London, 1649); E. Baber, *Answer to the Essex Watchmen's Watchword* (London, 1649).

³⁹ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, pp.76-79.

⁴⁰ W. Walwyn, *The Compassionate Samaritane* in J. R. McMichael and B. Taft, (eds.), *The Writings of William Walwyn* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989), p.103.

⁴¹ Walwyn, *A Whisper in the Eare* in *ibid.*, pp.178-179.

⁴² R Overton, *An Appeal to the Commons from the Free People* (London, 1647), in A.S.P. Woodhouse, *Puritanism and Liberty: Being the Army Debates (1647-1649) from the Clarke Manuscripts with Supplementary Documents* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), p.332.

⁴³ For an examination of the seventeenth-century focus on behaviour, see T.D. Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain: Disciplinary Religion and Antinomian Backlash in Puritanism to 1638* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

seemed foreign just a generation earlier. Although some scholars have insisted that 'sacred arguments waned, secular arguments waxed, and Enlightenment arguments emerged' during this period, these new justifications complemented, rather than replaced, the theological premise that began discussions over religious liberty more than a century earlier.⁴⁴ William Penn's writings demonstrate how different strains of thought and a modified rhetoric helped advance pleas for religious liberty at the end of the seventeenth century.

As a member of the Society of Friends, Penn was devoted to liberty of conscience, and as a statesman and entrepreneur, he was equally committed to fostering a tranquil religious and social climate for his colonists. After becoming interested in American colonization in the early 1670s, he purchased West Jersey before expanding his colonial holdings to what became Pennsylvania in 1681.⁴⁵ In the process, he wrote dozens of tracts on religious liberty, all of which attempted to calm discrimination at home and justify his 'Holy Experiment' abroad. As a political and spiritual leader in his Quaker community he made moral, rational, philosophical and theological arguments in response to Quaker persecution. On utilitarian grounds, he asked 'What if I differ from some religious apprehensions? Am I therefore incompatible with the being of human societies?'⁴⁶ He also made historical arguments to persuade his readers. In order to provide a historical precedent he consulted multiple sources, citing the writings of such figures as Cato, Livy, Tacitus, Tertullian, and Grotius, citing their writings as justification for his desires.⁴⁷ Though steeped in theological and biblical justification, his writings demonstrate a continuation of the movement toward more secular forms of reasoning later employed by Lord Shaftesbury, John Trenchard, Thomas Gordon, James Burgh and Richard Price.⁴⁸

Beginning in 1670, Penn defined liberty of conscience in terms that demonstrated his reliance on a theology of free and sincere religious choice. He described it as 'the free and uninterrupted exercise of our consciences, in that way of worship [which] we are most clearly persuaded, [and that] God *requires* us to serve him in. [This is] a matter of faith, [which] we sin if we omit'. Later he broadened his definition to 'not only a mere liberty of the mind', but also 'the exercise of ourselves in a visible way of worship upon our believing it to be indispensably required at our hands, that if we neglect it for fear of any mortal man, we sin, and incur divine wrath'.⁴⁹ Like others, Penn placed sincerity alongside the will of God. He noted the importance that religious liberty had for his own soul as well as the consequences – 'divine wrath' – one faced if deprived of that liberty. Yet just as this idea was coming to fruition within radical Protestantism, spokesmen from other intellectual movements reached similar conclusions. Radical Whigs and rationalist Enlightenment thinkers likewise placed sincerity and the will of God at the centre of their defences of religious freedom. John Locke's writings best illustrate how radical Protestant, Whig and Enlightenment rhetoric coalesced at the end of the seventeenth century.

Events during the last fifteen years of the seventeenth century placed religious freedom firmly at the forefront of political and social discourse. First, Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of

⁴⁴ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, p.77; Grenada, Faith, Reason, and Enlightenment', pp.31-32.

⁴⁵ Cobb, *Rise of Religious Liberty in America*, p.440.

⁴⁶ W. Penn, *The Select Works of William Penn* (New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1971), p1:157.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.2:152.

⁴⁸ See Shaftesbury, 'A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm' and 'Miscellaneous Reflections', in A.A. Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 2001), pp.1:11-18, 3:65-69; J. Trenchard and T. Gordon, *Cato's Letters: Or, Essays on Liberty, Civil and Religious, And other Important Subjects* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1995), pp.1:110-117, 2:428, 462-471, 4:775; F. Hutcheson, *A System of Moral Philosophy* (London, 1755), p.2:311; J. Burgh, *Crito, or Essays on Various Subjects* (London, 1767), pp.2:118-119; R. Price, *The Evidence for a Future Period of Improvement in the State of Mankind* in D.O. Thomas, (ed.), *Richard Price: Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.161-165.

⁴⁹ Penn, *Works*, pp.2:131, 134. Emphasis in original.

Nantes in October of 1685 heightened Protestant anxieties concerning Catholic ambitions on the continent. Next, the Glorious Revolution in England provided space for more liberal ideas concerning politics and religion to enter the public sphere. Finally, several colonies in America began questioning the viability of religious uniformity with an increasingly pluralistic society. Philosophers like Pierre Bayle and Samuel Pufendorf on the continent as well as Penn and Locke in England responded to these events by formulating an ideal relationship between the church and the state. Each of them circumscribed the authority of the civil government in relation to the church, harnessing an array of utilitarian, epistemological and theological justifications in their writings.⁵⁰

Born into a Puritan family in 1632, John Locke remained an orthodox Anglican all of his life. His contributions to empiricism, philosophical liberalism and natural rights rhetoric cast a long shadow over modern liberal discourse. Beginning with his *Two Treatises on Government* in 1689, Locke revolutionized modern philosophy during the next few years with his *An Essay on Human Understanding* (1690) and *Some Thoughts on Education* (1693).⁵¹ His thoughts on religious liberty, however, were not as novel as his epistemological or political philosophies. Locke framed liberty of conscience as a natural right that emanated from a personal, rights-giving God, just as radical Protestants had earlier in the century. For Locke, religious liberty meant that one could worship freely, without the coercive arm of the state dictating one's form of worship.⁵² He reached this conclusion in large part because he believed that religion was meaningless without freedom of choice in belief. He argued this point in his 1689 *Letter Concerning Toleration* when he reasoned that 'faith only and inward sincerity are the things that procure acceptance with God'. Actions against one's conscience were 'displeasing to [God], because [they were] not commanded by himself'.⁵³ Locke's writings, like Penn's before him and Jefferson's in the next century, suggested that the conscience alone was the medium by which God communicated with the individual, which made coercion a violation of the divine will. He insisted, for instance, that 'the care of the salvation of men's souls cannot belong to the magistrate; because, though the rigour of laws and the force of penalties were capable to convince and change men's minds, yet would not that help at all to the salvation of their souls'. Through coercion, magistrates restricted men from attaining salvation because it forced them 'to quit the light of their own reason, and oppose the dictates of their own consciences', which God left free to choose.⁵⁴

While most scholars have correctly noted his rationalist rhetoric in terms of natural rights, and the distinctly different epistemological approach he brought to other realms of knowledge, they have understated the continuities between Locke's writing and that of earlier reformers in the radical Protestant tradition.⁵⁵ Regarding religious freedom, Locke developed new rhetoric but maintained the logic of early modern radical Protestants who placed divinely-commanded sincerity at the heart of the matter. Once Locke is viewed as a seventeenth-century tolerationist who moulded his concept of religious freedom from Protestant clay, it becomes apparent that

⁵⁰ Grenada, 'Faith, Reason, Enlightenment', p.33.

⁵¹ B. Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972), pp.641-646.

⁵² Like almost all of those discussed in this essay, he did not believe that Catholics or atheists should have been granted full religious freedom. See J. Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (New York: Classic Books, 2010), pp.37, 54, 131.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp.168, 172.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.169.

⁵⁵ For the classic presentist interpretation of Locke as a covert atheist revolutionary see L. Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp.202-51. For a more nuanced interpretation of Locke as a pivotal yet still modern contextualized thinker, see M.P. Zuckert, *Natural Rights and the New Republicanism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) and his *Launching Liberalism: On Lockean Political Philosophy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002). Although those like John Dunn and his students working out of the Cambridge School of political thought have interpreted Locke in light of the Calvinism in which he was raised, they too understated his theological framework regarding religious liberty.

seventeenth-century Protestant and eighteenth-century Enlightenment ideas concerning religious liberty were not as different as many scholars have claimed.⁵⁶ Many theologians and philosophers between Locke and the American founding continued to appropriate early modern justifications for religious coercion to modern conceptions of religious liberty, each one citing the will of God as their foundation.⁵⁷ None did so more clearly than William Livingston.

Publisher of an influential weekly newspaper in the early 1750s and later governor of New Jersey during the American Revolution, William Livingston made many of the same arguments that others across the colonies and in England had made in defence of religious freedom since the seventeenth century. During the debate over denominational affiliation for the newly founded King's College in 1752, Livingston's paper advanced the idea that public institutions need not have denominational ties.⁵⁸ Employing Locke's natural rights rhetoric, his writings similarly demonstrate the shared ground between radical Whig, Protestant and rationalist discourse which helped bridge the rhetoric of traditional arguments that Roger Williams articulated with the more rationalist language used during the late eighteenth century. Although his rhetoric took on a deistical form, it is important to note that like others he argued that persecution was contradictory to the teachings of Christianity, even though he was not an orthodox Christian.⁵⁹ Appealing to traditional and liberal Christians alike, and in language reminiscent of Locke, Livingston informed his readers: 'Does a Man act in a conscientious Obedience to the Law of God, without Doubt such act is religious; but on the contrary, should he only be governed by a Submission to the Law of the Magistrate, such Act can never claim a moral Consideration, even tho' it be really in exact Conformity to the Will of the supreme Legislator of the Universe'. He continued to advocate for 'Liberty of Thought' because the 'Religion which proceeds from a Man's own free Thoughts, must certainly be the most agreeable to the Deity'. For Livingston, religion, in brief, consisted of 'a choice or obligation to do certain Acts in conformity to the will of our Creator'.⁶⁰ Writing in a hybrid of radical Whig and rationalist terms, Livingston – though distinct from those in the early seventeenth century – continued to emphasize a divine mandate for religious freedom.

Deus Vult: Madison, Jefferson, and the Institutionalization of Religious Freedom

The preceding pages demonstrated how seventeenth and early eighteenth-century thinkers developed the main philosophical justification for religious freedom. Locke's introduction of 'natural rights' changed the rhetoric, but not the logic, of the arguments for religious liberty. Despite important epistemological changes introduced by Locke and later Enlightenment and Whig thinkers in other areas, reformers continued to express arguments for religious freedom as a theological imperative. This form of argumentation was a manifestation of a larger movement to

⁵⁶ See for instance Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, pp.263-265; Lambert, *The Founding Fathers*, p.3; or note 17 above.

⁵⁷ See S. Belcher, *An Essay Tending to Promote The Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ* (Boston, 1707); J. Dickinson, *The Scripture-Bishop Vindicated* (Boston, 1733) and *The Vanity of Human Institutions in the Worship of God* (New York, 1736); E. Holyoke, *Obedience and Submission to the Pastoral Watch and Rule Over the Church of Christ* (Boston, 1737); E. Williams, *The Essential Rights and Liberties of Protestants* (Boston, 1744); J. Mayhew, *A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers* (Boston, 1749); E. Frothingham, *A Key, to Unlock the Door* (New Haven, 1767); I. Backus, *A Seasonable Plea for Liberty of Conscience* (Boston, 1770).

⁵⁸ Lambert, *Founding Fathers*, p.188.

⁵⁹ See R. Livingston, *A Vindication of the Moravians, against the Aspersions of their Enemies* (New York, 1753), in M. L. Klein, (ed.), *The Independent Reflector or Weekly Essays on Sundry Important Subjects More particularly adapted to the Province of New Work By William Livingston and Others* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), pp.89-94; Livingston, *The Absurdity of the Civil Magistrates' Interference in Matters of Religion: Part II* (New York, 1753), p.306. He described himself as a believer in the Bible, but qualified that by ruling out 'any foreign Comments, or human Explications but my own'. See *ibid.*, pp.387-397.

⁶⁰ Livingston, *Absurdity*, pp.313-315.

place God as the source of rights in order to expand notions of liberty beyond what the English Parliament or monarchy allowed. Colonial rebels like James Wilson, John Dickinson, Patrick Henry and Alexander Hamilton cloaked their secular demands for free trade, free speech, rights to trial by jury, and equal representation, under the guise of Lockean natural rights, but in explicitly religious language as well. Gordon Wood has argued that although the American Founders were not intensely religious men in the traditional sense, religion ‘gave the highest level of meaning, order, and value to people’s experience’, which made it a useful rhetorical and intellectual tool for political and cultural change.⁶¹ Dickinson, for example, made the distinction between rights secured by governments and rights granted by God. Charters, he insisted, were ‘*declarations* but not *gifts* of liberties’ because neither monarchs, magistrates nor parliaments could in any meaningful sense provide ‘the *rights essential to happiness*’. Instead, he continued, ‘We claim them from a higher source – from the King of kings, and Lord of all the earth’.⁶² Other prominent Americans like Alexander Hamilton circumscribed rights and liberties within a divine source. Still a teenager on the eve of the revolution, he acknowledged that though New York had no charter, ‘THE SACRED RIGHTS OF MANKIND’ were ‘written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole *volume* of human nature, by the hand of divinity itself’.⁶³

No one made better use of this line of reasoning than Thomas Jefferson. According to one authority, he placed God as the source of liberty ‘in virtually every major document he composed.’⁶⁴ Jefferson began employing this strategy with his Virginia Declaration of Rights in 1774 and later that year in *A Summary View of the Rights of British America* when he wrote that ‘the god who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time’. He also cited God as the origin of rights the following year in the ‘Declaration of the Causes and Necessity for Taking Up Arms,’ when he argued that the colonists used ‘all those powers’ granted by ‘our creator’ to maintain the ‘Liberty which he committed to us in sacred deposit’.⁶⁵ He again made this point in the Declaration of Independence, when he wrote that ‘all men are created equal & independant, [and] that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent & inalienable’.⁶⁶ Governments, he insisted, were there to ‘secure these ends’, but rights and liberties existed as a consequence of that equal creation. After the Revolution, Jefferson continued to make this argument in his Act for Establishing Religious Freedom and his *Notes on the State of Virginia*.

Based on his private papers, the radical libertarianism of his writings during the Revolution, the larger political context in which he wrote, his personal theological beliefs, and the frequency with which he made this argument, it seems evident that Jefferson was not merely using theological rhetoric to push a value he reached using strictly secular reasoning. When writing on religious freedom, Enlightened deists may simply have been repeating similar phrases from earlier religious freedom discourse, but they selected specific phrases – those that most appealed to their own and others’ intellect and beliefs. True, Jefferson was too astute not to recognize the appeal that theological arguments had to his contemporaries. But the eighteenth-century deism that Jefferson espoused in his private notes on Locke’s *Letter* as well as the private correspondence with John Adams later in life both suggest that his public statements on God being the source of liberty were not mere rhetorical flourish or political posturing. Deists in the eighteenth century did not believe

⁶¹ G. Wood, ‘Religion and the American Revolution’, in H. Stout and D.G. Hart, (eds.), *New Directions in American Religious History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.181.

⁶² [J. Dickinson], *An Address to the Committee of Correspondence in Barbados* (Philadelphia, 1766), p. 4.

⁶³ A. Hamilton, *The Farmer Refuted* (New York, 1775) in J. C. Hamilton, (ed.), *The Works of Alexander Hamilton* (New York: John F. Trow, 1850), pp.2:80.

⁶⁴ Buckley, ‘Religious Rhetoric’, p.58.

⁶⁵ Boyd, *Papers*, p.1:197.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.1:423-424.

in the God of the Bible, which separated them from the great majority of their contemporaries. Rather, they believed that God's revelation was written onto His creation, including the make-up of the human mind, which He designed with the capacity to think and choose freely without coercion.

In his private notes, which summarized Locke's argument and added notes of his own, Jefferson wrote that 'all men' were aware that both excessive persecution such as burning or hanging, but also more tame forms of discrimination like excluding religious dissenters from offices, were not only 'diametrically against Xyt [Christianity]' but also 'obstructive [to the] salvation of souls'. He wrote that 'our Saviour chose not to propagate his religion by temporal pun[ish]m[en]ts or civil incapacitation', which was 'in his almighty power' to do, but instead 'chose to extend it [religion] by its influence on reason, thereby shewing to others how [they] should proceed'.⁶⁷ Jefferson did not believe that Jesus was his 'saviour', but there is little evidence to suggest that his public appeals to religious freedom, which avoided sectarian or even Christian language, were insincere or manipulative. J.G.A. Pocock has persuasively argued that the theological arguments he made in his public appeals for religious freedom were entirely consistent with his own religious beliefs, and that he was in some way imposing his own religious beliefs – what Pocock called 'a kind of Unitarian universalism – the religion of free inquiry' – on others.⁶⁸ Though deists like Jefferson held a theology that was quite different from the Baptists who supported his Act for Establishing Religious Freedom, they all shared a fundamental belief that God was the source of rights and that He demanded religious freedom from His subjects because it was the only way to make free moral decisions. While many religious figures continued to quote scripture as the basis of their belief in the divine imperative, rationalists reasoned that God created the human mind in a way that left people free to choose in matters of faith, making any restraints on that choice inconsistent with God's prerogative.

By analyzing the two most prominent spokesmen for rights of conscience during the late eighteenth century – James Madison and Thomas Jefferson – we may demonstrate the influence these seventeenth-century arguments had on the eventual realization of religious freedom in the Anglo-American world. Moreover, by using Madison and Jefferson, we not only account for intellectual continuity, but substantive cultural, social and political change because these men were the architects of two of the most important legal developments regarding religious freedom in the modern period: the 1786 Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom and the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Finally, by placing theological justifications closer to the centre, rather than on the periphery, of the development of religious freedom, scholars may better account for its populist appeal among both dissenting denominations and rationalists like Madison and Jefferson.

Despite the persistent and widespread historiographical debates over their religious beliefs, all scholars agree that Madison and Jefferson had different theologies from those seventeenth-century radicals discussed above.⁶⁹ Like these men, however, Madison reasoned that one's religion resided entirely within one's conscience. Using the tools of Enlightenment hermeneutics at his disposal, Madison's *Memorial and Remonstrance*, his 1785 magnum opus on religious freedom, synthesized long-standing arguments for liberty of conscience. In doing so, he made religion by

⁶⁷ Boyd, *Papers*, p.1:544

⁶⁸ J.G.A. Pocock, 'Religious Freedom and the Desacralization of Politics: From the English Civil Wars to the Virginia Statute', in M.D. Peterson and R.C. Vaughan, (eds.), *The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom: Its Evolution and Consequences in American History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p.69.

⁶⁹ For a helpful historiographical overview, see G.W. Sheldon, 'Religion and Politics in the Thought of James Madison', in D. Dreisbach, (ed.), *The Founders on God and Government* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), p.112. For Jefferson, see C. Sanford, *The Religious Life of Thomas Jefferson* (Charlotte: University of North Carolina Press, 1984) and Kramnick and Moore, *The Godless Constitution* for opposing views; See E. Gaustad, *Sworn on the Altar of God: A Religious Biography of Thomas Jefferson* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdsman Publishing Co., 1997) for a more nuanced account.

definition a 'duty which we owe to our Creator'. He insisted, for instance, that rights of conscience were 'unalienable because the opinions of men, depending only on the evidence contemplated by their own minds, cannot follow the dictates of other men'. They were 'unalienable also, because what is here a right towards men, is a duty towards the Creator'.⁷⁰ Although he incorporated utilitarian and Enlightenment justifications into his argument,⁷¹ for Madison, denying one's freedom of conscience was 'an unhallowed perversion of the means of salvation'.⁷² Madison did not insist that coercion was a 'perversion' of natural or unalienable rights, but an obstacle to salvation – a pre-modern theological doctrine particular to Abrahamic faiths. Madison further reasoned that 'if [religious] freedom be abused, it is an offence against God, not against man. To God, therefore, not to man, must an account of it be rendered'.⁷³

In addition to these arguments which supported his theological beliefs, Madison also argued that the establishment was 'unchristian' and 'adverse to the diffusion of the light of Christianity', because it 'discourages those who are strangers to the light of [revelation] from coming into the Region of it'. Madison finished his *Memorial* by announcing that he and the signatories therein were 'earnestly praying' that 'the Supreme Lawgiver of the Universe' would illuminate those who did not yet recognize that infringements on one's conscience were an 'affront [to] his holy prerogative'.⁷⁴ Since this document was a petition, it is likely that Madison included these more orthodox statements in order to attract the Baptists and Presbyterians who made up the bulk of the signatories. But his form of providential deism nevertheless allowed him to use arguments like the divine imperative that spoke to different elements of eighteenth-century culture. Rather than viewing these theological arguments as negating his more secular reasoning, scholars can better understand the political and religious climate of the late eighteenth century by a consideration of how these modes of thought complemented each other.

Although Madison left few records on his religious beliefs, Jefferson was more generous to future historians. In his private papers, Jefferson took detailed notes on Locke's *Letter*, summarizing Locke's lines of reasoning and adding his own thoughts.⁷⁵ As demonstrated above, Locke affirmed that religious liberty was essential both to determine and perform one's religious duties. He believed that on judgment day, God would be less concerned with doctrinal orthodoxy than with sincerity of belief.⁷⁶ Jefferson too, retained the notion that God wanted sincere faith even though his theology was far more unorthodox than Locke's. Unlike his seventeenth-century predecessors, who insisted that religious freedom was based on Christian teachings in the Bible, Jefferson argued from Enlightenment grounds that God willed liberty of conscience. He reasoned that God revealed himself and his commands through his creation – in this case through His construction of the human mind, which He made with the ability to reason. From here Jefferson reached the same conclusion that early modern theologians reached – that God wanted individuals to have religious freedom. Finally, although Jefferson's conclusion was in opposition to what those in the medieval period had claimed – God wills religious uniformity – his rationale was still based on the will of God.

The preamble to Jefferson's Act for Establishing Religious Freedom reinforced the arguments he made in his private notes after reading Locke.⁷⁷ In defending freedom of conscience,

⁷⁰ Hunt, *Writings of James Madison*, p.2:187.

⁷¹ As early as 1773, Madison asked a friend on utilitarian grounds, 'Is an Ecclesiastical establishment absolutely necessary to support civil society'? See Hutchinson, *Papers*, p.1:101.

⁷² Hunt, p.2:184.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp.2:186-187.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.2:189-181.

⁷⁵ See Boyd, *Papers*, p.1:548, where Jefferson wrote in his notes on Locke's *Letter* 'It was a great thing to go so far...but where he [Locke] stopped short, we may go on'.

⁷⁶ S. Kessler, 'Locke's Influence on Jefferson's "Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom"', *Journal of Church and State*, 25 (Spring, 1983), p.235.

⁷⁷ See his unedited 1777 draft in Boyd, *Papers*, pp.2:545-547.

he opened his bill by stating that not natural law, but instead, 'Almighty God hath created the mind free'. From this premise he deduced that religious liberty was divinely directed. He continued to note that 'the opinions and belief of men depend not on their own will, but follow involuntarily the evidence proposed to their minds'. This was because God 'manifested his supreme will that free it [one's conscience] shall remain by making it altogether insusceptible of restraint, [and] that all attempts to influence it' were 'a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion'.⁷⁸ Jefferson reasoned that religion was a matter between man and God because it was His 'supreme will' that the mind He created free remained free to choose religious beliefs. In these ways, Jefferson continued to change the rhetoric, but not the theological premise behind his justification for religious freedom. His God, like others, was a God of liberty. His Virginia Statute, once described by Bernard Bailyn as 'the most important document in American history, bar none',⁷⁹ in this way used a radically conservative approach to fulfil a liberal end. Although Jefferson's conception of God might have had little in common with that of Luther, Williams, or Penn, he continued their appeal to a God who demanded liberty of conscience.

* * *

Many historians have rightly lauded Jefferson and Madison for their contributions to the development of religious liberty. Contrary to the findings above, however, the most prominent historians of religious freedom have argued that the 'ultimate overthrow of established religion in the Revolutionary Era was the result of a coincidental and temporary conjunction of deistic and pietistic efforts and ideologies; but there was never any merger of the two'.⁸⁰ These historians pointed to the fundamental difference between the two groups' conception of God. Radical Protestants, for these scholars, saw liberty of conscience as a *supernatural* right that came from the God of revelation, whereas deists saw it as a natural right that came from the God of Nature.⁸¹ What these scholars have missed is that both saw it coming directly from, and *demanded by*, God. Drawing this bright line between the sacred and the secular without also showing the similarities, these scholars have overlooked the continuities between what they have labelled Protestant thought during the seventeenth century and later Enlightenment thought that deeply influenced the modern period. They have approached the development of religious liberty in a manner that has blurred long-term continuities and overlooked the conservative foundations of one of the most revolutionary changes in Anglo-American history. The early-modern notion of divinely commanded sincerity of belief allowed eighteenth-century thinkers of all persuasions to find common ground when making arguments for religious freedom and to present a radical change in mainstream form. While orthodox Christians like Williams cited chapter and verse from scripture, deists like Jefferson similarly reasoned that 'God requires every act [to be done] according to *belief*'. Thomas Buckley concluded that Jefferson believed religious belief was a human response to a divine command. His argument was fundamentally 'a theological statement: God requires belief. This is God's choice as creator'.⁸² Buckley might have mentioned that radical Protestants reached the same conclusion a century before Jefferson was born.

Many scholars have explained the development of religious liberty in America by pointing to significant demographic changes, political exigencies, and new epistemologies. These explanations,

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.2:545.

⁷⁹ Quoted in D.L. Dreisbach and G.W. Sheldon, (eds.), *Religion and Political Culture in Jefferson's Virginia* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), p.153.

⁸⁰ McLoughlin, *New England Dissent*, p.388.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² T. E. Buckley, 'The Political Theology of Thomas Jefferson', in Peterson and Vaughan, *The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom*, p.159.

though important, only go so far. During the sixteenth to late eighteenth centuries, conceptions of tolerable religious belief underwent a fundamental transformation. This revolution required more than demographic, political, or epistemological change. It also required a revised theology. When writing or preaching on religious freedom, some reformers called God ‘Jesus Christ’, the ‘supreme Legislator of the Universe’, the ‘Creator’, or the ‘holy author of our religion’, but the outcome of the message was the same; since conscience was a matter between man and God, a force *above* the law could not be subject *to* the law. Consequently, reformers deduced that one man should not coerce another’s belief in matters of faith. As Jefferson wrote, this was God’s choice as creator. By framing the argument in this way, Enlightenment thinkers of the eighteenth century argued what the most dogmatic, medieval priests had argued in justifying religious coercion – God wills it. Instead of commanding coerced orthodoxy, this God commanded religious freedom. Rather than interpreting Enlightenment notions of religious liberty as conflicting with the theological formulation presented here, scholars might consider how their common heritage helped form a marketable web of ideas that made such a revolutionary change so acceptable to such a diverse group of individuals and how that heritage influenced church-state political thought in the nineteenth century.⁸³

⁸³ I wish to thank Dr. David Holland and Dr. Elizabeth Nelson for reading early versions of this draft, which began as a seminar paper in the spring of 2011. I also want to acknowledge the help of Jordan Watkins, who read later versions of this paper and helped refine the argument at several stages. A final thank you goes to the editorial staff at the *Journal of History and Cultures* and the anonymous editors who helped finalize the article.

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The Benefits of Travel: travel writing in the Lagos newspapers 1912-1931

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In the 1920s and 30s, a new craze spread amongst Lagosian journalists, intellectuals and writers for writing about their travels far and wide across Nigeria,¹ in serialised narratives published over several weeks in the Lagos newspapers. In these travel narratives, written in both Yoruba and English, we follow the writers on journeys from Lagos across Nigeria to nearby Ijebu, Ibadan and Abeokuta, to farther afield Port Harcourt, Enugu, and Aba, and all the way to the border with Cameroon. Their narratives are tales of encountering both strangeness and familiarity, meeting old friends, forging professional and social networks, eating strange foods and making sense of what it means to be a Lagosian abroad in Yorubaland and beyond.

This article traces the emergence of these travel narratives as a genre over the 1920s and 30s in the Lagos newspapers, and in particular in the bilingual Yoruba and English newspapers *Akede Eko*, *Eletí-Ofẹ* and *Eko Akete*. As well as looking at how the travel narratives developed amongst a small class of Lagos-based intellectuals, in the midst of an experimental Yoruba print culture, and in a climate of changing ideas about local and regional affiliations, I discuss the writers' ideas about travelling and travel writing as beneficial. I explore their ideas about education and wisdom, the notion of vicarious travel through the printed text, and the idea of travelling as 'civilised,' as it was expressed in colonial Lagos at the time.

Lagosian travel writing in the early twentieth century Yoruba and English press

Colonial Lagos in the 1920s and 30s was the seat of print and intellectual culture in Nigeria. As Karin Barber has described, the 1920s saw the establishment of a flurry of new Yoruba- and English-language newspapers in Lagos.² The newspapers were written and read by a small group of elite Lagosians and other readers scattered across southwest and eastern Nigeria,

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The author would like to add the following note on Yoruba orthography: standard Yoruba orthography includes the use of tone marks and sub-dots. However, the Lagos newspapers discussed in this article tend to use sub-dots but not tone marks. When quoting from these newspapers, the author has copied their usage faithfully. Otherwise, tone marks on Yoruba words are used, except for proper nouns such as names and towns.

¹ 'Nigeria' was formed as the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria by the British colonial regime in 1914, but did not become a fully independent state until 1960; I use 'Nigeria' here to refer to the colonial state after 1914, but also, for the sake of brevity, to the pre-1914 region that later became Nigeria.

² K. Barber, *Print Culture and the First Yoruba Novel: I.B. Thomas's 'Life Story of Me, Segilola' and other texts* (Leiden, 2012), pp.27-34.

particularly in towns with a Christian or Saro influence.³ They contained a certain amount of news, such as reports on events in Lagos and on contemporary politics, but on the whole were characterised by lengthy, discursive opinion pieces and long-running arguments about the issues of the day. They were usually published and printed by an editor who wrote much of their content, but also drew on a team of regular writers and occasional contributions from readers.

In the earliest decades of the twentieth century, the worldview of the newspapers was small and insular. In 1914, the *Lagos Weekly Record*, one of the major English-language Lagos papers, had a circulation of just 700.⁴ The newspapers were in essence 'neighbourhood gazettes',⁵ reporting local news from the social elite of Lagos, a world of picnics, local politics, and 'at homes'. At the same time, they also reported news from the coastal elites stretching across a small sliver of the West African coast, from Nigeria to the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Gambia; there was frequent interchange between the editors of these newspapers, who shared a common educational and religious outlook and thought of themselves as the local 'civilised' intellectual elite.⁶

The early twentieth century was a time of rapid change in the ways people travelled in Nigeria. In 1901, the colonial government opened 123 miles of railway track between Lagos and Ibadan, signalling the beginnings of a railway network which would eventually stretch to faraway Nguru in northern Nigeria. In 1907, there were just two cars on the streets of Lagos; by 1920, there were 600, for an estimated population of 100,000.⁷ By 1928, the railways, which had been built primarily for cargo, were handling three million passenger journeys a year.⁸

From the beginning of the twentieth century the Lagos-based newspapers had carried reports of individuals' travels, but until the mid-1910s, these tended to be short, impersonal reports of nearby excursions by colonial officers or elite Lagosians, or else of visits by Lagosians to their hometowns. The writers wrote of social events and networks, to be broadcast and memorialised by publication for a wider Lagosian audience, sometimes even paying the newspaper editors for the privilege; the editor of the *Nigerian Times* notes sternly in every edition of his newspaper in 1910 that he 'reserves the right to charge for inserting in his news columns descriptions of entertainments, concerts, ball parties, pic-nics and all other functions and enterprises of a like character, and such other matters as do not come into the category of news'.⁹

It was within this context that the first-person travel narratives which are the focus of this article emerged in the Lagos newspapers. One of the first of these narratives was the three-part series 'A Tour to the Hinterland' published in the English-language *Lagos Weekly Record* in October-November 1912. In this series, the pseudonymous 'Special Correspondent' travels to Ibadan, Abeokuta, Oyo, Oşogbo, Ede, Ilesha and Ife and remarks on life in each town, particularly its political institutions. His aim is to teach Lagosians about the hinterland towns, since, the writer argues, 'foreign influence' divorces 'the native' 'from his own people and life and sends him out as a segregated unit whose ideas of national life is a nationality built up without a

³ Saros were ex-slave Sierra Leoneans or their descendants who had settled in Lagos and the hinterland, many of whom were of Yoruba descent.

⁴ J. Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 231. In fact, this was not a very small readership for the time, since many newspapers had smaller readerships, but I use the figure here to illustrate the relatively small size of readerships compared to late twentieth century mass audiences.

⁵ M. Echeruo, *Victorian Lagos: Aspects of Nineteenth Century Lagos Life* (London, 1977).

⁶ S. Newell, *West African Literatures: Ways of Reading* (Oxford, 2006), p. 15.

⁷ A. Olukoju, 'Maritime Trade in Lagos in the Aftermath of the First World War', *African Economic History*, 20 (1992), p.122.

⁸ F. Jaekel, *The History of the Nigerian Railway*, Vol. 3 (Ibadan, 1997), p. 209.

⁹ 'Nigerian Times Notices', *Nigerian Times* (April 19, 1910), p. 4.

nation'.¹⁰ This was followed by the similar 'A trip to Northern Nigeria and Back' by 'our Special Correspondent' detailing a trip to Zaria, Kano, Katsina and beyond.¹¹

After the publication of this narrative, few similar first-person narratives were published until the growth of the Yoruba-language press in Lagos in the 1920s, when several new newspapers were launched, written mostly in Yoruba, but interspersed with occasional English-language articles. In 1923, *Eko Akete* published a landmark series: the five-part 'Irin-Ajo Lati Eko Lọ Si Kamerun' (Journey from Lagos to Cameroon) by 'Ajeji,' a Yoruba pseudonym meaning 'stranger' or 'foreigner'.¹² Ajeji narrates his journey from Lagos as far as Victoria (now Limbe) in Cameroon, via Bonny, Port Harcourt and Calabar.

The publication of this narrative signalled the beginning of a remarkable efflorescence of first-person narrative travel writing in the Yoruba press in Lagos, particularly in *Akede Eko*, *Eleti-Ofe* and *Eko Akete*. At least 15 travel narratives were published in the Yoruba newspapers between 1923 and 1931.¹³ While some of these were short reports in the older fashion, several of them were ambitious narratives published over many weeks. As well as Ajeji, two other pseudonymous authors turned their hands to travel narratives: 'Gay,' who published 'Travellers' Obsevation' [sic] in *Eleti-Ofe* in 1926,¹⁴ and 'Ọmọ Ẹgbẹ' ('Association Member') who wrote a Yoruba-language account of a visit by his hometown association¹⁵ to Ikorodu in *Eko Akete* in 1924.¹⁶ A further three travel writers – all prominent members of Lagos's print and cultural elite – wrote under their own names: E.A. Akintan, founder and editor of the newspaper *Eleti-Ofe*; Isaac Babalọla Thomas, writer for *Eleti-Ofe* and subsequently founder and editor of the newspaper *Akede Eko*; and A.K. Ajişafe, author of several important works on Yoruba history, culture and laws, and in the words of Toyin Falọla 'arguably the most talented and prolific Yoruba author of the colonial era,'¹⁷ who wrote a narrative of a journey from Lagos to Ibadan, Ifẹ and Ileşa while researching his histories.¹⁸

Isaac Babalọla Thomas's travel narratives were particularly influential. Thomas was a pioneer newspaper editor in early twentieth century Lagos, an up-and-coming member of Lagos's elite. Thomas, who had previously been a schoolteacher, rose to prominence in the 1920s first as a journalist with *Eleti-Ofe*, then as proprietor and editor of the Yoruba-English newspaper *Akede Eko*, which he founded in 1928. Thomas is best known for his serialised Yoruba novel *Ìtàn Ìgbésí Ayé Èmi Sègilọlá Ẹlẹyinjú Ẹgẹ Ẹlẹgbẹ̀rùn Ọkọ L'áiyé*,¹⁹ generally acclaimed as the first novel in Yoruba, which Thomas wrote and published in the *Akede Eko* from 1929-30 and later republished as a pamphlet. *Ìtàn Èmi Sègilọlá* caused a sensation, as

¹⁰ Special Correspondent, 'A Tour to the Hinterland', *Lagos Weekly Record* (October 19, 1912 – November 9 1912).

¹¹ Special Correspondent, 'A Trip to Northern Nigeria and Back', *Lagos Weekly Record* (August 2 – August 16, 1913).

¹² Ajeji, 'Irin Ajo Lati Eko Lọ Si Kamerun', *Eko Akete* (February 17 – June 16, 1923).

¹³ Not all editions of the Yoruba-language newspapers of the 1920s and 30s have been preserved in the National Archives of Nigeria in Ibadan, so there are likely to be further travel narratives I have not yet been able to track down.

¹⁴ Gay, 'Travellers' Obsevation' [sic], *Eleti-Ofe* (August 18 – September 1, 1926).

¹⁵ Hometown associations were organisations established by migrants from the Yoruba-speaking region and their descendants in Lagos and other large towns. As well as supporting each other in their new towns, they remained involved in the economies and politics of their 'hometowns', and many frequently travelled home individually and as associations, to see families, for important festivals, and to intervene in local politics. See L. Trager, *Yoruba Hometowns: Community, Identity and Development in Nigeria* (Boulder, 2001), and N. Sawada, 'The educated elite and associational life in early Lagos newspapers: in search of unity for the progress of society', PhD thesis (Univ. Birmingham, 2012).

¹⁶ Ọmọ Ẹgbẹ, 'Irohin Şoki nipa Irin Ajo Lọ si Ikorodu', *Eko Akete* (February 2 – March 1, 1924).

¹⁷ T. Falọla, 'Yoruba Town Histories' in Axel Harneit-Sievers (ed.), *A Place in the World: New Local Historiographies from Africa and South Asia* (Leiden, 2002), p. 68.

¹⁸ A.K. Ajişafe, 'Irin Ajo Kakiri Ilu Oke', *Akede Eko* (June 28 – August 2, 1930).

¹⁹ 'The life story of me, Segilola of the fascinating eyes, she who had a thousand lovers in her life' in Barber's translation; referred to henceforth in this article as *Ìtàn Èmi Sègilọlá*.

the readers' letters attest, and established Thomas' position as a writer, a publisher, a proponent of the Yoruba language, and a literary innovator.²⁰

But the novel was not the only result of Thomas's innovation. Back in 1926, Thomas wrote a series of columns called 'Ero L'Qna' or 'The Traveller' for *Eleti-Ofe*. The columns span a period of three months, and detail Thomas' journey from Lagos to the port town of Sapele, in present-day Delta State. Thomas was travelling on business, but his columns tell more of his delight in travelling, the sights he saw and people he met on the way, the growth of print culture and the newspaper network, and his thoughts on the meaning and benefits of travelling. When Thomas left *Eleti-Ofe* to found *Akede Eko* in 1928, he took the 'Ero L'Qna' format with him, and published three further 'Ero L'Qna' series between 1929 and 1931. Meanwhile, in both *Eleti-Ofe* and *Akede Eko* other writers had begun to write travel narratives, closely following Thomas's style. A spate of travel narratives appeared in *Eleti-Ofe* and *Akede Eko* between 1926 and 1930, by E.A. Akintan, the pseudonymous 'Gay,' and A.K. Ajişafe, with all three authors narrating their travels around different parts of the Yoruba-speaking region.

The travel writers write about towns, or journeys between towns; there is little sense of a natural or social world beyond the town in their work. Indeed, there are very few descriptions of flora and fauna or of the landscape, as was common in contemporaneous European travel writing; instead, their narratives are narratives of intense sociability, structured around their meetings with other 'civilised' people. Wherever they go, the writers describe meeting friends or colleagues who show them around, usually migrant Lagosians. They build complex webs of sociability and display their social capital through constant reference to their social, business and political networks beyond Lagos, to the extent that their namedropping sometimes threatens to overwhelm the chronological progress of their narratives.

Places outside Yorubaland, and sometimes even outside Lagos, are often described as strange and exotic by these writers, and sometimes their narratives differ little in this regard from foreign travel writing of the time (I.B. Thomas calls for missionaries to come and 'teach these naked people' of Port Harcourt, who are like 'wild animals', to wear clothes, for instance).²¹ However, Thomas does not see the places to which he travels solely as repositories of difference; in one series, he enjoys interacting with the local people, and he learns a few phrases of their language, which he prints with explanations. Indeed, through their writing, newspaper travel writers saw themselves not only reflecting but actually shaping local ties; the writer of the *Lagos Weekly Record* series helped his Lagosian readers to know the hinterland, while I.B. Thomas not only textualised and made public his relationships with migrant Lagosians and locals, but also sought to help his readers imagine both the strangeness and the familiarity of eastern Nigeria for themselves, to build a written connection to the place. E.A. Akintan, meanwhile, depicts the Yoruba region as known and knowable, a very local place which his readers can easily understand.

Though the scope of their writing was what we might belatedly label as national, these travel writers were not particularly concerned with the idea of the nation; in fact, the word 'Nigeria' hardly ever appears in their texts.²² Rather, these writers are more interested in various and shifting translocal networks and regions in the hinterland and across the 'civilised' zone of the coast. The travel narratives epitomise the newspapers' paradoxical simultaneous insularity and outwardness; they were interested in the world beyond Lagos and in expanding

²⁰ K. Barber, *Print Culture*, pp. 34-65.

²¹ 'kọ awọn oniḥoho wọnyi'; 'awọn enia ha ni wọnyi tabi ẹranko igbẹ?'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Qna', *Akede Eko* (May 23, 1929): 7.

²² Compare this to a later travelogue describing a journey to the UK, 'Irin Ajo Mi Lati Eko Lo Silu Qba' by Taju Thompson, published in *Akede Eko* in 1952, in which Thompson constantly refers to himself and his companions as Nigerians, and contrasts things back home in Nigeria with what he sees in the UK, mentioning the word 'Nigeria' thirteen times in total.

the reach of the paper, but used a range of references and people which located both their audience and the people they represented in a 'little Lagos' abroad. If localised conceptions of readerships were expanding in this period, as Rita Nnodim has suggested with regard to Yoruba novelists and poets' conceptions of their audiences, then newspapers, travel and travel writing also played a significant role in these changing configurations, and benefited from them themselves.²³ But the newspapers were ambivalent about their expanding scope, welcoming news that came from their 'civilised' Christian world, while fearing an influx to Lagos of people from the hinterland, imagining the hinterland instead as a region suffused with people just like them.

The travelogues flourished within a culture of intense and exciting literary experimentation in the newspapers, and the travel writers were part of a group of writers and intellectuals who established much of Lagos's early print and literary culture. Alongside local news, the newspapers printed a variety of literary texts, ranging from *oríkí*²⁴ to biography, history to poetry and plays. The first Yoruba novels or novelettes, one by E. A. Akintan, editor of the newspaper *Eletí-Ofe*, and the other I.B. Thomas's *Ìtàn Èmi Sègilólá*, were serialised in the newspapers in 1928 and 1929 respectively. The existence of the travel narratives demonstrates that writers were experimenting with narrative before the emergence of more famous fictional texts such as *Ìtàn Èmi Sègilólá*. The later travel writing series competed for space with *Ìtàn Èmi Sègilólá*; Thomas's 1929 'Ero L'Ọna' stops abruptly before its promised ending, and is followed very soon after by *Ìtàn Èmi Sègilólá*. Though Thomas mentions readers' requests for further travel writing series, no such readers' letters were actually published, unlike *Ìtàn Èmi Sègilólá*, which provoked a flurry of readers' comments. While this may have been a result of Thomas' growing skill in self-promotion, it seems also likely that the travel series were not as successful as *Ìtàn Èmi Sègilólá*, hence the entrepreneurial Thomas's switch to experiment with a new genre. So, the travel narratives emerged at a time when newspaper writers, editors and proprietors were playing with the possibilities that print offered in terms of audience, genre and style.

The travel writing context in Lagos

But why did the writers light upon travel writing in their literary experiments? Travel writing had some precedent in Lagos. From the nineteenth century, missionaries had kept detailed journals of their Nigerian travels to be published by their parent organisations, such as the Church Missionary Society and the Southern Baptist Convention. Local and/or Saro missionaries²⁵ also published accounts of their travels; Samuel Ajayi Crowther published an English-language account of a journey 'from Lokoja to Bida, on the River Niger, and thence to Lagos, on the sea coast from November 10th 1871, to February 8, 1872,' while Bishop S.C. Phillips turned brief notes in Yoruba in his diary into a full day-by-day narrative of a journey around Ondo in 1928.²⁶ Such reports were available in Lagos at the time, and the newspaper travel writers may have read them, ensconced as they were in early Christian circles in Lagos. Many more travel narratives by both foreign and local travellers went unpublished. American Baptist missionary William Clarke's accounts of his travels around the Yoruba-speaking region in 1854-58, for instance, were not published for over a hundred years, until Nigerian historian

²³ R. Nnodim, 'Configuring audiences in Yorùbá novels, print and media poetry', *Research in African Literature* 37, 3 (2006), pp. 154-176.

²⁴ Oral praise or attributive poetry.

²⁵ I use the term 'local' here to refer to non-European or non-American missionaries and clergy, usually from Lagos or Sierra Leone, often Saros who claimed ancestry in the Yoruba-speaking region.

²⁶ Many such unpublished accounts are available in the diaries, journals and letters preserved in the National Archives of Nigeria in Ibadan.

J.A. Atanda published an edited edition, stressing its importance as both Yoruba and missionary history.²⁷

Outside the missions, European and American colonial travellers and explorers wrote accounts of their journeys to Nigeria, a few of which become canonical, such as the accounts of Mary Slessor, Anna Hinderer and Mary Kingsley. The Lagos newspapers printed foreign travel writing about Lagos; the *Lagos Weekly Record* of 1910, for instance, printed an article called 'Impressions of Lagos' by Frank Voce,²⁸ followed by 'Lagos Through Foreign Eyes' by 'A Traveller'.²⁹ Travel accounts by Europeans in Nigeria were reviewed in the Lagos newspapers with a familiarity with the conventions of travel writing. The *Lagos Standard* gave a sardonic account of a talk in London by 'Captain E.A. Steel, RFA,' who had taken part in an expedition in Southern Nigeria. Deploring Steel's account of tribes, bows and arrows, human sacrifice and fattening ceremonies, the *Standard* retorts 'It is surprising that at this enlightened day, any one should be found bold enough to try to palm off such tales upon the public, and more surprising still that people are to be found who are simple enough to listen to, and receive them in all seriousness[...]What the average stay-at-home Englishman does *not* know about West Africa and West African affairs would fill a large book'.³⁰

It is conceivable that this circulating travel writing influenced the newspaper travel narratives. They shared a first-person narrative, often an epistolary format, observations of people and places, and linear chronological ordering. Though the newspaper travel writers never alluded to such narratives, the existence of these texts may have alerted them to a useful genre, and moreover to have validated it as a legitimate enterprise, tied up in the signifiers of 'civilisation'. This is not to say, however, that the travel writers were 'localising' or 'hybridising' a European genre; the travel narratives grew out of a specific local experimentation with genre, style and form, and also out of a complex relationship between Lagos, the Yoruba-speaking hinterland, and the rest of Nigeria, as I start to demonstrate in this article. Unlike the comparative case of Swahili *habari* travelogues, the newspaper travel writers were not encouraged in their writing by European colonial officials or scholars, who in the Swahili context saw *habari* as valuable ethno-historical material.³¹ The remainder of this article explores some of the local contexts and discourses out of which Lagos travel writing emerged, looking in particular at the writers' ideas about the benefits of travel writing, and travel as a signifier of 'civilisation'.

An elite group of writers and travellers

By the early twentieth century the newspapers were reporting increasingly on the social, business and political travels of elite locals within Nigeria, and between the West African coast and England. Travel by road and rail was still an expensive and exclusive pursuit; by the 1930s there were around 700 new cars registered in Nigeria each year.³² The steamers and railways were run by the colonial authorities or European companies. But travel was gradually opening up to a wider social base. Despite their elite outlook, the newspapers called for an increase in third class carriages on trains, and reported with approval the rise in train passengers from the Hinterland. As well as noting (perhaps somewhat regretfully) how many 'ordinary' Lagosians owned bicycles and used the trams, as early as 1913 the *Weekly Record* was documenting the

²⁷ W.H. Clarke and J.A. Atanda, *Travels and Explorations in Yorubaland, 1854-1858* (Ibadan, 1972).

²⁸ F. Voce, 'Impressions of Lagos', *Lagos Weekly Record* (May 14, 1910) p. 5.

²⁹ A Traveller, 'Lagos Through Foreign Eyes', *Lagos Weekly Record* (Aug 6, 1910), p. 3.

³⁰ 'Lagosian On Dits', *Lagos Standard* (March 10, 1909), p. 4.

³¹ T. Geider, 'Early Swahili Travelogues', *Matatu*, 9 (1992), pp. 27 – 65.

³² F.G. Omiunu & A.G. Onokerhoraye, *Transportation and the Nigerian Space Economy* (Benin, 1995), p. 115.

growth of 'native'-owned transport operators in Lagos such as the Obasa 'Anfani' bus and the Dawodu transport service.

Occasionally the travels of non-elites made it into print, such as the memoirs of the pseudonymous 'Joe Mullen,' a soldier who travelled from the Gold Coast to Cameroon to fight during the First World War, and whose diaries of his travels were printed in the *Gold Coast Leader*. Mullen's text, Stephanie Newell points out, is an unusual instance of the voice of an 'ordinary' Gold Coaster, a clerk of the 'intermediate classes' being given space in the otherwise elite Gold Coast newspapers.³³ The Nigerian papers similarly occasionally related stories and reports from regional correspondents in which we glimpse the travel of non-elite 'natives,' but these accounts are often fragments only, retold by the papers with the travellers' own voices obscured.

As Echeruo has suggested, Lagos's elite saw themselves at this time as distinct from the hinterland in their claims to 'civilization'.³⁴ Many of the Lagos elite, who were mostly Christians, had by this time undergone education in English, and could write equally as well in English and Yoruba. The Yoruba newspapers, as Karin Barber has shown, had a paternalistic, didactic attitude towards non-elite Lagosians, whom they saw themselves as championing. They wrote their newspapers in Yoruba partly to cater to a middling group who had some literacy in Yoruba, but not English.³⁵ Simultaneously, a growing number of Lagosians were re-claiming their ancestral links to the Yoruba-speaking hinterland, and the newspapers often printed articles about Yoruba history and culture.

The travel writers were a close-knit group of Lagosians who shared a distinctive background, and who, judging by the newspapers, knew intimately of one another's comings and goings. Their position somewhat echoes that of the 'creole pioneers' Benedict Anderson identifies as central to early south American print culture and nationalism, but unlike Anderson's southern American creole pioneers, born in south America but of Spanish ancestry, Lagos's intellectual elite were not intellectually and socially homeless, of neither European culture nor Yoruba.³⁶ Rather, they were a self-confident group who considered themselves distinctly Lagosian in their in-between-ness, who saw themselves to bear the responsibility of translating 'civilised' life into specific local circumstances, and who resisted European colonial culture and politics when they saw it to be at fault. There were variations in politics in the Lagos newspapers of the 1920s, but what they shared was a certainty that they were the intellectual powerhouse of Lagos, and a fondness for fierce and often florid debate over the issues of the day.

Why travelling and travel writing?

The Lagos travel writers' motivation for travelling was not, in the first instance, to publish travel writing. For Thomas especially, travelling was a necessity of his work as a newspaper editor, stemming from the need to sell his newspaper and extend its geographical reach. In the opening instalment of his 1929 'Ero L'Qna', Thomas informs his readers that he is setting out on a journey 'for the benefit and the progress of this newspaper,' and he reminisces about a previous journey as far as Minna, Jos, Kaduna and Kano which 'made my newspaper many friends'.³⁷ In his 1931 tour, he reports on the success of these marketing trips: 'the newspaper

³³ J.G. Mullen with Stephanie Newell, 'An Extract from 'My Experience in Cameroons During the War'', *Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute*, 78 (2008), pp. 401-409.

³⁴ Echeruo, *Victorian Lagos*, pp. 29-49.

³⁵ Barber, *Print Culture*, pp. 32-33.

³⁶ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983).

³⁷ I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Qna', *Akede Eko* (April 11, 1929), p. 7.

Akede Eko has become exceedingly well-established in Ilesha, the fame of *Akede Eko* has no competitor in Ilesha[...]I also tried to establish my newspaper *Akede Eko* in these new towns: Oyo, Awe, Ogbomoso, Akure, Ondo, Owo, Benin City, Onitsha, Enugu, Aba, and not forgetting Port Harcourt, where *Akede Eko* has become a native of that town'.³⁸

Thomas markets the newspaper in any spare moment on the journey to the local literate elites, manipulating his personal networks:

'I had a great opportunity that evening to announce or advertise my newspaper *Akede Eko* in the meeting of the District Council this evening in Ijebu-Ode. I got this opportunity thanks to my dear friend, the slender and kind-hearted gentleman, the highly respected D.A Fawehinmi, who had begged for this great opportunity for me from Archdeacon S.C. Phillips, who is the Chairman of the great District Council.'³⁹

It was not all networking and meetings, though. The word Thomas uses to describe selling the newspaper is '*ipolowo*,' meaning 'hawking,' and indeed, Thomas claims he 'went all day, from morning till evening, in the heat of the sun through all of Port Harcourt in order to hawk my newspaper to all the people from door-to-door. My lower back wanted to snap because of the bicycle which I rode until dark today'.⁴⁰

Beyond business interests, local politics stimulated many of the journeys, particularly shorter narratives detailing visits by Associations to their hometowns. Even those who were not travelling for specifically political reasons were interested in current affairs and regional politics; both Thomas and Akintan write of visiting the deposed Eleko of Lagos in exile in the hinterland town of Oyo,⁴¹ offering descriptions of their 'great sorrow'⁴² at his plight.⁴³ Many of the travel writers pay visits to Obas and other political leaders, not just out of the necessity of receiving an Oba's blessing to visit a town, but also to display their entrenchment in the politics of the region.

But beyond these pragmatic reasons for travelling, the travel writers also conceived of benefits to themselves and their readers from both travelling and travel writing. Many of the writers saw travel narratives as a form of near-mimesis which could give stay-at-home readers access to the edification to be gained from travelling. Before beginning the 1929 series of 'Ero L'Qna', Thomas devotes a whole article titled 'Irin-Ajo' ('Journeys' or 'Travelling') to the importance of travel and travel writing. He begins by remarking that travelling represents 'an

³⁸ '[I]rohin "Akede Eko" yi ti fi ese mu'le to ni igboro ilu Ilesha, okiki iwe irohin "Akede Eko" ko ni egbe ni igboro ilu Ilesha[...] mo ti tun gbiyanju lati fi ese iwe irohin "Akede Eko" na mu'le ninu awon ilu titun wonyi bi:- Oyo, Awe, Ogbomoso, Akure, Ondo, Owo, Benin City, Onitsha, Enugu, Aba, laiso ti ilu Port Harcourt to je pe iwe irohin "Akede Eko" ti di onile ati olona ni igboro ilu na'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Qna', *Akede Eko* (March 14, 1931), p. 6. All translations from newspapers in this article are my own.

³⁹ 'Mo ni anfani nla l'asale ojo oni lati se ikede tabi ipolowo iwe irohin mi "Akede Eko" ninu ipade Igbimo District Council ti nwon se ipade won ni irole ojo oni ni Ijebu Ode; a fun mi ni anfani yi nipa ola ore mi owon julio eyi ni opelepele enirere Eni-Owo D.A. Fawehinmi, eniti o toro anfani nla na fun mi l'owo Eni-Owo Archdeacon S.C. Phillips to nse Alaga fun apejo Ajo Igbimo nla na'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Qna', *Akede Eko*, (October 17, 1931), p. 4.

⁴⁰ '[F]un odidi ojo oni lati owuro sule ojo na ni mo fi nwo orun yika gbogbo ilu Pota lati lo se ipolowo lati lo se iwe irohin mi yi fun awon enia lati ojule kan de ekeji. Ibara'di mi fe le se nipa keke ologere ti mo gun sule ojo yi'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Qna', *Akede Eko* (May 23, 1929), p. 7.

⁴¹ The Eleko was the monarch of Lagos who had been deposed and exiled to Oyo by the colonial government in 1925.

⁴² '[I]banuje nla'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Qna', *Akede Eko* (February 14, 1931), p. 7.

⁴³ As Karin Barber has shown, it was the Eleko's exile that had itself prompted the founding of several of the Yoruba newspapers, in response to the political crisis that ensued; Barber, *Print Culture*, p. 32.

important opportunity in our lives, as human beings,⁴⁴ and encourages ‘our people’ to travel more:

‘And it would be a very good thing if we were to see some of our people once in a while travelling about the world, as an education, and most particularly to see the great work of God in foreign lands.’⁴⁵

Thomas reminds his readers that they are fortunate to have opportunities to travel:

‘Many people will remember that in the olden days it would take a traveller several days on the road to get from Lagos to Abeokuta, but today, if one leaves Lagos for Abeokuta in the morning, that person will eat lunch in Abeokuta. We give this as one small example, because many of you, our readers, will remember other things like this, about the opportunities for travel that we all have in today’s world.’⁴⁶

Thomas encourages his readers to take advantage of this ease of travelling, since ‘it is very good to travel’⁴⁷ and moreover remarks that it is a pity that many Lagosians who have travelled do not ‘talk about all the things they laid eyes on during the journey, for their acquaintances to hear’.⁴⁸ He concludes his piece by advising the reader to ‘[b]e prepared to see wisdom written in the beautiful journeys of the respected Editor.’⁴⁹ For Thomas, then, the benefits of travelling such as *ogbón* (wisdom or good sense) are conferred not only on the traveller, but also on those who hear about the journey; the ideal traveller should broadcast his or her experience more widely, and print allows Thomas to do this.

In 1950, the Yoruba Translation Committee of Ibadan published a pamphlet called ‘Anfani Irin-Ajo’ (‘The Benefits of Travel’), a Yoruba translation of an Efik text by E.N. Amaku, a novelist and poet from Calabar.⁵⁰ Though this pamphlet was published later and outside Lagos, it nonetheless draws on strikingly similar ideas about travel. Amaku writes that ‘there is scarcely anything in this world which offers more benefits for people than travelling’.⁵¹ He adds that ‘[s]ince time immemorial people have known these benefits. In all kinds of town and times we have seen brave travellers; several of them are famous people’.⁵² Amongst other benefits such as gaining expertise in trade, and health benefits, he devotes much of the first part of the pamphlet to the benefits of knowing places beyond one’s own home: ‘great hills,’ he tells us, ‘with fog covering their peaks, the wide sea which goes on forever, and the things that dwell in it, are not things that we can see near us. The traveller alone can enjoy these things in

⁴⁴ ‘Irin ajo je anfani pataki kan ninu igbesi aiye awa omọ-enia’; I.B. Thomas, ‘Irin-Ajo’, *Akede Eko* (April 11, 1929), p. 6.

⁴⁵ ‘Ohun ti yio si dara pupọ ni bi a ba nri ninu awọn enia wa ti nwon yio ma se ara won lekankan lati ma rin ajo kakiri-aiyegegebi ekọ ati papa gidi lati ri işe nla Olorun Olodumare ni ile ajeji.’ Thomas, ‘Irin-Ajo’ (1929), p. 6.

⁴⁶ ‘Pupọ enia yio ranti pe lasiko lailai o ni iye ojo ti awon Arin-irin-ajo ni lati gba l’ona ki nwon to ti Eko de ilu Abeokuta, şugbon l’oni, bi enia dide l’Eko lati lo si Abeokuta l’owuro, oluware yio jeun osan l’Abeokuta; awa kan se eyi ni apere kekere sa ni, nitoripe pupọ enyin okawe wa yio ranti awon nkan miran bawonyi nipa anfani ti gbogbo wa ni l’aiye l’oni nipa irin-ajo-ririn.’ Thomas, ‘Irin-Ajo’ (1929), p. 6.

⁴⁷ ‘O dara pupọ lati rin irin ajo’; Thomas, ‘Irin-Ajo’ (1929), p. 6.

⁴⁸ ‘[N]won ko so gbogbo ohun ti oju won ba pade ninu irin ajo na fun awon omọ elegebe won gbọ’; Thomas, ‘Irin-Ajo’ (1929), p. 6.

⁴⁹ ‘E mura lati ri oğbon ko ninu arewa irin ajo gbajumọ Editor na’; Thomas, ‘Irin-Ajo’ (1929), p. 6.

⁵⁰ E.N. Amaku, ‘Anfani Irin-Ajo’ (trans. Yoruba Traditional Committee, Ibadan) (Ibadan, 1950).

⁵¹ ‘Şaşa nkan aiye yi li o se anfani fun enia ju irin ajo lo’, Amaku, ‘Anfani Irin-Ajo’, p. 3.

⁵² ‘[L]ati aiyebaiye wa ni awon enia ti mo anfani yi. Ni oniruru ilu ati igba ni a ti nri awon ogboiya arinrin-ajo, omiran ninu won si je olokiki enia’; Amaku, ‘Anfani Irin-Ajo’, p. 3.

various towns'.⁵³ To this list of natural wonders he adds 'dazzling houses, ships, aeroplanes, bridges over rivers, huge lorries and great towns'.⁵⁴

As well as the variety and glory of nature and manmade spectacle, Amaku points to the benefits of travel in terms of knowledge: 'travelling will teach you how to know the character of others through visiting them, and experiencing their behaviour and their surroundings,'⁵⁵ and he explains how one can judge the character of one's own town and people better once one has travelled out so one has something to compare it to. He concludes by arguing for the importance of travelling as education:

'It's no exaggeration, the lessons [èkò] that we learn on a journey have no comparison. The traveller sees for himself things that we tell other people about. The lessons learnt by someone who is travelling about like this will be more permanent than those of the person who sits in one place.'⁵⁶

For Amaku, then, one of the important benefits of travel was èkò, lessons or education, gained by seeing a place with one's own eyes, and by taking that knowledge back home to better evaluate one's people and their way of life. The Lagos newspaper travelogues shared this sense of the importance of educating their readers through travel and travel writing. In his 1926 'Ero L'Ọna', Thomas asks his readers to 'please read my news as a lesson [èkò],'⁵⁷ and explains that he is writing for 'the benefit of you our readers, men and women, children and elders, who have not yet had the opportunity to travel on the sea or by car around the land'.⁵⁸

But what exactly were these lessons? Despite their expectation of self-improvement through knowledge, these texts are not voyages of self-discovery, as David Spurr identifies in 'an entire tradition of Western travel writing which makes the experience of the non-Western world into an inner journey, and in doing so renders that world as insubstantial, as the backdrop of baseless fabric against which is played the drama of the writer's self'.⁵⁹ Thomas, for instance, envisions himself as a reporter substantiating the country beyond Lagos for his readers: 'Since I have the opportunity to go and know these important Itsekiri and Ijaw towns themselves,' he writes, 'this will give me a great chance to give you interesting news about the characteristics and ways of these people in the land of their birth'.⁶⁰ He particularly enjoys reporting on the Itsekiri greeting he picks up:

'As I stood on the edge of the road to my house, I heard: 'Ndo, ado! Ndo, ado! Ndo, ado!!!' This was the language that the Itsekiri were using to greet one another. They have no other words for greetings, just this alone. If they greet you in the

⁵³ 'Awọn oke nlanla, ti ikuku bo ọ̀nso ori won, omi okun nla ti o tẹ̀ lẹ̀ titi ati awọn ohun ti ngbe ninu rẹ̀ ki iṣẹ̀ ohun ti a le ri nitosi wa. Arinrinajo nikan ni o le gbadun awọn nkan wọ̀nyi ni ilu miran'; Amaku, 'Anfani Irin-Ajo', p. 5.

⁵⁴ '[I]le alarabara, awọn ọ̀kọ omi, ọ̀kọ ofurufu, tabi afara ori awọn odo, awọn ọ̀kọ ti o tobi ati awọn ilu nlanla', Amaku, 'Anfani Irin-Ajo', p. 5.

⁵⁵ '[A]rinrin-ajo a ma kọ lati mọ iwa awọn ẹ̀lomiran nipa bibẹ wọn wo, ati nipa riri ihuwasi wọn ati ayika wọn'; Amaku, 'Anfani Irin-Ajo', p. 5.

⁵⁶ '[K]i iṣẹ asọdun, ẹ̀kọ ti a nkọ ninu irin-ajo ko ni ẹ̀gbẹ, iriri oju ni arinrin-ajo fi nri ohun ti a nrohin fun ẹ̀lomiran. Ẹ̀kọ ti ẹniti nrin kiri bayi ba kọ, a ma fi ẹ̀sẹ mulẹ ju ti ẹniti o joko si oju kan o'; Amaku, 'Anfani Irin-Ajo', pp. 5-6.

⁵⁷ '[E] jowo, ẹ ma ka irohin mi wọ̀nyi gẹ̀gẹbi ẹ̀kọ'. I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Eleti-Ofe* (April 28, 1926), p. 8.

⁵⁸ '[F]un anfani ẹ̀yin ọ̀kawe wa lọkunrin, lobinrin, lọmọde ati lagba ti ẹ ko yi ti ni anfani lati rin irin-ajo lẹkan ri yala lori omi-okun tabi nipa Motọ lorilẹ'. I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Eleti-Ofe* (April 28, 1926), p. 8.

⁵⁹ D. Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: colonial discourse in journalism, travel writing and imperial administration* (Durham, 1993), p. 142.

⁶⁰ 'Bi o ti jẹ pe mo ni anfani lati lẹ mọ awọn ilu pataki to jẹ ilu awọn Ẹ̀kiri ati Ijọ papa, eyi yio fun mi laye dada lati fun nyin ni irohin aladun nipa iṣesi ati ilo awọn enia wọ̀nyi ni ilẹ ti a bi wọn si'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Eleti-Ofe* (June 2 1926), p. 8.

morning, or the afternoon, or the evening, or if they offer condolences for anything in life, there are no other words, just 'Ndo, ado! Ndo, ado! Ndo, ado!!!'⁶¹

He repeats this greeting several times, even entreating his readers to join him in using the greeting. Thomas expects his readers to share the knowledge he gains from his journey, whether the particular details he imparts about places, or the more general knowledge of the world beyond Lagos.

Sometimes the lessons these writers sought to teach their readers were not so much information about other places as moral and social lessons, tied up with observations about the nature of travelling. Akintan is able 'pull a little lesson'⁶² about life and death out of the rituals of his train journey to Ibadan:

'To my eyes the train resembled this world in which we live: when we are born into it, we are there with our Tickets, some go on short journeys, perhaps from Lagos to Agege; others go on quite a long journey, such as Alagbado to Lafenwa, and others go on a huge journey, from Ifo to Ibadan or Kano, thus I started to think these things to myself. As each person produced his Ticket for the conductor when they got down, so we human beings leave our tickets before we can leave life; as the journeys of some are not far, so the days of others are not many in the world before they go.

I thought again to myself: as they happily greeted those who got off, so, over there, they will welcome with happiness those who die. As they happily greeted those new ones who just entered the train, so we ourselves happily greet newborn children who have just come into the world. Thus it was that I sat in a quiet corner of the train where I was thinking all these things.'⁶³

Akintan characterises his extended metaphor as a 'lesson' (*èkò*) for both himself and his readers. Elsewhere, travel writers similarly use Yoruba proverbs to instruct their readers in the social or moral truths, with Thomas in particular frequently quoting the proverb: 'We don't make friends with a traveller in order to rejoice, for the traveller will return home tomorrow.'⁶⁴

There was also a sense of 'civilisation' tied up with 'knowledge'. Transport and travel were closely associated with both colonialism and 'civilisation', a concept which was typically expressed in the newspapers as *òlájú* ('civilisation' or 'enlightenment') or *ilòsíwájú* ('progress' or 'development'). In his classic study of *òlájú*, J.D.Y. Peel argues that the notion of *òlájú* is specifically linked in Yoruba discourse to individual and collective exposure to the outside

⁶¹ 'Bi mo ti duro l'enu ona ile mi, beni mo ngbo: 'Ndo, ado! Ndo, ado! Ndo, ado!!!' eyi ni ede ti awon Şekiri fi nki enia; ko si ede miran fun won mo lati fi ki enia bikoşe awon ede yi nikan; bi nwon ma ki o ku owuro tabi ku asan ati ku ale, tabi bi nwon yio ba o kedun fun ohunkohun laiye yi, ko si ede miran fun won mo bikoşe: 'Ndo, ado! Ndo, ado! Ndo, ado!!!' I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ona', *Eleti-Ofe* (May 26, 1926), p. 8.

⁶² '[Y]o ekò kekere kan lati inu re'; E.A. Akintan, 'Irin Ajo Lati Eko Lo si Ilesha', *Eleti-Ofe*, (November 24, 1926), p. 9.

⁶³ 'Loju mi oko Reluwe dabi aiye ti a wa yi; nigbati a bi wa sinu re awa pelu Ticket wa lo wa; elomiran nlo si ona ajo ti o kuru boya lati Eko de Agege; awon elomiran wa lati lo si irin ajo ti o gun die, bi Alagbado titi de Lafenwa; awon elomiran si wa lati rin ona ajo gigan, bi Ifo lo si Ibadan tabi Kano, bayi ni mo beresi ro nkan wonyi loka ara mi. Gegebi olukuluku ti nfi Ticket re fun Ogako nigbati o ba to ati bo silo; begege ni awa eda nfi Ticket wa silo ki a to le kuro laiye; gege bi ona ajo awon elomiran ko ti gun begege ni ojo ori awon elomiran ki ipolaiye ki nwon to lo. 'Mo si tun nro loka mi wipe bi nwon ti nfi tayo-tayo ki awon ti o bo silo, begege ni nwon yio ma fi tayo-tayo gba awon ti o ba ku lohun; bi nwon tin fi tayo-tayo ki awon titun ti o sese wo inu oko, begege ni awa papa ma nfi tayo-tayo ki omotun ti a sese bi sinu aiye; bayi ni mo joko ni koroko kan ninu oko ti mo si nro gbogbo nkan wonyi'; E.A. Akintan, 'Irin Ajo Lati Eko Lo si Ilesha', *Eleti-Ofe*, (November 24, 1926), p. 9.

⁶⁴ 'A ki nse ore ero ka yo, Ero nre ile re lola'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ona', *Akede Eko* (March 14, 1931), p. 6.

world (both local and global), particularly education, world religions, external travel and trade, and so to coming to 'enlightenment' and new ideas through access to a mixture of local and foreign influences.⁶⁵ From the colonial era, *òlájú* began to be used to refer to the 'cultural package' brought from outside by missionaries. Lisa Lindsay suggests that while colonial notions of 'modernization' encapsulated ideas about industrialisation, labour, regulation of time and the nuclear family, *òlájú* suggested a different conception of 'enlightenment,' used to describe 'those who were not necessarily well-educated, but who gained worldly knowledge by pursuing trading opportunities away from the hometown.'⁶⁶

As Lindsay describes, railway workers in the 1950s were encouraged with a free travel allowance to travel the railways during their free time. But as early as 1913 the *Lagos Weekly Record* had reported approvingly on the beginnings of such a scheme:

'The grant of free passages to Native Clerks in the Government Service and their families on Government vessels and railways is a generous provision which should encourage clerks on leave to travel and widen their ideas. The clerks are poorly paid as a rule and this provision confers on them a great boon.'⁶⁷

The newspaper envisages workers 'widening their ideas' by travelling; Lindsay points out, too, that while the colonial authorities saw the free travel allowance as a way of allowing migrant workers to maintain contact with 'extended families' in their hometowns (reinforcing colonial conceptions about migrant labour and family ties), workers themselves often split their travel allowances between their hometowns and elsewhere, 'exploring unfamiliar parts of the country'.⁶⁸ One of the train drivers Lindsay spoke to explained that he travelled to faraway places such as Enugu and Kano during his leave, for the sake of knowledge and self-improvement: 'I can tell more of these places than someone who has not travelled'. Such travel, Lindsay argues, contributed to the railway workers' image of themselves as 'modern, cosmopolitan' men.⁶⁹

There was simultaneously a discourse developing in the Lagos newspapers about the value of travel as a leisure activity, which drew on similarly complex notions of 'civilisation'. Though West Africans had been travelling for a variety of purposes for thousands of years, pleasure and leisure travel by train and steamer seemed a 'civilised,' innovative and newsworthy form of travel to the papers. In 1907 the *Standard* began a campaign to encourage leisure travel. Three times that year, it called for dedicated boats and trains for leisure outings:

'The usual places of resort on public holidays – Victoria and Ebute Metta – were thronged with holiday-makers on Easter Monday. It is to be regretted that no other places are available for persons who, once or twice a year, the only times they have to spare, would like a change from the stereotyped and dull routine of life in Lagos. With a railway running some hundred miles into the interior, there is no reason why excursion trains might not be run on holiday occasions to some point in the Hinterland, giving people the advantage of seeing something of the country without loss of time from business.'⁷⁰

⁶⁵ J. Peel, 'Olaju: A Yoruba Concept of Development', *The Journal of Development Studies*, 14 (1978), pp. 139-165.

⁶⁶ L. Lindsay, *Working with Gender: Wage Labor and Social Change in Southwestern Nigeria* (Portsmouth, 2003), pp. 14-18.

⁶⁷ 'Weekly Notes', *Lagos Standard* (February 1, 1913), p. 4.

⁶⁸ Lindsay, *Working with Gender*, p. 156.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁷⁰ 'Lagosian On Dits', *Lagos Standard* (April 3, 1907), p. 4.

By 1913, the authorities seemed to be in agreement with the papers, and a 'Special Excursion Train' was put on for the August Bank Holiday, running between Lagos and Abeokuta.

The Lagos travel writers did not see themselves as tourists or leisure travellers; as we have seen, they were travelling for business. But in their travels they began, perhaps inadvertently, 'scripting' tentative leisure travel routes that would persist for another hundred years (in Derek Gregory's sense of the performative 'scripting' of European tourist routes in colonial Egypt);⁷¹ so, for instance, Ajiṣafẹ, Akintan and Thomas all visit Ile-Ife, the mythical home of all the Yoruba people, and a site which became an important part of the Nigerian tourist route, traced by guidebooks and travel writers alike.

If the discourse of *òlájú* emphasises the benefits of travel, however, 'civilisation' also brought its discontents. At the same time as the newspapers celebrated the spectacle of new travel infrastructure, they wrote of accidents between bicycles and pedestrians, of shipwrecks and train derailing, of hinterland 'natives' failing to understand the dangers of crossing the road in front of trains. They use travel to critique 'civilization'; the *Standard* remarks:

'All the hurry, bustle and activity of modern civilised life, the railroad pace at which everything moves, the high pressure state of existence, the dress, the food, and other acquired tastes are, it will be confessed, but ill-adapted to local requirements. The African was not made for such a life [...] A return to the simple life is the urgent call to the educated Native in West Africa.'⁷²

The newspapers reported transport and travel as a sphere where colonial power was made manifest. The more radical papers sometimes reported on travel as a site of conflict or disparity between coloniser and 'native'. In 1909, the *Lagos Standard* complains of how railway passengers had been forced to stand in the corridor: 'the only reason for all the inconvenience experienced was that several European passengers, who were in first class, had made a pantry of the second class where their pots and pans with their boys were placed'.⁷³ I.B. Thomas was outraged at how Nigerian steamer passengers had to undergo humiliating quarantine procedures while European passengers did not.⁷⁴ The newspapers thus also constructed travel as a site where colonial power was made manifest, where the stratifying politics of colonialism were played out, and sometimes resisted.

Many writers in the newspapers emphasised the visual and auditory spectacle of the new colonial forms of transport, their incredible speed and ability to telescope distance, and I draw on Brian Larkin's concept of the 'colonial sublime' to suggest that this spectacle helped reinforce the power of the colonial regime.⁷⁵ The newspapers wondered at the railways' speed and comfort and their great power to transform the landscape, honeycombing the continent, spectacularly telescoping journey times and opening up new routes. The newspapers were proud of the pace of 'progress', and keen to show that they were well-connected and well-informed about the growth of travel infrastructure.

Educated, elite Lagosians who had been exposed to colonial transport for some time still wondered at the spectacle of travel, sometimes to their own benefit. I.B. Thomas's account of his journey by German steamer to Port Harcourt emphasises his 'resplendent enjoyment'⁷⁶ on board the ship, the 'delicious meals that they spread before me in infinite amounts',⁷⁷ the three

⁷¹ D. Gregory, 'Scripting Egypt: Orientalism and the Cultures of Travel' in James Duncan and Derek Gregory (eds.), *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing* (London, 1999), pp. 114-150.

⁷² 'A Serious Problem', *Lagos Standard* (February 13, 1907), p. 4.

⁷³ 'News Notes and Comments', *Lagos Standard* (August 11, 1909), p. 6.

⁷⁴ I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Eleti-Ọfẹ* (April 28, 1926), p. 8.

⁷⁵ B. Larkin, *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure and Urban Culture in Nigeria* (Durham, 2008).

⁷⁶ '[I]gbadun alarinrin'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (April 25, 1929), p. 7.

⁷⁷ '[A]wọn onjẹ-aladun ti nwọn fi su mi lainiye'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (April 25, 1929), p. 7.

beds provided just for him with 'light and fluffy pillows'⁷⁸ and electric fans, which 'worked all night'.⁷⁹ When Thomas later encounters a car belonging to friends in Aba, south-eastern Nigeria, he again stresses the spectacle of the encounter: the car is 'fine'⁸⁰ and 'glorious' or 'dazzling',⁸¹ so much so that it resembles the car that the Governor himself uses to 'show off his splendour in Lagos'.⁸² But Thomas also gestures here towards the use of spectacle to reflect his own power rather than simply to overwhelm and dazzle him. The driver of the car, who is also decked out 'in splendid style'⁸³ is dressed this way, Thomas jokes, because he had been told he was driving the editor of the *Akede Eko*, and that if he did not impress him, the paper would 'proclaim it for the world to hear'.⁸⁴ Though Thomas is dazzled by the car, the car impresses him through a calculated display of spectacle rather than because of any ignorance or naivety on Thomas's part. Thomas's own power generates the owner's desire to impress him through spectacle; moreover, that power is produced by Thomas's ability to manipulate the printed word.

Beyond these associations of travel with knowledge and spectacle, I.B. Thomas also claims an interest in wandering out of curiosity. While his steamer stops in Burutu, for instance, he 'used those two days to see the sights',⁸⁵ During his lengthy stay in Sapele, he takes a trip on the Benin River for 'an enjoyable rest and relaxation',⁸⁶ and explores the nearby town. Though Thomas is by no means a flâneur, he has an eye for gaining something from the travelling beyond his business interests. He also wields a romanticism about travel, as he reflects on his reasons for travelling despite his supposed reluctance:

'But what's to be done, friends, when money, which the Hausas call *Kudi*,⁸⁷ is calling you and won't be silent? Can you hear and pay no attention? By force you will have to answer the call; one wise Englishman said as much when he said that "Where duty calls
Man must obey".'⁸⁸

This romantic sense of *Kudi*, exoticised by the use of the Hausa word, 'calling' him to leave is counterpointed by his discussion of how '*kádàrà*' (a Yoruba ontological concept approximating to 'destiny' or 'predestination') similarly calls him to travel; though he experiences 'great sorrow' in leaving home, he asks: 'but what can one do except accept one's *kadara*?'⁸⁹ Thomas's invocation of *kádàrà* and *kudi* is typical of the rhetorical flourishes that pepper his text, but Thomas also uses this term to underline his exceptionalism as a traveller, as someone who travels more than most, because of the 'destiny' that has been allocated to him. Thomas often draws attention to how extensively he has travelled; he tells us he has travelled 'since I was a

⁷⁸ '[I]rõri mulõmulõ'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (April 25, 1929), p. 7.

⁷⁹ '[N]fi gbogbo oru na'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (April 25, 1929), p. 7.

⁸⁰ '[D]aradara'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (May 6, 1929), p. 7.

⁸¹ '[A]larabara'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (May 6, 1929), p. 7.

⁸² '[G]be oşo yõ ni igboro Eko'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (May 6, 1929), p. 7.

⁸³ '[F]a oşo yõ nipataki'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (May 6, 1929), p. 7.

⁸⁴ '[B]i iwõ ko ba fa oşo yõ, Akede yio kede re fun araiye gbõ'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (May 6, 1929), p. 7.

⁸⁵ '[M]o lo awõn oşo meji wõnyi lati lo fi ri arisa ilu Burutu'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Eleti-Ofe* (May 12, 1926), p. 7.

⁸⁶ '[I]tura ati orun aladun'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Eleti-Ofe* (June 16, 1926), p. 7.

⁸⁷ 'Kudi' is the Hausa word for 'money' or 'wealth', also with the sense of 'trade' or 'profit'.

⁸⁸ 'Şugbõn ewo ni şise, enikeji, nigbati owo ti awõn Gambari npe ni *Kudi* npe o, ti ko si dake, iwõ ha le ni iwõ ngbõ agbõya bi? Peļu tulasi iwõ yio ni lati je ipe na; Oyinbo oşogbõn kan ti soro tan nigbati o so bayi pe:-

"Where duty calls

Man must obey"; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Eleti-Ofe* (April 28, 1926), p. 8.

⁸⁹ '[Ş]ugbõn ewo ha ni şise, lehin pe ki oluware gba "kadara"; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (April 11, 1929), p. 7.

babe in arms, countless times across the sea, with my parents', ⁹⁰and from the time he was 'twelve years old I had been sent from Lagos to go to towns like Calabar, Bonny, Victoria, Cameroon, Fernando Po, Port Harcourt, and other towns besides'.⁹¹

Thomas also describes a more immediate sense of 'duty' calling him to travel, not only for the progress of his newspaper, but also for society at large:

'The people who read *Akede Eko* were as pleased to see me as to see an Oba! They were all very pleased to lay their eyes on me. And they were all very surprised to see that a young man like me, a small boy, is doing this kind of important work, for the good and the progress of the homeland of us black people. But it is the work of God!'⁹²

Thomas suggests that others shared this view of the importance of the paper in the 'progress' of Africa; in Ogbomoso, he tells us, he visits N.D. Oyerinde, a local intellectual and historian, who 'praised me very much, saying that I was an intrepid editor, and he told me that it was very good that newspaper editors should travel to see and experience other things and towns like this, to report in their newspapers'.⁹³ Thomas seems to suggest that the distribution of his newspaper, and thence the spread of print culture, literacy and 'civilised' values, is his most important work, but in his report of Oyerinde's praise he also suggests that he saw his travel writing itself as being of social benefit.

In these travel narratives, the notion of *òlájú* has become individualised, with travel seen to benefit the individual, rather than the broader community. And yet, at the same time, travel *writing* becomes important as a way of broadcasting the benefits of travel more widely amongst the newspaper readers. The texts, however, are not mimetic in the sense that they appear to faithfully replicate the experience of travelling; these are very *textual* texts, overtly constructed as partial, incomplete narratives. Thomas momentarily allows a rupture in his rhetoric of the value of travel as he remarks on the singularity of his experience: 'the things the eyes see in a strange place can't be spoken of when one gets home,' he tells us.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, the writers aim to reproduce enough of the knowledge gained through travel to be able to confer it on their readers.

However, this travel writing is not educational in the sense of documenting people and places for posterity. Geider posits a close connection between auto-ethnography or ethno-history and travel writing in Swahili travelogues, part of the *habari* genre of historical writing, which were concerned with documenting their own culture, which they saw as distinctly local, under threat from the incoming colonial 'modernity' of the early twentieth century.⁹⁵ This desire to create a body of local knowledge about places and cultures is not at play in the Lagosian travel narratives, nor is there a desire to document one's own culture and locality to counter outsiders' ethnography, history or travel writing. Instead, most of the travel writers' texts are very rooted in their particular specificity in time and space; they are highly personalised narratives based on the writers' own experiences and itineraries, rather than

⁹⁰ '[L]ati ọmọ-ọwọ ni awọn obi mi ti ngbe mi la okun yi kọja lainiye igba'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (April 18, 1929), p. 7.

⁹¹ '[L]ati igbati mo ti wa niwọn ọmọ ọdun mejila ni a tin ran mi lati Eko lọ si awọn ilu bi: Calabar, Bonny, Vitoria, Fernando Po, Port Harcourt ati awọn ilu miran yida bẹ'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Eleti-Ofe* (July 21, 1926), p. 7.

⁹² '[G]eḡebi ọba ni awọn enia ti nwọn ka "Akede Eko" nyọ fere mọ mi, Inu gbogbo wọn dun pupọ lati fi oju wọn kan mi, ẹnu si ya wọn pupọ wipe ẹmi ọmọde kekere jojolo bitini bayi, ni mo nṣe iṣe nla bi irufe eyi, fun ire itesiwaju orile-ede awa enia dudu; ṣugbọn Iṣe Oluwa ni o!'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (February 21, 1931), p. 7.

⁹³ '[Y]in mi pupọ fun pe mo ḡ alakinkanju Oniwe-Irohin, o sọ fun mi pe eyi dara pupọ bi awọn oniṣe-iwe irohin ba le ma dakan rin irin-ajo lati le ma ri awọn ohun iriri yida awọn ilu miran bawonni fun rirohin sinu iwe irohin wọn'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (February 21, 1931), p. 6.

⁹⁴ '[O]hun ti oju ri ni mekun, ko ṣe de'le wi'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (May 23, 1929), p. 8.

⁹⁵ Geider, 'Early Swahili Travelogues'.

attempting to make more universal or timeless statements about the places to which they travel. Thomas's narratives in particular are suffused with his very bodily presence, as he writes frequently of his body and its functions, of his sweat, tears, backaches, clothes, tiredness, hunger and coldness.

This is not to say the writers are not interested in recording details about other people that they find striking. Akintan, for instance, sometimes describes local food on his journey throughout the Yoruba-speaking region, while Thomas describes dressing up for fun for photographs with his Lagosian host in Warri 'in the native clothing of the Itsekiri,'⁹⁶ and describes, as he walks from Oyo to Awe, the 'black *kijipa* cloth'⁹⁷ the locals were wearing. But these occasional details are not documented systematically or extensively, and the writers tend not to interpret them as anything beyond local colour or evidence of a lack of Lagosian 'civilisation'. Writers similarly do not engage in cultural collecting, documenting oral culture or local idiosyncrasies of history and language, as the writers of contemporaneous town histories (such as A.K. Ajişafe) do, except for occasional fragments of greetings.

Conclusion: Lagosian travel writing as a product of print culture

The travel writers of the Lagos newspapers of the 1920s and 30s were travelling primarily to develop the business interests and audiences of their newspapers, but travel narratives proved a useful forum for them to develop other preoccupations, such as displaying their sociability and their 'civilised' nature, and thinking about changing local and regional affiliations in the newly formed Nigeria. The travel narratives were an output of an increasingly confident and experimental Yoruba print culture which was playing with new ways of convening and addressing its audiences and new genres and rhetorical styles. The travel narratives were, above all, distinctively a product of print in early 20th century Lagos, which enabled them to bring together intertexts, to experiment with new forms, to address their known but growing audiences and to broadcast to these audiences the perceived benefits of travel.

Acknowledgements: I gratefully acknowledge the support of an Arts and Humanities Research Council Doctoral Studentship, which enabled me to carry out the research for this article, including my overseas study visit to Nigeria. I would also like to thank Professor Karin Barber for her comments on an earlier version of this article, the staff of the National Archives of Nigeria, Ibadan, and Joseph Ayodokun for research assistance in Ibadan.

⁹⁶[A] wọ aṣọ ni ti aṣa ibilẹ awọn ọmọ Şekiri'; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (April 11, 1931), p. 8.

⁹⁷ '[A]ṣọ kijipa dudu' [*kijipa* is a coarse rural cloth]; I.B. Thomas, 'Ero L'Ọna', *Akede Eko* (February 14, 1931), p. 7.

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Homesickness: An American History by Susan Matt. Oxford University Press, 2011. 360 pages. ISBN 978-0195371857, cloth, \$29.95

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Susan Matt's *Homesickness: An American History* is a wide-ranging study, focused on cultural concepts of homesickness throughout American history. Because her subject is an emotion, Matt is able to move across space and time, using homesickness as an organizing trope, a window into whatever setting breeds it. By doing so, she provides a premier example of how to study the history of emotions. Indeed, Matt is the coeditor, with Peter N. Stearns, of the new History of Emotions Series from University of Illinois Press. Though the book speaks to other historiographies concerning the United States—including immigration, westward migration, and the Civil War—the clear intention is to show how a focus on emotions can illuminate the lives of historical subjects. Matt does so skillfully, citing a wealth of sources and telling fascinating stories that render the past equally familiar and strange.

Homesickness is plotted chronologically and thematically; this organization allows for Matt to highlight the shifting ideas around homesickness and how they reflect and impact their historical situations. The first chapter, 'Emotions in Early America,' packs a plethora of characters and settings into its pages, underscoring the vastly different situations of the people inhabiting North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Matt discusses the disparate lives—and, thus, differing conceptions of homesickness—of slaves, indentured servants, the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts Bay's Puritans, Enlightenment thinkers, and American revolutionaries. Even within each group, ideas about home and attachment to place were not uniform or unchanging. For instance, 'Some Puritans saw their ability to withstand separation as proof of their piety; others reminded themselves that mortal life and earthly homes were but temporary and that their true home and eternal life were in heaven' (p. 19).

Understandings of homesickness began to undergo broad changes in America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. One reason for this was the 'powerful and liberating' idea of 'cosmopolitan, unfettered, happy individuals, open to the offerings of the world' (p. 28). This mythology became integral to the mythology of America, fueled by westward expansion and frontier stories. Even President Andrew Jackson—in quintessentially Jacksonian style—mused on migration and whites' exceptional propensity for it: "'To better their condition in an unknown land our forefathers left all that was dear in earthly objects. Our children by thousands yearly leave the land of their birth to seek new homes in distant regions'" (p. 41). All this rhetoric, though, could not save early republican Americans from 'painful lessons in individualism,' as thousands of Americans—from slaves separated from families to western missionaries to boys in boarding schools—dreamed of home and longed to return. Because 'the complex reality of movement became obscured' by uncomplicated myths, Americans of the nineteenth century onwards had little structure by which to understand these feelings and thus were 'unprepared for the emotional challenges they would face' (p. 74).

War is a theme that appears repeatedly in *Homesickness*. The different physical, temporal, and cultural settings of America's wars led to various responses to soldiers' homesickness. The

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third chapter, devoted to the Civil War, explores the ways ideas of duty, gender, home, and nationhood contributed to the lived experiences of soldiers and those they left behind. Matt weaves together stories of mothers seeing off their sons, Southerners defending their homes, and prisoners of war despairing in squalid quarters over Christmas. These situations were made all the more serious because of the widely-held opinion among medical professionals, drawn from 'European discourses on homesickness and nostalgia,' that yearning for home was in fact a disease, indeed a potentially fatal one. Soldiers' letters home—sources Matt mines perspicaciously—'indicate that many worried their homesickness might be a sign of weakness, make them unfit for duty, or even kill them' (p. 76). By the First World War, the American Psychological Association, recognizing the problems homesickness could create, 'attempted to screen out men with mental or emotional disabilities, for they believed that even mild problems in civilian life might become serious hindrances in wartime' (p. 178). Thus, homesickness was by then a clear sign of weakness, even unmanliness, and not a disease to which poor souls might succumb. In World War II, conglomerate groups like the United Service Organizations (USO) brought American comforts and goods to soldiers, providing various services including mailing services and American movies. Such acts served not to make soldiers long for U.S. soil but to alleviate their 'boredom' and 'anxiety' and thus assuage their homesickness (p. 204).

The book also contains insightful sections on immigration, the rise of consumer capitalism, changing American notions of success, and the role of the internet in contemporary thought about place and emplacement. The main thrust of the work is summed up concisely in its conclusion: 'Immigrants and native-born alike know what the emotional rules are in American culture, and by observing them they make their homesickness almost invisible' (p. 248). It is this ability to 'look behind' Americans' naturalized cultural assumptions that lends the book its strength. Matt's study deals just as much with the rhetoric of emotion as the emotion itself. In this way, she deftly navigates the emotionality of people which are so highly constructed and influenced by their own contexts, and yet still seem so universal and natural. This is the tension in which emotions history must live. Emotions are often cross-cultural and universal (or almost universal), but the cultural understandings of emotion vary widely. In turn, these notions and the connected rituals influence and even construct the way the emotion itself is experienced.

Homesickness is a welcome and needed addition to the small but budding historiography of emotions in the United States, complementing the work of scholars such as Peter Stearns, Carol Stearns, William Reddy, and John Corrigan. Some readers might be disappointed to find this cultural history less interdisciplinary than some other work on emotion, especially by European scholars. However, though Matt does not endeavor to engage cognitive psychology or philosophical theories of emotion, she makes a clear case at the outset for a why a historical study of emotions—and, by the same token, incorporating emotions into history—can be fruitful: to do so offers 'a record of intention, motivation and feeling. To focus only on external behaviors misses much of what went on in the past...[H]istorians of emotions argue that [emotions] are central to historical narratives, for their shifting meanings reveal much about the social attitudes and outlooks that were prevalent in earlier eras' (p. 9). *Homesickness* makes a persuasive case for this argument, using the emotion as a lens into whatever context in which it surfaces. Any one of the volume's six chapters reasonably could have been expanded into a book, and yet the treatment of each topic never seems rushed or too cursory, as the book maintains surprising depth despite its considerable breadth.

The British people and the League of Nations: Democracy, citizenship and internationalism, c.1918-45 by Helen McCarthy, Manchester University Press, 2011, 304 pages. ISBN: 978-0-7190-8616-8, Hardback, £65.00

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The third marquess of Salisbury, the oft-foreign secretary and prime minister of the late nineteenth century, doubted that the general public could ever be effectively educated in the nuances of diplomacy and thus grew fretful that extensions to the franchise would be injurious to British foreign policy.¹ His son – the great figurehead of the League of Nations Union (LNU) – Viscount Robert Cecil disagreed. Instead, he advocated the ‘New Diplomacy’ discourse that had developed during the First World War which contended that citizens (under the correct tutelage) should play a far more active role in international affairs and greater democratic accountability would increase the probability of peace. Helen McCarthy’s examination of the British people’s relationship with internationalism provides valuable insights into how successful the LNU was in achieving this goal.

McCarthy, firmly of the new political history mould, ‘conceptualises the League movement as a major presence within wider political culture, and one which contributed in important ways to the recasting of social, political, religious and imperial identities’ (p.6). The approach differs from the only other historical work published on the LNU, Donald Birn’s institutional history, which rests on a more traditional – albeit important – empirical base comprised of the papers of state and non-state policy makers.² McCarthy’s bibliography, like Birn’s, lists the private papers of prominent individuals affiliated with the LNU and its central archive, but also includes the papers held by a large variety of national collections and the records of LNU branches spanning the United Kingdom. McCarthy also departs from Birn and Martin Ceadel’s seminal study of the British peace movement, *Semi-Detached Idealists*, by adopting a mostly thematic structure. It comes at the expense of the relation of specific global events with British attitudes toward internationalism, but enables her to avoid framing the LNU’s activities within historiographical debates surrounding the efficacy of the League of Nations and appeasement, and take a detour from the well-trodden road-to-war narrative.³ More importantly, the approach allows for a greater focus on how the LNU related to the various identities and dynamics outlined below in order to better appreciate how issues gained popularity in both public and private spheres.

The sheer breadth of scope provided by the sources expose the extent to which the LNU attempted to appear non-partisan in order to attract a mass membership across divisions of politics, religion, class and gender. The task was not without its difficulties: the body was predominantly liberal, protestant, middle class and headed by a male inner circle of the executive. Nevertheless, the LNU enjoyed significant success in its goal to bring international affairs to the purview of a wider public. At its peak in 1931, its membership amounted to a little over 400,000 across 3,036 branches (p.4), one of which was located within a Debenhams London department

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¹ John Charmley, *Splendid Isolation? Britain and the Balance of Power, 1874-1914* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999), pp.195-6

² Donald Birn, *The League of Nations Union, 1918-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981)

³ Martin Ceadel, *Semi-Detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

store (p.165). The LNU was especially successful in attracting women to the cause – indeed 21 of the 38 national organisations that participated in the famous Peace Ballot (1934-5) in England and Scotland were women's associations (p.199). One of the finest chapters in the book applies gender analysis to the League Movement and reveals the methods undertaken to attract both men and women through gender stereotypes. Furthermore, the chapter demonstrates well McCarthy's observed need to correct historians' neglect of the role of women in international affairs after the Fourth Reform Act (p.192).

Much of the organisation's success in gaining support can be attributed to the LNU's assumed role as educator and the greater interest in international affairs that followed Europe's first total war. McCarthy outlines the LNU's endeavours to introduce lessons on the aims and activity of the League of Nations into schools and to internationalise universities. An examination of the annual Cecil Peace Prize, which awarded £100 to undergraduates for an essay on the maintenance of international peace relating to the League of Nations, may have been illuminating in this regard. Nevertheless, McCarthy provides more than enough evidence to reveal the impressive extent to which the LNU succeeded in internationalising education. An important observation is also made on how the general public proved particularly receptive to the LNU's campaigns: it sought not to contradict nationalist and imperialist values, but rather supplement them with internationalist tenets and thus produce world citizens capable of loyalty to league, empire and nation.

However, the LNU did not go unchallenged and McCarthy reveals the extent to which the Union feared the sway of other opinion formers, including the Northcliffe and Beaverbrook press. McCarthy's final chapter (and only chronologically structured one) charts how the international crisis of the late 1930s left little time for the LNU's guiding principle of non-partisanship, undermined its unity and led to its decline. Notwithstanding the lip service paid by the National Government to the value of the League of Nations during the 1935 election, divisions between Conservatives and the LNU were already apparent during the Peace Ballot. The trend was exacerbated by the LNU's denigration of government foreign policy and its accommodation of pacifists and the communist affiliated International Peace Campaign (IPC). The IPC's inclusion was doubly unfortunate as it also earned the chagrin of anti-communists within the Labour Movement. Although, not one of A.J.P. Taylor's troublemakers, the LNU, McCarthy concludes, played a significant role in democratising foreign policy by conveying the importance of international affairs to British citizens; even if the majority of their converts were middle class liberals – 'Britain's quiet citizens' (p.253).

Although greater analysis of the origins of the 'New Diplomacy' discourse may have further enlightened the reader, McCarthy's excellent study fills a sizeable gap in the existing literature. Notwithstanding the manifest progress being made in regard to the activity of non-state actors in twentieth century Britain, the attention given to those engaged with international affairs has been limited at best. McCarthy may not offer radically different conclusions on the LNU from those expressed by Birn, but by frequently shifting the spotlight towards the LNU's interaction with the British public – rather than with Whitehall and Westminster – readers are granted a much deeper understanding of the British relationship with internationalism. Indeed, it leads one to wonder what happened to it after 1945. *The British people and the League of Nations* thus deserves a large and varied readership.

Orientalists, Islamists and the Global Public Sphere: A Genealogy of the Modern Essentialist Image of Islam, Dietrich Jung. Equinox Publishing, 2011, 332 pages. ISBN: HB 9781845538996 £60.00/PB 9781845539009 £19.99.

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Dietrich Jung begins his genealogy of essentialism with a simple observation: ‘No scholarly erudition is required to see the enormous variety in both the political institutions and the walks of life in the Muslim world.’ (p. 1) Despite this diversity, the notion persists in both popular and academic circles that Islam is ultimately a violent, anti-modern religion, totally wedded to the political and social life of citizens in many countries and utterly opposed to the West and its social and intellectual liberties¹. Jung sets out to uncover how this notion took hold.

This question was of course most famously posed by Edward Said in his classic *Orientalism*, from which Jung’s own essay departs. Jung details Said’s polemical vitriol and the critiques which followed. Chief among these are Said’s reductive fusion of colonial policies and academic scholarship, and his facile continuity from medieval constructions of Muslims through to the modern. Jung highlights the critiques of Sadik al-Azm, describing how Said ignores ‘orientalism in reverse’ in which some Muslims essentialise ‘the West’ and adopt the orientalist perspective in their own self-definition².

If Jung’s project were just to revamp *Orientalism* in light of the criticism it has sustained, it would not warrant a book-length treatment. However, he views *Orientalism* not as the definitive word on the subject – to be accepted or rejected – but as the start of a long conversation to be continued by critics. Jung’s contribution is an attempt to show the development of this image, not as a unidirectional force imposed on Muslims by orientalist scholars in the West, but rather as a dialectical development to which Muslims and non-Muslims alike contributed.

The claims Jung makes are modest: he admits that his roster of exemplary figures through which to tell the history of orientalism is partial and selective. His chapters on German founders of Islamic studies and the influence of historical biblical criticism are helpful and sound, and they fill in areas Said neglected, thus disturbing the straight line drawn between scholarship and colonialism.

Jung’s theoretical model, however, is elaborate. He invokes the tools of world society and the global public sphere to decentre this essentialist image, frequently deploying the term ‘interconnectedness’ to describe the various personalities and perspectives. This model warrants further consideration as a way to explore sensibly the global development of ideas. However, in this instance his evidence is not convincing. While modernist Muslim intellectuals such as Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani and Sayyid Qutb are clearly influenced by Western orientalist conceptions of their

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¹ This is perhaps most clearly seen in the article and then book by Samuel Huntington on the ‘clash of civilizations’ and the writings of Princeton orientalist Bernard Lewis.

² Al-Azm’s critique came shortly after the original publication of Said’s book, in S.J. al-Azm, ‘Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse’, *Khamsin*, 8 (1981), 5-26. More recent considerations of the book and its legacy are the introduction to A.L. Macfie, ed., *Orientalism: A Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), and R. Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and their Enemies* (London: Allen Lane, 2006). The latter is especially useful, as it was written and published in a post-September 11 context, adding currency to the discussion.

religion and their compatriots, there is little sense of feedback which in turn enriches or corrects those conceptions. The genealogy Jung fabricates is more sequential, less interconnected.

Jung is correct to observe that '*like European intellectuals, non-Europeans developed their own semantics to grasp and debate the modern condition related to different historical trajectories, popular narratives and religious traditions*' (p. 115, emphasis mine). He thus effectively portrays the agency indigenous thinkers had in creating Islamic modernities. However, Jung also conceives 'the modern condition' as somehow external to Europeans themselves. This is unfortunately ahistorical and does not adequately reflect how scholars such as Ernest Renan, William Robertson Smith, or Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje would have imagined their position within the transformations taking place around them. Occasionally, Jung must insert a footnote or restate his thesis so as to cover a troublesome drift in his analysis: 'Given my theoretical perspective of an emerging modernity, this core [i.e. the West] is defined by means of power rather than of evolutionary origin.' (p. 155, fn 49)

Yet he cannot escape the fact of origin: these technological and social changes began in Europe and spread globally, inflicted on other nations rather than spontaneously growing from within. The global public sphere he invokes is therefore asymmetrical, as Jung himself observes. In his conclusion, he agrees with Said that we can only explain the 'global dominance' of this essentialist image 'by taking into account the impact of power on the generation and dissemination of knowledge.' (p. 271) He has softened *Orientalism's* polemical edge and nuanced the stark villainy of Western colonials and the innocent victimhood of Muslims. But he has not shared the burden of responsibility for creating and perpetuating this stereotype, likely because the blame is itself asymmetrical.

Racial Innocence: Performing American Childhood from Slavery to Civil Rights by Robin Bernstein.
New York University Press, 2011, 307 pages. ISBN: 978-0-8147-8708-3, Paperback, \$24.00

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What do *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, late-nineteenth century lard-substitute advertisements, and psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark's famed 'doll tests' have in common? Robin Bernstein contends that they comprise a repertoire of performances about how childhood innocence in the nineteenth and twentieth-century United States was 'raced white' (p.8). In her recent book, Bernstein uses social artifacts such as dolls, illustrations, theater props, figurines, texts, and ephemera to trace how the racialization of childhood innocence developed. She contends that whiteness was the cultural framework around which true childhood innocence could be formulated, and ultimately upheld as natural. Yet, as Bernstein effectively articulates, by the mid-twentieth century African Americans 'resisted and reconfigured racial ideologies,' upending the claims that such visions of childhood were at all natural (p.29).

As her argument suggests, central to Bernstein's method is the extraction of counternarratives from the ways that her subjects, often children, used historical artifacts. In her deconstruction of the topsy-turvy doll, for instance, Bernstein takes a subject already considered by many scholars and provides insight into African-American agency through the construct of implicit coding and the performances of such coding. Through careful observation that the doll's prominent skirt made both the black and white side of the doll 'equally gendered,' Bernstein shows the subtle intent of the dolls' makers: 'that if white women are women, then black women are also women' and furthermore, 'white domination is always temporary' (p.89). Bernstein not only considers the topsy-turvy doll as a source itself, but also shows how white girls played with these subversive dolls. By highlighting the performance of play, Bernstein argues that what might have seemed like the benign act of taking a topsy-turvy doll to bed, in fact 'functioned as a Trojan horse that smuggled an enslaved woman's emotions, analyses, and critiques into white slaveholders' homes' (p.90).

Through such rich examples, it becomes clear that the strength of Bernstein's work is its interdisciplinary framework. Drawing on a wide spectrum of scholarship, from sociology to cultural history, and from literary criticism to social theory, Bernstein reveals the sophisticated questions that emerge when speaking to a range of academic audiences. In addition, Bernstein's study is thoroughly grounded in history, which gives her analysis an intellectual dexterity sometimes lacking in cultural studies. By looking at childhood through the lens of characters like Raggedy Ann, for example, Bernstein astutely reperiodizes minstrelsy's influence from a nineteenth-century phenomenon to a twentieth-century script. At the same time, her attention to the performance of materials is reminiscent of ethnographic research, which accesses how individuals interact and behave toward objects in their everyday lives. While looking at the script of objects might be new to historians of material culture, it is a hallmark of cultural anthropology as seen in work by James C. Scott.

Surprisingly, religion receives scant consideration in Bernstein's formulation of racialized innocence. She does provide a brief background about the influence of religion on the shift toward

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viewing childhood as a time of innocence—from the Puritan ‘doctrine of infant depravity’ to the ‘holy ignorance’ of the Victorians. But her analysis of how religion shaped racial categories almost disappears throughout the rest of the book. Her inattention to religious scripts is especially striking in her interpretations of Francis Hodgson Burnett’s reenactment of conversion scenes from *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* with her gutta-percha doll. Since Christianity was certainly one place where African Americans performed an alternative script in the practice of sacred rituals, the book would have benefited significantly from an analysis of both white and black religious performances.

Perhaps the book’s greatest shortcoming lies in its inattention to the children of color who do not fit neatly into the sacrosanct black-white binary. Just as public culture made white children into the embodiment of innocence and excluded black children from this same status, Bernstein argues that children from other racial backgrounds disappear completely from these racial texts; they are invisible. But were Asian, Latino, and biracial children actually invisible? Recent historical scholarship has challenged this invisibility paradigm—works by Rocío G. Davis, Melissa Klapper, and Paula Fass come to mind—suggesting that the script of innocence might be riveted more to regional distinctions than Bernstein acknowledges.

Nevertheless, Bernstein’s study demonstrates the phenomenal scholarship produced at the intersection of disciplinary boundaries. By interrogating the racial scripts that white and black children themselves often engaged in when ‘innocently’ playing with dolls or reading stories, Bernstein has offered a method that will undoubtedly influence future scholarship across a range of disciplines.

Islam and the English Enlightenment 1670-1840 by Humberto Garcia. The Johns Hopkins University Press, December 2011, 368 pages. ISBN: 978-1421403533, Hardcover, £36.50

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Islam and the English Enlightenment is one of those rare books that uniquely changes traditional discourses in history, literature, philosophy and politics, as Humberto Garcia examines how 'sympathetic literary and cultural representations of the Islamic republic contributed significantly to Protestant Britain's evolving self-definition between 1670 – 1840' (p.xi). Using the primary lens of literature and history, Garcia aims to reconstruct continuing narratives about the English Enlightenment and more generally, 'our Judeo-Christian heritage' and 'our secular present' (p.xiv). He argues that they are 'not the exclusive property of Western Europe but a shared yet too-often forgotten heritage in which cross-cultural exchange between the early modern Christian West and the Muslim world was not unfathomable or even predominantly hostile' (p.xiv).

By his own admission, the book is a 'corrective addendum' to Edward Said's pioneering work, *Orientalism* (1978) (p.xi). This is where Garcia differs from Said, as *Orientalism* 'recast Eastern religions as alien and reactionary in contrary distinction as the "Enlightened" and "progressive" West' (p.13). This produces an 'imperialist taxonomy in which Europe is the privileged centre of world history' (p.13). Thus, Garcia shows that there was intercultural contact between England and the Muslim world, and that the latter influenced British Christian and political identity in the 17th – 19th centuries. Garcia uses notable writers such as Henry Stubbe, John Toland, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Shelley, Mary Shelley and Robert Southey to show how some of England's leading scholars were not only impressed by Prophet Muhammad's socio-political achievements in Makkah and Madinah in the seventh century, but were importing his ideas in order to redefine Whig principles and challenge Anglican authority. These writers also looked at the achievements of Muslim empires at the time such as the Ottomans who Lady Mary Wortley Montagu regards as progressive in granting women greater rights compared to Britain (p.61).

Garcia attributes the temporary fascination of these writers with Islam to what he terms as 'Islamic republicanism' (p.1). This refers to the notion that Islam was an egalitarian religion, promoting tolerance, justice, gender rights and a purer, deistic conception of religion through the concept of *tawhid* (Oneness of God). This was in stark contrast to the values of England during this period, as some Christians grew increasingly disenchanted with the Church, Passion, Trinity and French Revolution. The Anglican state also banned Unitarians, Quakers, Catholics and Anti-Trinitarians from holding public office, obtaining legal preferment and earning degrees from Oxford and Cambridge. Here, Garcia argues that the aforementioned writers saw in Prophet Muhammad (or as they called him, Mahomet) a 'Prophet and Priest, who...crush'd the blasphemous Rites of the Pagan and idolatrous Christians...' (p. vii, Coleridge) and 'the blueprints for a dissenter-inclusive toleration policy' (p.31).

Chapter one deals with Henry Stubbe, the refutation of Whig radicalism and the notion of deism. Chapter two focuses on Lady Mary Wortley Montagu who adopts a subversive deist voice that defends Turkish women's socio-economic freedom under Islamic law. Chapter three looks at

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Edmund Burke's defence of Mahometan-republican virtue during the impeachment trial of Warren Hastings in 1788. Chapter four examines Walter Savage Landor's *Gebir* as a radical extension of Burke's anti-colonialist discourse. Chapter five deals with the works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey. Finally, chapter six focuses on Mary Shelley and Percy Shelley. The literary style of Garcia is evidential, using a combined approach of literature and history to set these writers' works in a broader context of British and Muslim events and exchanges. This is the strength of the book – Garcia argues the literary works he examines have been largely ignored as important sources of dialogue in the intellectual relationship between Britain and Islam. In his analysis, however, Garcia does not deal with major Shi'i saints such as 'Ali b. Abi Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad and in particular, al-Husayn who was martyred by Yazid b. Mu'awiyah in Karbala. It would have been interesting to see what conclusions Garcia would draw from these figures, as they directly contribute to his theme of 'Islamic republicanism' and are mentioned by some of the authors he cites, including Thomas Carlyle.

The book's conclusion is equally important. Garcia places his contribution within current events relating to Islam in the global world. Citing the backlash of Rowan Williams' speech on the inclusion of *shari'ah* law in Britain and the continuing 'clash of civilizations' dialogue, Garcia states that 'by casting Islam as a reactionary religion, these narratives continue to act as a stumbling block in initiating a productive dialogue with the Muslim world' (p.231). Overall, the book is an original and in-depth contribution to the issue of reconstructing Eurocentric narratives about the Enlightenment and teasing out the diverse literary works of English writers who saw the universal values of Islam as adaptable to Enlightenment Britain. No doubt, the argument which permeates the book is a challenge to numerous preconceptions concerning Islam, the Enlightenment period, British history, Christianity, secularisation and modernity.

The Royal Navy and the German Threat, 1901-1914: Admiralty Plans to Protect British Trade in a War Against Germany by Matthew Seligmann. Oxford University Press, 2012, 186 pages. ISBN: 978-0-19-957403-2, Hardback, \$110.00

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Boston College

Britain's early twentieth century naval race with Germany has launched as many studies as ships. From Winston Churchill to Paul Kennedy, scholars have used it to explain the outbreak of the First World War¹ or to substantiate their theories of state power.² Matthew Seligmann walks bravely into this rich if well-trodden territory with *The Royal Navy and the German Threat, 1901-1914*, a thoroughly researched book that offers a new perspective on the strategic contest between Britain and Germany.

No stranger to Anglo-German military history, Seligmann has written several books in this area, most recently *Naval Intelligence from Germany: The Reports of British Naval Attaches in Berlin, 1906-1914* (2006) and *Spies in Uniform: British Naval and Military Intelligence on the Eve of the First World War* (2006).³ His extensive archival knowledge is on display in this latest project, which aims to connect the literatures that discuss the outbreak of World War I and those that study the history of espionage in the same period. Indeed, this book's copious footnotes and bibliographical information will make it a valuable resource to researchers.

Seligmann's primary objective is to show that the Royal Navy was actively planning to counter a different kind of German naval threat than has previously been emphasized: that of armed merchant vessels capable of disrupting British trade. While this argument is specific in detail, its implications are much broader. By showing that German commerce raiding and armed merchant ships were seen by the Admiralty as a major threat, Seligmann destabilizes an axiom of the Anglo-German rivalry narrative – that it was primarily a contest to see who could build the most capital ships, namely the new *Dreadnought*-class battleships. In this way he also questions the presumed doctrinal ascendancy of capital ship offensive warfare, advocated so forcefully by American Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, at either the British or German admiralties. Finally, Seligmann takes the sinking of the *Lusitania* out of its usual political context as a *casus belli* and places it in the context

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¹ For a helpful overview of this literature, see Jan Rüger, "Revisiting the Anglo-German Antagonism," *The Journal of Modern History* 83, no. 3 (September 1, 2011): 579–617; Some classic works on this topic are Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1980); Zara Steiner and Keith Neilson, *Britain and the Origins of the First World War, The Making of the 20th Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); H. W. Koch, ed., *The Origins of the First World War: Great Power Rivalry and German War Aims* (New York: Taplinger Pub. Co., 1972); David Stevenson, *Armaments and the Coming of War: Europe, 1904-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); David French, "The Edwardian Crisis and the Origins of the First World War," *The International History Review* 4, no. 2 (May 1, 1982): 207–221; Michael R. Gordon, "Domestic Conflict and the Origins of the First World War: The British and the German Cases," *The Journal of Modern History* 46, no. 2 (June 1, 1974): 191–226.

² Kennedy famously extrapolated on his earlier work to make this theorization, see: Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987).

³ Other important works in this conversation include David Stafford, *Spies Beneath Berlin* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2003); David Stafford, *Churchill and Secret Service* (Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 1998); and Nicholas Hiley's introduction in William Le Queux, *Spies of the Kaiser: Plotting the Downfall of England*, Classics of Espionage (London: Frank Cass, 1996).

of a long-running strategic contest between Britain and Germany over armed commercial ships – one which saw the *Lusitania* fitted with Admiralty-subsidized engines and gun mounts under the Cunard Agreement.

The first two chapters of the book are studies in naval planning and intelligence. Seligmann establishes that Germany, despite the machinations of committed Mahanian Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz, planned to attack British maritime commerce in the event of war, and that British naval intelligence was aware of the fact. Chapters 3 and 4 cover the Admiralty's attempted naval solutions for protecting British shipping: the Cunard Agreement for outfitting merchant liners, and the design of a new 'battle cruiser' class ship that could intercept German commerce raiding vessels. The next two chapters concern institutional responses to the threat. Chapter 5 details British attempts to bring about a prohibition of armed merchant vessels at successive international naval conferences. These attempts failed, and Britain instead created a network of naval intelligence officers capable of observing the behavior of German merchant ships in foreign ports, which Seligmann details in Chapter 6. The final chapter documents First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill's resolution to outfit ships with fully installed guns and to create provisions for their requisition as 'Defensively Armed Merchant Ships' or DAMS (p.132). Seligmann's epilogue carries the narrative to the outbreak of World War I.

The Royal Navy and the German Threat is, like many of Seligmann's books, primarily a military history. However, the archival detail with which he writes gives the reader a sense of the policymaking process in early twentieth century bureaucracies. Technology features heavily in this book, as the problem Seligmann's subjects are trying to address is fundamentally technological – how to account for ships with unconventional kit and capabilities. Yet Seligmann does not attempt to draw broader conclusions about the relationship between technology and policymaking from this study, an exercise that might have widened its impact.

Seligmann charts the trajectory of various memos and notes across the desks of numerous officers and bureaucrats, including unsuccessful proposals and quickly discarded policies. These will fatigue some readers, but they serve a higher purpose in showing that the making of military policy was a complicated affair involving many other participants besides the usual "great men" of the period: Tirpitz, Fisher, Churchill. Seligmann does fellow researchers of the Royal Navy a service by explaining gaps and confusions in the archival record. His approach also demonstrates how a researcher might successfully go 'against the grain' of the archive to reconstruct the history of an issue with a fragmented record, like the threat of armed commercial ships in war. In sum, this book fully accomplishes its analytical objectives and has created space for itself in the substantial corpus of important work on the naval race that preceded the First World War.

Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World by Christopher Schmidt-Nowara. University of New Mexico Press, 2011, 222 pages. ISBN 978-0-8263-3904-1, Paperback, \$28.95

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Why were Cuba and Brazil the last New World countries to finally abolish slavery? Why, for instance, did slavery persist in Cuba despite the harsh criticisms and public outrage expressed by the members of the Spanish Abolitionist Society, which pointed out the ‘violence and lawlessness that thrived on the Cuban plantations in the form of unchecked corporal punishment’? (p.1). Why was slavery so resilient in Brazil, which maintained the institution until 1888, and how was it resisted and fought against across the Americas? These are just a few of the questions Christopher Schmidt-Nowara poses in his new work.

The author sets out to organize ‘a narrative of slavery’s uneven rise and fall in Latin America and those parts of the Atlantic world to which the region was inextricably connected’ (p.5). Albeit short, the compelling introduction stakes the claim that ‘Slavery was the historical residue of abolitionist regimes in which power was arbitrary and capricious and unfree labor and monopolies dominated the colonies’ (p.3). Offering a glimmer of hope, however, Schmidt-Nowara then states that viewing such events as progress, readers should understand that slavery then ‘must give way to the imperatives of individual liberty’ (p.3). Lastly, the introductory chapter establishes that the boundaries of the Atlantic World were fluid, refuting typical perceptions of the region. It resonates with the work of scholars like Jack D. Forbes, who sought to demonstrate in *Black Africans and Native Americans* the significant level of contact between Africans, Americans and Europeans before Columbus. In his introduction, Schmidt-Nowara too deconstructs our understanding of the Atlantic slave trade as isolated and separate from other parts of the globe.

Chapter one, ‘Slavery and Iberian Colonization,’ begins by exploring the relationship between Iberian empires and the Atlantic world. It explains how religious warfare drove Iberians into the Atlantic and down the coast of Africa, intertwining the spirit of warfare with that of commerce in the fifteenth century. The author goes on to examine the early slave trade to Spanish America, in which indigenous people of the Antilles were forced into labor through colonization, and to Brazil colonized by the Portuguese Empire in the sixteenth century. Furthermore, Schmidt-Nowara explores why African slavery was more prevalent. He concludes by considering Don Quixote’s dismay at the sight of a galley of slaves in Spain, which he sees as indicative of the rallying against the institution of slavery to come. He surmises that the commitment to slavery, particularly within the American empires of Spain and Portugal, for the sake of colonial expansion - coupled with the legal and religious culture of Iberian empires - helped to continue the expansion of the slave trade. This was especially the case with the Dutch, English, and French when staking their own claims in the Americas (p.47).

The next chapter opens with would-be conquistador Àlvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca’s report of four men (out of hundreds) surviving a Spanish expedition to Florida. The leniency of some forms of bondage and the class structuring of colonial slave societies is demonstrated by de Vaca’s detailing of the lineages and journeys of the four men (one traveled from Morocco to New Mexico). Schmidt-Nowara concentrates on the story of Estevanico, whose ‘origins in a Moroccan city within

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the Portuguese orbit show the close links between Iberian expansion in the eastern Atlantic and the subsequent transatlantic expeditions' (p.50). This then leads into the main subject of the chapter, which is the expansion of the slave trade and the increase in African slavery as European rivals began establishing colonies in America.

Chapter two concludes with the questioning of slavery in the Caribbean and Spanish America, coinciding with the British Empire's desire for colonial expansion and consolidation of power. Chapters three and four turn to the primary focus of the author's study: revolution and emancipation across the Americas, as well as the resurgence and destruction of slavery in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Brazil. Here Schmidt-Nowara discusses the impact of revolution and independence on slavery as being "far from homogenous" and how after independence in many republics, abolition became a political issue. He then carefully traces the process of abolishing Cuban and Brazilian slavery in 1886 and 1888, respectively.

What Schmidt-Nowara ultimately offers readers is a far more comprehensive and globalized view of the Atlantic slave trade than we are used to seeing. His intention to detail the interconnectedness of the globe so long ago remains clear throughout. The book is therefore reminiscent of other influential works that have sought to make new connections between history and social conflict, like Susan Buck-Morss' *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (2009). While the reader is sometimes overwhelmed by the innumerable historical facts and background that often begin a chapter, the author's success in establishing a reinterpretation of human conflicts and the significant impact of slavery on the modern world far outweighs the occasionally convoluted presentation of historical information. Other recent titles on slavery have also attempted to establish very early connections between nations across the globe, such as Jeremy Black's *Slavery: A New Global History* (2011). However, Schmidt-Nowara's particular focus on Brazil, Africa and the Caribbean allows him to give a great deal of specificity to regions previously marginalized in the study of world history. It contributes to a rich and growing body of interdisciplinary work on Caribbean history, literature, and culture.

Throughout his study, Schmidt-Nowara details the shifts in the Atlantic and global markets, plantation societies, as well as the 'long history of rebellions, covert acts of resistance, flight, and maroon communities'. He thus demonstrates the many ways in which the Atlantic, South and North America were intricately connected with Africa, parts of Europe, even China. The author reveals a globalized economy that existed long before once thought while he tells many of the stories about slavery, rebellion and colonialism that have previously been uncovered, as well as the 'forms of social, political, and cultural solidarity created...that could at times countervail the stubborn colonial inheritance and the scientific racism and belief in white supremacy that would grip much of the western world in the modern age' (p.163).

The Ephemeral History of Perfume: Scent and Sense in Early Modern England by Holly Dugan. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011, 280 pages. ISBN: 1421402343, Hardback, £34.

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In 1994 Constance Classen, David Howes, and Anthony Synnott lamented:

‘Odours form the building blocks of cosmologies, class hierarchies and political orders; they can enforce social structures or transgress them... But smell is repressed in the modern West, and its social history ignored.’¹

Holly Dugan is amongst a number of historians seeking to redress this ignorance.² Dugan’s aim is to use the ‘archive of everyday life’ (p. 6) in early modern England (1500-1700) to study the shifting cultural resonances of smells.

The study demonstrates the rich nature of this archive for writing sensory history. Laura Gowing led the way in *Common Bodies* (2003) by using Bridewell and church court records to demonstrate the role of touch in knowing, marking and subordinating women’s bodies.³ Dugan’s focus is ostensibly literary but her book is firmly interdisciplinary, using material, visual and medical sources in supplementing her poetry, prose and plays. Dugan and Gowing’s works show two different ways of approaching early modern England’s sensory history and creative connections between the two should be encouraged.

Avoiding Alain Corbin’s ‘great divide’ between a clean post enlightenment present and a smelly pre enlightenment past, Dugan’s history is less a history of *smell* and more a history of *smells*.⁴ Eschewing a universalist conception of sensory experience, Dugan argues, as Mark Jenner recently has, for the culturally constructed nature of sensory perception (pp. 6, 17).⁵ The introductory chapter should be required reading for those seeking to study the history of the smell in the early modern world. Though its briefness does not allow for deeper theoretical analysis, it does offer a number of stimulating points. Histories of the body have so often wavered between investigating how medical discourses structure perceptions of the body and the material and experiential nature of the body itself.⁶ Dugan suggests that olfaction enables us to study the space between material and immaterial conceptions of the body (p. 9). The paradoxical nature of smell - at once material and invisible - and its ability to create unease about bodily boundaries is thus

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¹ C. Classen, D. Howes, A. Synnott, *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell*, (New York: Routledge, 1994), p.ii

² For an excellent, though not completely up to date, bibliography of recent research see M. Smith, *Sensing the Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling Tasting and Touching in History*, (California: California University Press, 2008), pp.157-173.

³ L. Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003). Gowing also uses letters and popular literature including advice manuals.

⁴ A. Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination*, (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1988), Part One pp.11-89, pp. 229-235,

⁵ M. Jenner, ‘Civilization and Deodorization? Smell in Early Modern English Culture,’ in P. Burke, B. Harrison and P. Slack (ed.), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 127-145.

⁶ Thomas Laqueur has been criticized by Lyndal Roper for taking the former approach at the expense of the latter, see L. Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Religion and Sexuality in Early Modern Europe*, (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp.15-16.

useful to historians. This echoes Gina Bloom's argument that in early modern England sound's uneasy materiality meant it was perceived as 'unruly matter' which Bloom turns to her advantage, examining how sound could undermine gender hierarchies.⁷ This innovation is an important strength; it suggests sensory history should be used, as Mark Smith suggested, as a 'way of thinking about the past' rather than simply a 'field' of enquiry.⁸

Dugan uses a scent, a material object and a space, to subtitle each chapter; these three factors are then examined together. In all the six chapters the shifting nature of olfactory meaning is prominent. The first two chapters focus on the connection of scents to power, both ecclesiastical and royal. Chapter one, subtitled 'Frankincense, Censers and Churches', shows how the mixture of native and foreign perfumes, coupled with the impact the religious divisions of the Reformation, could complicate ideas like the odour of sanctity, giving smells multivalent meanings. Dugan is right to nuance her presentation of the attacks on the Catholic concept of odour of sanctity. My own research shows the concept did survive, for example in female conduct literature where the good behaviour of women was seen to create 'a sweet perfume that sendeth forth a good savour into Christ's nostril'.⁹ Dugan presents a welcome literary perspective in contrast with Matthew Milner's recent multi-sensorial treatment of the English Reformation, which has focused on theological and political rather than literary themes.¹⁰ Chapter two, subtitled 'Rosewater, Casting Bottles, Court', argues that the scent of the damask rose, distilled in England, came to play an important role in the Tudor performance of royal power and national identity. The study of court life, a burgeoning area of enquiry, could benefit greatly from such insights. Dugan further argues that the scent of the damask rose could take on subversive meanings in the context of London Bankside's Little Rose Brothel, the Rose Theatre and the dirty streets that surround them.

Chapters three and four follow a similar pattern, this time focusing on medicinal scents. First Dugan examines the scent of sassafras and olfaction's role in exploring the new world. Unlike Charles Peter Hoffer's focus on 'sensory imperialism', Dugan presents a more nuanced depiction of the uncertain role of the senses in imperial exploration.¹¹ The smell of sassafras, an aromatic used to treat the pox, imported into Europe in large quantities, became intimately linked to the dangers of exploration. Yet olfaction could be a weapon used to subordinate native 'sensualism' to European weaponry or a technology of exploration (pp. 72-81, 93-95). The latter could be further explored in light of a recent focus on the embodied, as opposed to scientific, nature of exploration and navigation. One case in the High Court of Admiralty records, for example, shows how the sailors on board the *Diamond* in the 1640s knew they were reaching Barbados when they detected the 'sweet smell' of cedar wood.¹²

One of the central points of the book is to examine the paradoxical and multivalent meanings of scents. The sixth chapter demonstrates this, examining the paradoxical role of perfume as both a curative for plague-ridden households and as a stimulant to dangerous erotic contagion. The last two chapters shift focus to the economic and commercial history of perfume. Chapter five charts the emergence by the 1630s of the perfumer as an occupation and the disputes between guilds, housewives, artisans and merchants over the right to control the production,

⁷ G. Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), p.6.

⁸ M. Smith, *Sensing the Past*, p.5.

⁹ William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties*, (London, 1622). See also Richard Allestree, *The Ladies Calling*, (Oxford, 1673), who asserts a woman 'will cast a much sweeter savor in Gods nostrils, with the smell of unguents and balsoms, then with the most exquisit odors and perfumes.'

¹⁰ M. Milner, *The Senses and the English Reformation*, (Surrey: Ashgate, 2011). Milner's study was published only a few months after Dugan's, which explains the omission of her work from the book.

¹¹ P. C. Hoffer, *Sensory Worlds in Early America*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), pp. 49-76.

¹² Deposition of John Pagee, 23 July 1640. TNA PRO HCA 13/56. With thanks to Richard Blakemore for this reference.

consumption and ownership of knowledge about aromatics. The destruction of ‘faulty’ aromatics by rivals is intriguing (pp. 139-142) but the chapter could have benefitted from some quantitative evidence regarding the proliferation of perfume, perfumers and printed recipes to better illustrate the developments described. Chapter six finally demonstrates, using potpourri, the cross-fertilization between the space of the pleasure garden and the emergence of the private bedroom as an erotic scented zone (pp. 154-182). This raises interesting comparisons that could be further explored by using diaries, correspondence and architectural sources. This is especially true in the light of the vigorous debate over the emergence of privacy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Dugan’s book is a well-researched, lucidly written, and timely intervention in the field of sensory studies, which demonstrates the need to see the cultural meaning of smells as unstable and shifting. The case studies she presents portray the need to see sensory history as a new way of thinking about many different fields of enquiry rather than simply a field in itself. Historians, in approaching other sources and questions using a sensory paradigm, should take up the gauntlet she has thrown down.