

REPORT
WEST POINT
UNDERGRADUATE
HISTORICAL REVIEW
VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1
FALL 2015

REPORT

WEST POINT UNDERGRADUATE HISTORICAL REVIEW
VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1; FALL 2015

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Lucas Hodge (2016)

International History

EDITORS

Phillip Latshaw (2016)

American History

Erica MacSwan (2016)

American History

Andrew Mengle (2017)

American History

John McCormick (2017)

International History; Mathematical Science

Brandon Wethman (2017)

Military History

COPYRIGHT AND PHOTOCOPYING

© 2015 Department of History
United States Military Academy
West Point, New York 10996

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Editorial Board would like to thank the faculty of the History Department for their submission recommendations, all the students who submitted papers, and Major Johnathan Romaneski and Lieutenant Colonel Rademacher for his extensive guidance and technical support. Without their help, *Report* would not have been possible.

ABOUT THE REVIEW

Report is a non-profit publication produced by undergraduate cadets at the United States Military Academy. It accepts and encourages submissions from undergraduates in the fall and spring. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.

ON THE INTERNET

<http://www.westpoint.edu/history/SitePages/report%20history%20journal.aspx>

DISCLAIMER

The contents of *Report*, including words, images, and opinions, are unofficial and not to be considered as the official views of the United States Military Academy, the United States Army, or the Department of Defense. Readers accept and agree to this disclaimer in the use of any information obtained from *Report*.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FROM THE EDITOR

Lucas Hodge, US Military Academy

5

THE BACKBONE OF THE MAU MAU: FEMALE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE KENYAN EMERGENCY OF THE 1950'S

Millicent Whitmore, University of Colorado, Boulder

7

BOYS TO MEN: ROBERT BADEN POWELL AND THE BOY SCOUT MOVEMENT

Emma Poole, Yale University

17

THE STUFF OF LEGION: A STUDY OF THE BACKGROUNDS AND CAREERS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES

Evan Stark, Washington Univeristy in St. Louis

29

FROM SHIRAZI TO SIDI: THE EVOLUTION OF SWAHILI IDENTITY

Destiney Randolph, Rice University

47

STORMING THE CASTLE: THE BATTLE FOR HUNGARY AND THE SIEGE OF BUDAGEST, 1944-1945

Brandon Wethman, United States Military Academy

61

MAINTAINING THE FRONTIER: AN ANALYSIS OF ROMAN FORTIFICATIONS AND THE FRONTIER OF THE EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE FOURTH CENTURY C.E.

Erik Conrad, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

67

X'S PREDICTIONS: HOW THEY WERE RIGHT, WITH LIMITATIONS

Maxwell Schwartz, Columbia University

85

FROM THE EDITOR

In this edition of *Report*, we did our best to capture history by encompassing a broad view of history without restriction to any theme, time period, or region. This edition of *Report* is a direct result of that goal, with essay submissions from across the United States and the world covering a wide range of topics.

In this edition, we present a variety of pieces. Each was selected carefully from nearly thirty submissions from across the country. Our leading piece, submitted by Millicent Whitemore, discusses the role of women in Kenyan Independence. The following piece, submitted by Emma Poole, investigates the origins of the Boy Scout movement. Next up, Evan Stark from Washington University in St. Louis provides a quantitative analysis of the Legion of the United States, a professional organization within the early American army. The following work, submitted by Destiney Randolph, covers the evolution of the Swahili identity. Brandon Wethman, one of *Report*'s editors, then dives into the battle for Hungary during World War II. The next paper, submitted by Erik Conrad, provides comprehensive coverage of the fortification system on the Roman Frontier. The final paper, submitted by Maxwell Schwartz from Columbia University, returns to more modern history with an evaluation of George Kennan's predictions for the fate of the Soviet Union.

At West Point, we like to say that the history we teach was often made by those we taught. Working on the staff of *Report* has been a valuable component of my experience at the Academy. As a member of the Editorial Staff, and subsequently as Editor-in-Chief, I have had the amazing opportunity to read papers from leading institutions across the United States and the world. Additionally, our efforts were carried out under the guidance of our faculty advisors, Major Jonathan Romaneski and Lieutenant Colonel Franz Rademacher, without whose assistance this publication would not be possible. Thanks must also go to West Point's History Department, which offers us this opportunity among so many others and supports our education and development as Army officers.

I hope you enjoy our publication. *Sapientia per historiam!*

In History,
Lucas Hodge
Editor-in-Chief, Report
West Point, NY

The Backbone of the Mau Mau: Female Contributions to the Kenyan Emergency of the 1950's

Millicent Whitmore

Millicent Clare Whitmore is a senior studying History and Secondary Social Studies Education at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Prior to CU, she attended Holy Family High School in Broomfield, CO. She wrote this paper during the Fall semester of 2014 for Historical Thinking and Writing course that focused on the Mau Mau War in Kenya. Millicent was inspired to write about female involvement in the Mau Mau movement after reading the autobiography of a female forest fighter, Wambui Waiyaki Otieno. She thanks Dr. Myles Osborne for his guidance over the course of the semester.

The Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya during the 1950s was an uprising of the Kenyan Kikuyu people against the oppressive British colonial government that had encroached upon their fertile native land. Mau Mau historiography often neglects the vital roles that women played in the Mau Mau Movement. Accounts often portray women as victims, as servants, and as prostitutes, or simply do not mention them at all. *Mau Mau's Daughter: A Life History* by Wambui Waiyaki Otieno is the first memoir written by a female Mau Mau forest fighter and Kenyan politician and refutes the previous portrayals of the conflict as a man's war. It was published in 1998, after numerous male authored memoirs of Mau Mau had been released. This paper will examine the roles women played in the military side of Mau Mau and the hardships that they endured, their perception throughout history by the British and by male Mau Mau leaders, and discuss Otieno's memoir in relation to the two other female authored accounts of the conflict. Though forgotten in much of the historical record, Kenyan women were actually the backbone of the Mau Mau movement, as their efforts were essential to the forest fighters; The loss of these female contributions lead to the eventual British victory over the Mau Mau forces.

The Mau Mau war was a civil conflict in Kenya, and began as a response to the oppressive British colonial regime that had marginalized many of the Kikuyu people since 1902. The Mau Mau movement originated in the early 1950s with poor Kikuyu peoples who had been forced to leave their native land, the fertile white highlands in the Central Province of Kenya. This land was essential to Kikuyu culture because in order for men to take brides they had to produce a bridewealth of cattle, which was impossible to do without sufficient land ownership or wealth. It was a guerrilla movement fought mainly from the forests surrounding the highlands, and was composed of Kikuyus who were poor, displaced from their land, uneducated, and spoke almost no English. The War was not simply a conflict of the British against the Kikuyu, but a civil conflict as many Kikuyus chose to join the British effort as Loyalists. These Loyalists were upper middle class Kikuyus who were able to succeed under the colonial regime and were predominantly

English speaking Christians. In the early 1950s, Mau Mau soldiers began attacking wealthy Kikuyus who they viewed as traitors. In 1952, the British declared a State of Emergency in which martial law took effect. During this time, the British detained between 80 and 90 thousand Kikuyu peoples in detention and rehabilitation camps, in which the Kikuyu people suspected of supporting Mau Mau were subjected to regular torture and violence. Over a million Kikuyu were also forced into enclosed villages where they endured extremely harsh treatment.¹ During the conflict, only 32 Europeans were killed by Mau Mau. The number of Kikuyu killed is disputed, but is estimated to be greater than 50,000.² The Mau Mau movement was joined by Kikuyu men and women as a way to fight back against the British colonial regime that had stripped many of them of their homeland, and the violence continued until 1960 when the Movement was defeated.

Many women, including Otieno, contributed directly to the Mau Mau effort by joining the guerrilla camps in the forests and performing essential tasks for the militant forces. Women took Mau Mau oaths alongside the men, pledging their allegiance to the fight for Kenyan freedom. Otieno herself claims to have taken nine oaths, an exceptional number in comparison to many other fighters.³ Women joined Mau Mau to “gain economic status, gain access to the political process, get more education, and regain alienated land.”⁴ Some women joined male Mau Mau fighters in the forest camps where life was “precarious at the best of times.”⁵ In these camps, women performed traditional roles such as caring and cooking for the soldiers there. Though few in number, women were also involved in the combat and fought alongside the men. Some women maintained their roles as wives and mothers, raising families in houses built entirely out of scavenged junk. Most women who went to the forests were single or widowed and therefore able to leave their familial ties in villages to join the Movement.⁶ Women were sometimes leaders of forest units and were able to hold rank up to a colonel.⁷ However, the roles that women played in the forests still remain “ambiguous” and there

¹ Marshall S. Clough, *Mau Mau Memoirs: History, Memory, and Politics* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998), 178.

² John Blacker, “The Demography of Mau Mau: Fertility and Mortality in Kenya in the 1950s: A Demographer’s Viewpoint,” *African Affairs* 106 (2007), 225.

³ Otieno, *Mau Mau’s Daughter*, 35.

⁴ Cora Ann Presley, *Kikuyu Women, The Mau Mau Rebellion, and Social Change in Kenya* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 125.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁶ Tabitha Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau* (London: James Currey Ltd., 1987), 146.

⁷ Macdonald, Sharon, Pat Holden, and Shirley Ardener, *Images of Women in Peace and War: Cross-Cultural and Historical Perspectives* (Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 88.

is limited primary information available about this subject, not allowing them adequate credit due for their contributions.⁸

Though they composed only five percent of the guerilla combat fighters, the roles that women played in the Movement are significant because they provided important contributions during the Mau Mau rebellion of clandestine work and providing the line of supplies into the forests.⁹ In this way, women were integral to the Movement. British accounts of the War describe them as the “passive wing,” but this description does not acknowledge their importance to the military success of Mau Mau. Historian and author Cora Ann Presley instead calls them “non-combatant” forces because they provided assistance that helped make the Mau Mau forces a serious threat to the British and Kikuyu loyalists.¹⁰ When the Emergency was fully underway, it was more important for the Mau Mau military forces to get supplies to the forest than it was to get people there.¹¹ Women were the source of these supplies, retrieving firearms, information, food, and medicine, and ensuring they were delivered to Mau Mau guerillas.¹² The supplying of food to the forests has been called the “women’s war.”¹³ Women were enthusiastic to be a part of the Movement and in gaining their freedom from the British.¹⁴ It was not unusual for women of prominent Kikuyu families to be involved in the movement while their husbands and male family members were not.¹⁵ Women risked their lives in making these contributions and were the lifeline of the forests.

Mau Mau scouts were predominantly female because the European traditional ideal of women did not expect them to be involved in assisting such a violent conflict. Otieno describes her work at the center of organizing and performing scout work for the Mau Mau forces, and provides insight into the methods used to secure supplies. She rightly claims that “without scouts, no war would be waged or won.”¹⁶ She explains that women made the most successful scouts as they were more easily disguised than men and less likely to be suspected as a member of Mau Mau than men were. One method Otieno describes for retrieving firearms and information was through the use of young women who would seduce intoxicated Home Guard soldiers and accompany them back to their barracks where they were unsuspected as anything more

⁸ Clough, *Mau Mau Memoirs*, 139.

⁹ Ibid., 141.

¹⁰ Presley, *Kikuyu Women*, 157.

¹¹ Kathy Santilli, “Kikuyu Women in the Mau Mau Revolt: A Closer Look,” *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 8 (1977), 151.

¹² Presley, *Kikuyu Women*, 130.

¹³ Kanogo, *Squatters*, 143.

¹⁴ Jean Davison, *Voices from Mutira: Change in the Lives of Rural Gikuyu Women* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1966), 184.

¹⁵ Presley, *Kikuyu Women*, 168.

¹⁶ Otieno, *Mau Mau’s Daughter*, 42.

than “mere prostitutes.”¹⁷ After guards had fallen into a drunken sleep, they would secure arms and information from the incapacitated soldiers. This allowed Mau Mau forces to know the positions and plans of British and loyalist troops.¹⁸ Otieno portrays herself as an essential organizer of female scout work that was critical to forest fighters. Tactics employed by the women of Mau Mau allowed the forest fighters to combat the British and Loyalist forces more effectively and readily.

The British, realizing that women were a substantial danger to their ability to control the Emergency, forcefully detained Kikuyu women in large numbers towards the end of the conflict, demonstrating how critical the female contributions to the Mau Mau Movement were with this focus on forced villagization in order to control them. The British viewed Kikuyu women with their own traditional ideas of female responsibilities, and perceived their participation in the Movement as “far more radical and fanatical” than the participation of men because they were acting in an extremely untraditional manner.¹⁹ British acknowledgement of the threat that women posed led to the forced villagisation programs in 1954 that aimed to contain women where they could be monitored by the Home Guard and prevented from supplying the forests. This program was fully underway by 1955, with 804 villages that housed 1,050,899 people, mainly women, children, and the elderly.²⁰ By containing the women, the government would “weaken the morale and resistance of [Mau Mau] gangs by a complete denial of food.”²¹ Women were forced to dig trenches around these villages that were then filled with sharpened bamboo sticks to prevent any access to forest fighters.²² The British also created the Maendeleo ya Wanawake clubs which were instituted with the goal of rehabilitating women from Mau Mau. Membership to these clubs was a matter of life or death in the reserves, as members were provided with food during times of famine. These clubs were also a way for the British to present anti-Mau Mau propaganda to women. The fact that the British devoted a large portion of their budget to implementing the villagisation program and Maendeleo clubs demonstrates their awareness of the essential role that women played in the Mau Mau movement. This increased detainment of women from 1954 to 1957 led to the military defeat of the Mau Mau, because the British recognized that the conflict could not be ended without first removing the female support from the Movement.²³

¹⁷ Otieno, *Mau Mau's Daughter*, 39.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Presley, *Kikuyu Women*, 157.

²⁰ Elkins, Caroline, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005), 235.

²¹ Kanogo, *Squatters*, 143.

²² Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 247.

²³ Presley, *Kikuyu Women*, 165-167.

Women experienced acts of violence and sexual abuse at the hands of British and Loyalist guards while forced into villages and detainment camps, while having to worry about their own survival as well as the survival of their young children oftentimes detained with them. The forced villages were essentially “detention camps in all but name.”²⁴ They were created as a solution for the British to expand detainment of Kikuyu people and to solve the problem of Mau Mau without having to expand the system of labour camps that already existed. The women who the British determined as “hard-core” members of Mau Mau were admitted into the detainment camps, mainly at Kamiti camp, a camp created precisely for holding women, but some were also held in predominantly male camps in separate wings.²⁵ Of the 80,000 or more Kikuyus detained during the Emergency, 8,000 were women.²⁶ They endured the atrocities of the screening process as did their male counterparts, in which women were tortured physically and sexually. In these villages and camps, women faced inhumane treatment and starvation. They lived in constant fear of beatings and sexual assault and were forced into hard labour. Otieno experienced two periods of detainment due to her involvement with Mau Mau, and was detained with her three young children and therefore had to worry about their survival as well as her own, as did many other women.²⁷ She describes her time here as filled with long hours of interrogation, beatings, and sexual assault, in her case resulting in pregnancy.²⁸ Women were raped daily by guards, given the choice to comply or to be killed. Women in villages and camps were often there with their children, either ones that they had brought with them or had given birth to during detainment. Caroline Elkins estimates that 15 percent of four thousand camp detainees in Kamiti in 1955 had one or more children in the camp with them, an estimate of six hundred children.²⁹ They were not given extra food or supply rations for these children, meaning many of them died in the camps. Women felt more compelled to endure the beatings and rapes and to survive because the livelihood of their family depended on it.³⁰

The contributions and the sacrifices women made to Mau Mau were significant, but their portrayal in previous accounts of the Emergency rarely give them the credit they deserve due to the view of women at the time. They are often described as being the “passive-wing,” which suggests that they merely sat back and let men control their destinies. This is because the 1950s and 60s perspectives of women limited their inclusion in history, as traditional views held them as inferior to men. Women were seen as “weak and easily

²⁴ Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 237.

²⁵ Santilli, “Kikuyu Women,” 151.

²⁶ Clough, *Mau Mau Memoirs*, 178.

²⁷ Otieno, *Mau Mau’s Daughter*, 64, 78.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 78-82.

²⁹ Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 227.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 219-248.

manipulated,” and therefore incapable of possessing the qualities necessary to have any involvement in the battle against British Colonialism.³¹ Presley writes, “Historians of Mau Mau have treated women’s nationalism as incidental to the main currents of nationalism.”³² The Mau Mau war has been portrayed as a conflict between males, and held “gendered conceptions of deviancy,” where any female involvement was merely due to coercion by men.³³ The British held this idea for the rehabilitation of women, believing that they had been manipulated into Mau Mau and therefore could be manipulated again into renouncing the cause.³⁴ When hardcore women involved with the Movement refused to betray Mau Mau during in detainment, they were viewed as “thugs and witches” who were merely mentally ill.³⁵ However, women were not insane or simply dull-minded puppets of the male Mau Mau members, but instead acted on their own interests and desire for Kenyan freedom. The women possessed similar nationalist sentiments to the men as they too felt the economic effects of British occupation. Many women were highly involved with agricultural production, at home on their own farms and on British owned coffee farms. The Mau Mau rebellion created an opportunity for women to assert themselves in politics and leadership.³⁶ It was not a war between African and European males, but instead, “largely a rural rebellion of minimally westernized Kikuyu men and women.”³⁷ The British perceptions of women at the time, in addition to the inaccurate portrayal of women in the memoirs of male leaders and the lack of memoirs authored by female forest fighters, mean that history has neglected to acknowledge the integral role that they played in the Mau Mau movement.

Memoirs written by male Mau Mau leaders often belittle the role that women played in the Movement. They often refer to women in the forests with the word “kabatuni” meaning “little platoon” or “little person.”³⁸ This name was intended to demean women as being simply personal servants for the male fighters. Leaders were “concerned with protecting the male Mau Mau warrior community in the forests from the negative influence of the female presence.”³⁹ They focus on the roles of women as mistresses, and “casually mention” the leadership roles of women both in the camps and on

³¹ Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 222.

³² Presley, *Kikuyu Women*, 169.

³³ Katherine Bruce-Lockhart, “‘Unsound’ Minds and Broken Bodies: the Detention of ‘Hardcore’ Mau Mau women at Kamiti and Gitamayu Detention Camps in Kenya,” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 8 (2014), 597.

³⁴ Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 222.

³⁵ Bruce-Lockhart, “Unsound Minds and Broken Bodies.”

³⁶ Presley, *Kikuyu Women*, 147-149.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 150.

³⁸ Santilli, “Kikuyu Women,” 149.

³⁹ Clough, *Mau Mau Memoirs*, 140.

the non-combatant side.⁴⁰ Gucu Gikoyo's memoir describes his time as a Mau Mau guerilla fighter living in forests camps. He focuses on the strict ban on sexual contact with women in his camp and describes the work they did cooking and caring for fighters. He states that "girls in the *mbuci* [camps] who had taken refuge in the forest when they were discovered by the government to be Mau Mau agents" did the cooking and knitting for the males in camps.⁴¹ Though women did perform traditional roles in the forests, his focus on only these detracts from the critical contributions women made outside of camps. His revelation that these women were "Mau Mau agents" seeking refuge because they were discovered to be assisting the forests proves that they played more than just sexual and traditional roles in the Movement.

General Waruhiu Itote, a leader third in command in the Mt. Kenya forest, speaks of women in this way in his memoir, the first one released from the Mau Mau side of the Emergency. He mentions the issues that women posed in the forest because they disrupted the routine of Mau Mau fighters.⁴² There were many leadership meetings that discussed the treatment of women in the forests and the reserves, and leaders in the Mt. Kenya forests held the opinion that women were weak and "easily persuaded," and should therefore be kept alive only for reproductive purposes after the rebellion.⁴³ Itote also writes of the discretion encouraged for male soldiers in forming relationships with women, asking men to "restrict their relationships to women leaders only."⁴⁴ This brief mention of women not only suggests that they were not merely kept as sexual objects in the forests, but that they also held leadership positions.

The memoir of Karari Njama, Mau Mau Field Marshal Dedan Kamathi's secretary in the Aberdare forests, describes women as detrimental to male fighters and as being concerned with their own personal safety above the Mau Mau cause. He believed that women joined the forests not to fight for freedom as the men did, but instead to their desire to be free from the brutality of the Home Guard they would face if they remained in the villages.⁴⁵ Njama's memoir presents his personal views that rejected female contribution to the military side of the Movement. He emphasizes the domestic and sexual roles that women played in the forests, and describes the female contribution of supplies and weapons as being "payment to prostitutes who later sent them

⁴⁰ Santilli, "Kikuyu Women," 148.

⁴¹ Gucu G Gikoyo, *We Fought For Freedom* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1979), 60.

⁴² Clough, *Mau Mau Memiors*, 140.

⁴³ Waruhiu Itote, *"Mau Mau" General* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967), 78.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 281.

⁴⁵ Santilli, "Kikuyu Women," 147-149.

to our warriors.”⁴⁶ However, his views differed from those of other Mau Mau leaders who embraced female assistance. Njama describes one leadership meeting in which male guerillas described the brave acts and contributions of women, and urged that they should be considered as important as any other warrior. Njama spoke out against this, saying that women caused more harm than help, but was refuted by Kimathi himself, who agreed that female warriors were equally as beneficial to Mau Mau military efforts as men.⁴⁷ The leaders’ emphasis on the sexual exploitation of women in the camps detracts from the female impact on the war effort. A close reading also reveals contradictions in their personal views of women and the actual roles women played in the forests.

The opinions of women expressed in male memoirs varied and developed over time, which makes the study of women’s roles through only these sources difficult, but demonstrates the changing dynamic of gender roles of the time. The Mau Mau rebellion was an opportunity for women to prove their ability and dedication to Kenyan Liberation. One change in gender roles was the oath-taking of women, and women administering oaths to men and women.⁴⁸ Women were not deterred by the prejudice they experienced from men in the forest, but instead proved their trustworthiness and loyalty to Mau Mau, earning them more authority in the Movement. As the war continued, ideas of gender began to change and, “once people had proved themselves trustworthy through acts of bravery, secrecy, or dedication, then ‘there was no man or woman leader,’ for gender was immaterial. Merit was more important and ‘Mau Mau would not oppose what a woman leader said.’”⁴⁹ Women inarguably proved themselves by risking their lives to get supplies to the forests. Women were condemned from camps because they were thought to be untrustworthy, but Itote also writes of the importance of female efforts.⁵⁰ He says, “Over and over again, during the Emergency, I noticed that a woman could keep a secret much better than a man; even under interrogation, relatively fewer women than men would break down and reveal information.”⁵¹ This idea is mirrored in Otieno’s memoir as she claims to have refused to denounce Mau Mau or give up information, even through two terms of detainment and enduring beatings and brutal rapes.⁵² Women proved that they could act as mothers and wives, but also could assist in a military revolt against the colonial forces, an idea that was not accepted in traditional views of women.

⁴⁶ Donald L. Barnett and Karari Njama, *Mau Mau From Within* (London: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1966), 208.

⁴⁷ Barnett, *Mau Mau from Within*, 247-248.

⁴⁸ Presley, *Kikuyu Women*, 161.

⁴⁹ Kanogo, *Squatters*, 147.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 148.

⁵¹ Itote, “*Mau Mau*” *General*, 105.

⁵² Otieno, *Mau Mau’s Daughter*, 80.

Otieno's memoir provides insight into the women's struggle for freedom, but has to be read with care. Marshall Clough emphasizes the need for critique and cross checking when reading all Mau Mau memoirs. This book is one of three memoirs written by women affected by the Mau Mau Movement, but is the only one written by a female involved in the forest fighting and organization of Mau Mau. Otieno, like other authors, has personal intentions for publishing her story. Her memoir is not a diary and is therefore not written from the time of occurrence of the events she details. She also places herself at the center of the story of Mau Mau, understandable as she is telling her life story, but the reader needs to keep in mind that actual events of Mau Mau did not actually occur with her as the central figure.⁵³ She writes as if Mau Mau would not have happened without her organization skills and contributions. She also spends a large portion of her book writing about the fight for her husband's burial, which she refers to as the "burial saga," suggesting that she was largely motivated to write this book in order to publicize to the world what she felt was a great injustice against her.⁵⁴ Still, Otieno was detained as a hard-core Mau Mau and involved in the leadership of prominent political organizations. Her book demonstrates her exceptional ability to "endure her traumatic experiences and remain active in Kenya's political scene after independence."⁵⁵ Though Otieno may exaggerate in her memoir, the importance of *Mau Mau's Daughter* for understanding the women's role in the movement is not compromised. Otieno writes with a desire to memorialize those who played a role in the fight for Kenya's freedom, especially the women who were so often "abandoned and neglected" in history prior.⁵⁶

The account that Otieno provides is exceptionally important as the two other female authored Mau Mau memoirs do not compare to Otieno's in regards to content. The first was written by Charity Waciuma, who describes her life in colonial Kenya and how the Emergency affected her and her family.⁵⁷ However, this memoir is "written almost exclusively from a child's point of view and does not yield the kind of reflection and analysis of mature women."⁵⁸ Waciuma was only school-aged when the Emergency was occurring, and was never involved in the forest. She focuses on the turmoil that Kikuyus faced as they transitioned to the modern and European ways of

⁵³ Clough, *Mau Mau Memoirs*, 16-21.

⁵⁴ Otieno, *Mau Mau Memoirs*, 157.

⁵⁵ Pamela Wadende, "Women and War: A Kenyan Experience" In *Narrating War and Peace in Africa* ed. Toyin Falola et. al. (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2010), 103.

⁵⁶ Otieno, *Mau Mau's Daughter*, 107.

⁵⁷ Charity Waciuma, *Daughter of Mumbi* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969).

⁵⁸ Otieno, *Mau Mau's Daughter*, 1.

life.⁵⁹ She also discusses her life in the forced villages and communal labour she performed there. Her memoir reveals the hardships that Mau Mau created for families who were torn apart and affected economically by the loss of jobs on European estates. Waciuma's family supported Mau Mau but was never involved directly with it. She chose Christianity over the Movement, as she felt there was no possibility of moderation between the two.⁶⁰ The other female authored source written by Muthoni Likimani also addresses the roles of women in Mau Mau.⁶¹ She discusses the activities and ideas of women in this conflict and their contributions to Kenyan nationalism. However, this book is a collection of short stories. They are written with real experiences and observations of the author, but still do not provide the detailed life history and firsthand account of scout work, forest fighting, and political activism that Otieno does. Otieno's memoir is unparalleled and is the primary source for understanding the involvement of female Mau Mau freedom fighters.

The Emergency ended in 1960 when the British determined that the Mau Mau Movement was disabled. Kenya would still go on to gain liberation in 1963 after the British left the country and an independent government was formed. Otieno was involved in politics during the next 30 years and continued to push for the rights of Kenyans, especially those of women. Mau Mau provided an opportunity for women to assert themselves in Kenyan politics. Otieno is an example of one of the exceptional women who assisted the Movement, and of the essential work they did as freedom fighters. Through providing the lifeline of supplies and information to the forests, women became the backbone of Mau Mau. The loss of the vital contributions that women made to the Movement meant that fighters could no longer continue the military battle against the British. Without their help, as Otieno proves, the war could not be won. The strength demonstrated by both the men and women of Mau Mau paved the way for liberation and an independent Kenyan government.

⁵⁹ Waciuma, *Daughter of Mumbi*, 30.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 109-113.

⁶¹ Muthoni Likimani, *Passbook Number F.47927* (Eastbourne, UK: Praeger Special Studies, 1985).

Boys to Men: Robert Baden-Powell and the Boy Scout Movement

Emma Poole

Emma Poole is a junior studying European History at Yale University. Originally from Brookline, Massachusetts, she graduated from Brookline High School in 2013. She wrote this paper in the spring of 2015 under the supervision of Professor Becky Conekin for a History seminar entitled "London and Modernity: 1800 to the Present." For her senior thesis, she anticipates researching Hoover's European aid package and the Treaty of Versailles.

When Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell was born in February 1857, the British Empire was in its heyday. In May of that same year, the British imperial fist crushed an uprising of Indian troops in the service of the British East India Company, in what was known as the Sepoy Mutiny, epitomizing the harsh nature of colonial rule. Being a patriot in this era, although uncontroversial at the time, has taken on new meaning over the years, since being patriotic as a citizen of empire demanded the support and celebration of the colonialist ideals that are, today, widely condemned. In creating a movement that appeared to perpetuate this very brand of nationalism, Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scouts, fashioned a sort of historical bull's eye on his back. Not surprisingly, those like Baden-Powell who stood out as heroes in imperialist Britain came to be seen as standard bearers for the Empire and its sins. The Scout Movement and Baden-Powell have therefore lent themselves to somewhat polarized interpretations, primarily due to Baden-Powell's own past and the evolving historical context of those evaluating him. Seen in his own time as an exponent of moral virtue and altruism, his legacy has been deeply tarnished by post-colonial attitudes that regard him as the ultimate champion of classist, racist, and subordinating propaganda. A modern consideration of the man and the movement, however, demonstrates that neither extreme is warranted, but that he was most likely a well-intentioned product of his society and his movement was essentially a benign effort at community building and democratization, albeit in a militaristic discourse.

By joining the army in 1876, Robert Baden-Powell was set on a course that would shape his life, career, and legacy.¹ While his military career took him across continents to various edges of the Empire, it peaked at a "... small British military outpost ..." called Mafeking in North Western South Africa.² Sent by the commanding officer to lead a seemingly misguided show of British force near Pretoria, Baden-Powell found himself situated at "... Ramathlabama in Bechuanaland conveniently close to the town of Mafeking,

¹ Tim Jeal, *Baden-Powell*, (London: Hutchinson, 1989), 44.

² "Mafikeng," *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. (Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 2015), Web. 28 Apr. 2015
<<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/356368/Mafikeng>>.

which he already feared would be attacked as soon as war was declared" in mid-August.³ Shortly thereafter, he "... received warnings ... that the Boers were planning an incendiary attack on his stores at Mafeking".⁴ This catalyzed a cycle of Baden-Powell sending more troops to guard the ever-increasing store of supplies, the supplies attracting more Boer troops, and Baden-Powell ordering a further increased guard of the stores. This escalating chain of events culminated on October 14, 1899,⁵ when the Boers officially laid siege to the outpost and the British soldiers within. Over the course of the seven-month siege, it was Baden-Powell's capacity as commanding officer to keep morale high, through "... performances and [his admirable] organizing abilities ..." that would earn him the respect of Britons at home and the title of hero when, at long last, the siege was broken.⁶ The military victory was, in itself, significant and was compounded, argues historian Tim Jeal, by the fact "... that [Baden-Powell] was also a talented and unusual man."⁷ His presence at Mafeking cast Baden-Powell as a hero in the national consciousness for the rest of his days.⁸ Furthermore, the victory at Mafeking conferred an immense amount of influence upon Baden-Powell, influence that he would redirect to the nascent Boy Scout Movement.

Indeed, it was the renown garnered by his leadership at Mafeking that led Baden-Powell to first become involved with youth organizations and to eventually start his own. In 1900, Baden-Powell was approached by a group of Cheshire choirboys who "... asked him to be the patron of their non-smoking association." He communicated with the boys somewhat regularly through letters urging them to do "... one good turn ..." each day.⁹ Although his role in the choirboys' association was not nearly as active as the one he came to hold in the coming years, it made him realize, Jeal claims, "... how effectively his name could be exploited to promote an organization..."¹⁰ In the couple of years that followed, Baden-Powell gave numerous speeches to schoolteachers and schoolchildren alike, in South Africa as well as in Britain.¹¹ As time went on, his speaking engagements became more numerous, his message more finely-tuned. Then, on January 15, 1908, the first installment of *Scouting for Boys* appeared on British bookshelves.¹² In the eyes of its author,

³ Jeal, 218.

⁴ Ibid., 219.

⁵ "The Siege of Mafeking," *British Battles*, Web. 28 Apr. 2015.
<<http://www.britishbattles.com/great-boer-war/mafeeking.htm>>.

⁶ Jeal, 286.

⁷ Ibid., 303.

⁸ Robert H. MacDonald, *Sons of the Empire: The Frontier and the Boy Scout Movement, 1890-1918* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 1993), 95.

⁹ Jeal, 362-363. It is worth noting that this phrase evolved into a key piece of the Scouting ethic, the Scout Slogan "Do a good turn daily."

¹⁰ Ibid., 364.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Jeal, 390.

historian Michael Rosenthal asserts, *Scouting for Boys* was not merely one of many elements that, together, comprised a movement. Rather, he clarifies, "... it was very decidedly the sacred text of the brotherhood ... the handbook is the movement, defining the total universe of the Scouts, its priorities, practices, and principles."¹³ In fact, it was the only aspect of the movement that could compete with Baden-Powell himself in importance, since he was woven into the very fabric of the Boy Scouts. The motto of the Boy Scouts, "be prepared," was, said Baden-Powell outright, "... founded on my initials..."¹⁴ In this example it is hard to avoid seeing how centrally embedded Baden-Powell was in the culture of the organization. He did not merely lead the movement; he was the movement.

Baden-Powell, then, wielded an astonishing amount of personal influence at a time when the prevailing social values were incongruent with ours today. Thus, the movement's influence has led to a thorough evaluation by historians. In the process, both the man and the movement have received their fair share of unforgiving criticism. Most common is the claim that the Boy Scout Movement was merely a propagandist tool, working to promote the agenda of an immoral empire. The most often cited evidence supporting this claim stems from Baden-Powell's military history. Having served in both India and South Africa, he was at the very heart of British Imperialism, where colonial jingoism and the values it promoted were strongest.¹⁵ Jeal recounts, "... within days of his arrival [to Lucknow, India,] Baden-Powell was thoroughly reassured by his brother officers' habitual condescension towards all Indians."¹⁶ A young, impressionable man himself at the time, Baden-Powell's alleged characterization of the subjugation of the colonized as "reassuring," worries the contemporary historian when examining the agenda he later passed on to other young, impressionable men. In fact, Rosenthal argues, not only was Baden-Powell comforted by the military mores of his day, he also prioritized them as his own values. "For Baden-Powell," he writes, "the soldier, more than any other human type, embodied the fullest range of essential virtues."¹⁷ Thus, it might be argued that, even if the movement only intended to shape a new generation of good citizens, those citizens would be inherently militaristic if their model of a virtuous citizen was a soldier.

Perhaps more incriminating were the links to particular individuals within military organizations that were nurtured by Baden-Powell when the movement was in its nascent stages. Over the course of 1905 and 1906,

¹³ Michael Rosenthal, *The Character Factory: Baden-Powell and the Origins of the Boy Scout Movement*, (New York: Pantheon, 1986), 161.

¹⁴ Rosenthal, 163.

¹⁵ Lord Rowallan, "Baden-Powell and the Boy Scouts." *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* (106.5017 1957), 28.

¹⁶ Jeal, 47.

¹⁷ Rosenthal, 196.

Baden-Powell met and developed a close relationship with R. B. Haldane, the new Secretary of State for War.¹⁸ Beyond his friendship with the Boy Scout's founder, it was well known that Haldane "... believed that the future of his Territorials would depend upon the quantity and the patriotism of the boys now joining cadet corps or religious brigades."¹⁹ It is hard not to imagine that in their meetings Haldane sought to point Baden-Powell towards a similar larger purpose for his budding organization. The extent to which Haldane achieved this goal remains matter of speculation, but his involvement in the early stages has fueled much skepticism in historians who portray Baden-Powell as an imperialist indoctrinator. Haldane's later actions do not help his cause, as he was also in close contact with the board of the Boys' Empire League, an organization centered on the bulletin *Boys of the Empire*, "... arguably the most jingoistic of all the juvenile periodicals ..." around the turn of the century.²⁰ He even toyed with the idea of altering the organization's name from "Boy Scouts" to "the Imperial Scouts."²¹ Unsurprisingly, historians favor these final details when arguing the militaristic nature and purpose of the Boy Scout Movement.

Since, as Rosenthal claims, *Scouting for Boys* is not merely a handbook but the soul of the Boy Scout Movement, much of the evidence offered to support Baden-Powell's imperialist motives can be derived from the book itself. Those sections of *Scouting for Boys* that deal with patriotism and preparedness are most laden with details that hint at the inculcation of its readers with military and imperialist ideals. Part I, Scoutcraft, instructs the scout leader to start his scouts' training by recounting "Camp Fire Yarn No. 1: Mafeking Boy Scouts," which, Baden-Powell writes, is "... an example of how useful Boy Scouts can be on active service ... [and] shows you how you must be prepared for what is *possible*, not only what is *probable* in war ..." ²² In short, *Scouting for Boys* opens with the explicit assumption of war as the setting for its implementation. A new scout's first impression of Boy Scouts would be one of boys engaged in "active service," prepared, not for the possibility of war, but for what is possible *in* war. War itself is a given. In the same anecdote, Baden-Powell goes on to equate preparedness with being "... accustomed to obey orders ...," demonstrating his equation of the epitome of virtue with the attributes of a soldier.²³ Most famously, Baden-Powell begins his section on "Scout's Work" with the following:

¹⁸ Jeal, 372.

¹⁹ Ibid., 373.

²⁰ Ibid., 367.

²¹ Ibid., 368.

²² Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship*, Ed. Elleke Boehmer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 10.

²³ Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, 12.

I suppose every British boy wants to help his country in some way or other. There is a way, by which he can do so easily, and that is by becoming a scout.²⁴

In using “suppose,” Baden-Powell implies that all *truly* British boys ought to want to help their country. Furthermore, he implies that the only effective way to help one’s country is through military service. He goes on to acknowledge and explicate the militaristic origins of his terminology: “A scout, as you know, is generally a soldier who is chosen for his cleverness and pluck to go out in front of an army in war to find out where the enemy are, and report to the commander all about them.”²⁵ From this association, it is clear that Baden-Powell’s definition of patriotism – “help[ing] one’s country” -- is deeply entwined with ideas of military service.

In addition, it quickly becomes clear that, at the time, there was a deep-seated fear of the possible repercussions of a lack of British patriotism. As Baden-Powell highlights patriotism as one of the key attributes of a Scout,²⁶ he notes also that “... people say that we have no patriotism nowadays, and that therefore our empire will fall to pieces like the great Roman Empire...”²⁷ He goes on to almost threaten that, if boys do not “... keep the good of [their] country in [their] eyes above everything else ... there is a very great danger, because we have many enemies abroad ...”²⁸ Once again, Baden-Powell’s concept of patriotism is based almost completely on one’s willingness to participate in the active defense of, or fight for, their nation. He reaffirms this association in “Chapter IX: Patriotism” blaming the fall of Rome on Romans’ lack of patriotism and love of country which, in turn, destined them to fail militarily and, ultimately, fall.²⁹ Rosenthal focuses Baden-Powell’s equation of patriotism, moral worth, and action in the face of threat to home soil. Scouts are defined, he claims, by “... their usefulness in times of war ... the notion of the Scout as a serviceable citizen trained to follow orders in wartime is at the heart of Scouting.”³⁰ He goes one step further, tying the Scout’s motto, “be prepared,” to the presumption of war. Peacetime, he argues, would not merit such a motto. Rather, it is “... in a world of threats and ambushes ... with enemies hovering everywhere ready to attack...” where a motto of “be prepared” would be appropriate.³¹ Thus, Robert MacDonald

²⁴ Ibid., 13.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 26.

²⁷ Ibid., 28.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 278.

³⁰ Rosenthal, 162.

³¹ Rosenthal, 193.

contends, "... [the] handbook was correctly understood ... to be the work of a general who was worried about the next war."³²

It is not hard, then, to read militaristic meaning into Baden-Powell's seemingly simple call to be an upstanding citizen. This controversial equation of military readiness with civic virtue is compounded by claims that the Movement garnered support from and promoted those privileged social structures and institutions that played a key role in perpetuating imperialism. Arguably Baden-Powell's most explicit attempt to tap into entrenched privilege was the appeal that he made by letter to the editor of the Eton College *Chronicle* on December 19, 1906. Eton College, a secondary school, historically educates the sons of "... England's wealthiest and most prestigious families ..."³³ It is, in short, the institutional heart of class privilege. In his letter, he urges each Etonian to "... get together ... a squad of (say) ten boys in his village or town, just as the Knights of old used to get together their ... retainers and [train] them to patriotism and use of arms."³⁴ With this, Baden-Powell appeals to the elite as just that, urging them to help him train those in the lower strata of society. Born to lead, they were tasked with training those who were, just as certainly, born to dutifully follow. Furthermore, the purpose of these modern-day knights gathering their "clumps of retainers" was, clearly "... to help defend the country by force of arms against the threat of invasion."³⁵ Baden-Powell's appeal to Eton College is, then, offered as proof of both the movement's alleged militarism as well as its classism. In turn, Rosenthal points out, in appealing to the most privileged of boys to be troop leaders, Baden-Powell's character mold, in the form of the Boy Scout Movement, "... took as its model the finely tuned artifact of ... the public school, which supplied England with its norms of gentility and its necessary complement of leaders and statesmen."³⁶ Unsurprisingly, the values of the public school boy, namely "... a narrow patriotism [and] ... discipline ...," echo the heralded virtues of the soldier, and of empire.³⁷ Therefore, Baden-Powell's appeal to and perpetuation of classism can be seen as an appeal to and reciprocal perpetuation of imperialism.

Perhaps the least discussed but most significant influence in the depiction of Baden-Powell and the Boy Scout Movement as propagandist is the examining historians' position in time. That is to say, those endorsing this

³² MacDonald, 8

³³ "Eton College". *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*.

(Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 2015), Web. 28 Apr. 2015

<<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/194547/Eton-College>>.

³⁴ Eton College *Chronicle* (22 December, 1904), quoted in Michael Rosenthal, *The Character Factory: Baden-Powell and the Origins of the Boy Scout Movement*. (New York: Pantheon, 1986), 54.

³⁵ Rosenthal, 57.

³⁶ Ibid., 90.

³⁷ Ibid., 103.

argument appear to have been influenced by the central historical events of their own lifetimes, or even in the years before they were born. For example, Michael Rosenthal, perhaps the most uncompromisingly accusatory voice in the canon of work on Baden-Powell, wrote his book, The Character Factory: Baden-Powell and the Origins of the Boy Scout Movement, in 1986. It is reasonable to surmise that the tumultuous events of the first half of the Twentieth Century, perhaps most notably World War II, affected his consideration of the movement. In his Eton Appeal, Baden-Powell lauds Japan for its recent military successes (namely a victory in the Russo-Japanese War), and cites the "... soldierly spirit and self-sacrificing patriotism of the whole people" as the secret behind Japan's achievement.³⁸ To a historian of the post-war period like Rosenthal, this could sound like Baden-Powell lauding the societal indoctrination and exaltation of militarism that, in only a matter of decades, would yield fervent fascism. Although the comparison is never made outright, in considering an organization led by one charismatic figure, seemingly intent on the training and inculcation of a nation's youths, it is doubtful that the example of the Hitler Youth does not come to mind. Perhaps the most famous instance of youth indoctrination and its devastating results, the Hitler Youth Movement of the 1930's and 1940's served as an extreme to which compare all other youth movements, as well as earning such associations a timeless instinctual suspicion on the part of historians.³⁹ While scholarly works written on Baden-Powell and his movement, almost all of which were composed after World War II, usually fail to acknowledge their own historical biases, the international events in the decades between the appearance of *Scouting for Boys* and their publication almost certainly had a role in shaping historians' consideration of Boy Scouts, pushing them towards a more skeptical, suspicious posture.

It is through this lens of skepticism and misgiving, constructed by events perhaps not fairly attributable to Baden-Powell and his movement, that we see the allegations of imperialism, classism, and propaganda of *Scouting for Boys*. Even if his critics might argue that Baden-Powell contributed to these events by influencing British politicians to see that the response to Hitler and Hirohito had to be military rather than diplomatic, they surely cannot contend that he or the Scouting Movement is responsible. Examining the Boy Scout Movement through a more modern lens, however, it becomes clear that

³⁸ Rosenthal, 54.

³⁹ "From the 1920s onwards, the Nazi Party targeted German youth as a special audience for its propaganda messages. These messages emphasized that the Party was a movement of youth: dynamic, resilient, forward-looking, and hopeful. Millions of German young people were won over to Nazism in the classroom and through extracurricular activities." United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Introduction to the Holocaust." Holocaust Encyclopedia. <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005143>. Apr 28, 2015.

Baden-Powell's agenda was essentially a benign, even democratizing, effort at community organization, even if it was framed by militaristic terminology and organizational structure. While it is easy to get caught up in the army-like configuration of the Boy "Scouts," -- "troops" that "patrol," -- its usage can be simply attributed to its being the system of organization with which Baden-Powell, a military man, was most familiar.⁴⁰ The Mafeking Cadet Corps, for example, weighed heavily on the creation of the Scout model because it was within this model that Baden-Powell experienced the greatest success.⁴¹ The fact of this chosen system of organization, then, ought fairly to be extricated from the values and intentions that were promoted by those doing the organizing.

Similarly, the evidence of classism in Baden-Powell's initial outreach to the boys of Eton College is misconstrued as having sinister, subordinating intentions. The letter to the Eton *Chronicle*, Jeal argues, is often misconstrued in order to villainize Baden-Powell. Yet rather than being the earliest version of the Boy Scout Scheme,⁴² the letter was simply an effort "... he was beginning to make to interest young men in rifle shooting."⁴³ While it can be challenging to pinpoint the exact beginning of a movement, it is important to give all documents full consideration to ensure that individual works are not viewed in isolation as speaking for the movement; rather, they carry no greater weight than others.

Finally, Baden-Powell's own writings demonstrate a self-awareness that does much to refute the inferences drawn by historians about his intentions. In his description of what a Scout is, Baden-Powell acknowledges the group's associations with military organization, but makes clear that he intends a non-militaristic role for the Scout. "But, besides war scouts," he clarifies, "there are also peace scouts, *i.e.*, men who in peace time carry out work which requires the same kind of abilities. These are the frontiersmen of all parts of our Empire ... peace scouts [are] real *men* in every sense of the word..."⁴⁴ With this, Baden-Powell nods to the system from which the organization of his movement is derived, and simultaneously separates his movement from it in all but structure.

Once the military infrastructure of the movement is set aside, and more attention is paid to Baden-Powell's voice, the benevolent, even democratizing, nature of the Boy Scout Movement becomes undeniable. Two "articles of faith in the Boy Scout creed," traceable to speeches he gave on scouting as early as 1901, were:

⁴⁰ Baden-Powell, 5.

⁴¹ Rosenthal, 33.

⁴² Michael Rosenthal, "Knights and Retainers: The Earliest Version of Baden-Powell's Boy Scout Scheme," *Journal of Contemporary History* (15.4, 1980), 607.

⁴³ Jeal, 369.

⁴⁴ Baden-Powell, 13.

First, that “children should be brought up as cheerfully and as happily as possible,” and second, that “in life one ought to take as much pleasure as one possibly can ... because if one is happy, one has it in one’s power to make all those around happy.”⁴⁵

A sort of Peter Pan figure, Baden-Powell was known for his love of games, humor, and lightheartedness, often putting on plays for his regiment when the ugliest side of colonial occupation reared its head.⁴⁶ The happiness and cheerfulness of Scouts aided the Movement’s larger intention: the production of good citizens.⁴⁷ While historians often argue Baden-Powell’s idea of a good citizen to be synonymous with a soldier, he explicitly states the contrary: “I do not mean by good citizens merely fighting men.”⁴⁸ Interpretation is, undoubtedly, an important part of understanding any piece of history, but equal attention should be given to the plain words of those that are the object of that interpretation. Here, giving Baden-Powell’s own words more weight, and noting the self-awareness with which he uses and defuses the language of war and militarism, the benignity of his intentions becomes harder to refute.

Upon closer inspection, not only was the Boy Scout Movement not a propagandist tool, but it aimed, to some extent, to eliminate class divisions rather than to promote them. The Scout Leader was from “... an ordinary middle-class family ...,” that was sometimes economically limited.⁴⁹ Having had to forgo an education opportunity himself due to financial constraints, Baden-Powell hoped “... to provide for the working and lower-middle classes the character training that privileged classes were able to receive in the public schools.”⁵⁰ While this point corroborates Rosenthal’s argument that Baden-Powell held up the public school boy as the model for his “character factory,” it debunks the claim that he sought to reinforce the existing class system. Rather, it is clear, he hoped to provide the training to others that had produced a character he saw as virtuous, in the hopes of forming a nation of youths that shared the same righteous character, no matter the education opportunities available to them. This intention is also well-defined in the structure of *Scouting for Boys* itself. The manual-like organization of the handbook, which includes instructions, diagrams, and anecdotes, makes it accessible to all readers, no matter their previous experience in the field. “[O]ne of the main reasons for the Boy Scouts training,” Baden-Powell stated with an unusually

⁴⁵ Jeal, 365.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 63-67.

⁴⁷ Allen Warren, “Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the Scout Movement and Citizen Training in Great Britain, 1900-1920.” *The English Historical Review* (101.399, 1986): 376-398.

⁴⁸ Jeal, 371.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 53.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 27; Rosenthal, 59.

candid recognition of a truth often left unspoken, “[is] to take the place of the public school life which is only open to the comparatively few whose parents can afford it ...”⁵¹ In 1910 he went one step further, saying that “... the most important work that the Scout Movement can do lies in getting hold of the vast hordes of slum boys in the great industrial centres of the North Midlands ...”⁵² Two years after the initial distribution of *Scouting for Boys*, not only was Baden-Powell cognizant of the influence his nascent movement wielded, but he also sought to use it for the democratization of a society traditionally defined by its stark, unyielding class divisions. His insistence, throughout *Scouting for Boys*, in words and in structure, that “... men could be trained ...” to be Scouts, makes Baden-Powell’s intention to provide *all* boys with the tools with which to become good citizens incontestable.⁵³

It is necessary to apply a similar understanding of the climate in which Baden-Powell was writing when examining his use of, and seeming fixation on, Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*. Considered an iconic imperialist text, references to *Kim* in *Scouting for Boys* and throughout the Boy Scout Movement understandably lent fuel to the criticism of Baden-Powell as a promoter of militaristic values. Baden-Powell’s focus on the story, however, speaks more to his wild imagination and fascination with adventure than to Kipling’s imperialist agenda. For Baden-Powell, “... there was a strong romantic appeal in imagining himself as a scout in enemy territory, surviving by stealth and deception. That most of his actual scouting exploits would involve little danger would not stop him from writing them up as if they had done.”⁵⁴ As a man who tended towards adventure and intrigue, Baden-Powell was drawn to Kipling’s *Kim*, who “... loved ... the stealthy prowling through dark gullies and lanes, the crawl up a water-pipe, [and] the sights and sounds of the women’s world on the flat roofs ...” that he observed while “... executing commissions by night ... for sleek and shiny young men of fashion ...”⁵⁵ Baden-Powell was not the only British boy captivated by *Kim*’s tale. “In 1908,” Jeal says, “no other fictional character was such a dream hero for boys.”⁵⁶ It is clear then, that, while *Kim* was a projection of Baden-Powell’s own imagining of boyhood, he served this role for most of his contemporaries. Therefore, Baden-Powell’s incorporation of *Kim* as an exemplary figure in *Scouting for Boys* serves as further evidence that his movement was a product of the time in which it emerged. In the nearly five-page summary of *Kim* that Baden-Powell offers at the beginning of *Scouting for Boys*, he seems more focused on *Kim*’s adventures themselves than he is on the boy’s service to his

⁵¹ Rosenthal, 90.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 413.

⁵³ Jeal, 72.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁵⁵ Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*, 1st ed. (London: Macmillan and Co, 1901), 4.

⁵⁶ Jeal, 391.

nation.⁵⁷ He recounts all in great detail, remarking only at the end of the passage that the "... adventures of Kim ... show what valuable work a boy scout could do for his country if he were sufficiently trained ..." ⁵⁸ The attention given to the exploits themselves, however, reveals that, much like any boy at the time, Baden-Powell's true fascination with Kim lay not in his service to Empire, but rather the resourcefulness and bravery he demonstrated in his missions.

Finally, Baden-Powell proved himself much more receptive to changing times and attitudes than he is given credit for. In emphasizing his allegedly imperialist agenda, historians imply that Baden-Powell and the Boy Scout movement were, like the militaristic values they purportedly propagated, stagnant and unchanging. On the contrary, writes Elleke Boehmer:

In the fifteen years following the first publication of *Scouting for Boys*, up to 1922, Baden-Powell would repeatedly modify and remould the text to reflect the changing emphases of the Scout Movement: in particular, towards a greater pacificism after 1914-1918, and away from British imperialism.⁵⁹

This point simultaneously acknowledges and refutes the claim that Baden-Powell was simply a tool of imperialist propaganda. Admittedly, Boehmer says, the Movement had traces of imperialist undertones. That was, however, a product of the time in which it was written, and was not singlehandedly due to the malicious agenda of one man. The fact that Baden-Powell altered the work he considered to be the heart of his movement in the face of a changing world and political climate indicates that both the leader and the intentions of the Boy Scout Movement sought to remain current. The original imperialist currents, then, were a result of the movement being born at the peak of Britain's Imperial Age.

Today, Baden-Powell and the Boy Scout Movement often garner criticism, for the man and the movement have come, somewhat unjustly, to symbolize the Empire and its sins. Due to its emergence during the height of British imperialist and jingoist attitudes, and its subsequent popularity and success, historians are understandably tempted to charge the Boy Scout Movement with intentionally propagating imperialist sin. The failure to consider Baden-Powell and *Scouting for Boys* as products of their time, and the desire to find a culprit and to express condemnation for the attitudes and actions of that era, renders some unable to view the Movement for what it really was: a benign, democratizing effort to create a nation of good citizens.

⁵⁷ Baden-Powell, 14-18.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 18.

⁵⁹ Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell "Introduction," xl.

Admittedly, Baden-Powell utilized a traditionally military structure and nomenclature for his organization. This was, however, a product of his background and experience, rather than a subversive effort at inculcating a martial agenda. Well-founded suspicion of certain types of organizations, and of societies that equate militarism with patriotism, fueled by painful historical examples, render it difficult to take Baden-Powell at his word. However, having given the man and his message, as presented in *Scouting for Boys*, a thorough analysis and contemporary consideration, it is hard to see Baden-Powell as anything other than a youthful, well-intentioned if naive spirit trapped in an adult's body.

The Stuff of Legion: A Study of the Background and Careers of the Officers of the Legion of the United States

Evan Stark

Evan Stark is a senior at Washington University in St. Louis studying History, Archaeology, and Operations and Supply Chain Management. He wrote this paper in the spring of 2015 for the history seminar: The Founding Fathers' Government in an Electronic Age, taught by Professor Peter Kastor. Evan became interested in the Legion of the United States and the early U.S. Army as a research assistant working on a Professor Kastor's "Creating a Federal Government" project. He wishes to thank Professor Kastor for his guidance.

Ensign William Pitt Gassaway was exceptional only in death. From a Maryland family of Revolutionary War veterans, Gassaway began his own military career in 1792 as an ensign in the Legion of the United States. The Legion of the United States, officially formed on September 4, 1792, was a radical reorganization of the U.S. Army in response to General St. Clair's disastrous campaign against Native American tribes in the Ohio Valley in 1791. Following St. Clair's defeat, President George Washington and Secretary of War Henry Knox turned to fellow Revolutionary War veteran Anthony Wayne to command a new force modeled after both the Roman Legion and the Continental Army. In his study of the development of the U.S. Army officer corps, William Skelton explained that Wayne's goal "was to instill the qualities of the Continental Army at its most effective stage – its discipline, spirit, and tactical proficiency" in his new Legion.¹ Although the Legion still was prone to the challenges and shortfalls of the early U.S. Army, Wayne was able to field a capable and successful force. Both the Legion's victory at the Battle of Fallen Timbers and the Treaty of Greenville symbolize the Legion's eventual success in the West. Unfortunately, Ensign Gassaway would live to see none of that. Killed by a bullet to his chest, Gassaway was only one of 140 ensigns who served in the Legion, of which almost a third would eventually die while in service. However, Gassaway, killed during a duel with Lieutenant Daniel Jennifer, holds the distinction of being the only Legion officer killed intentionally by a fellow Legion officer. The consequences of Gassaway's death, and the underlying tensions his death reveals, demonstrate that the Legion was comprised of officers who were fundamentally human. In order to better understand the Legion, this project seeks to understand not only who served as Legion officers, but also how Legion service shaped the careers of these officers who, in turn, shaped the legacy of the Legion.

This project emphasizes the use of quantitative analysis, in tandem with traditional qualitative historic sources, to develop a new military history

¹ William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861*, Modern War Studies (Lawrence, Kan: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 92.

of the Legion's officer corps. While military histories traditionally focus on the biographies of important officers and chronologies of significant battles, this project investigates the overarching characteristics of the Legion's officer corps in order to understand the Legion as a unique military institution and how its officers shaped the Legion, the U.S. Army and the United States. In many respects, this project is modeled after Christopher McKee's *A Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession: The Creation of the U.S. Naval Officer Corps, 1794-1815*. McKee, in justifying his decision to embrace a numerical study of the U.S. Navy, explains that "if a book about them [naval officers] is to be more than an atomistic series of vignettes, pattern must be discovered. That pattern can best be detected by using the tool of numbers." A quantitative analysis, unlike the typical qualitative histories that often focus on the extraordinary, rather than the ordinary, can reveal how national institutions in the early years of the United States formed and how they operated.² Using the variety of historic demographic and career information available in Francis Bernard Heitman's *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*, this project builds a mathematical critique of many of Skelton's claims about the early American Army officer corps, and the Legion officer corps in particular.³

There are certainly Legion officers whose own individual contribution to their Army and their nation, both during the Legion and long afterwards, deserve their own detailed studies. From Lewis and Clark to President William Henry Harrison, the impact of the Legion on their respective endeavors is certainly intriguing. However, this project primarily focuses on the Legion's officers as a mostly anonymous group whose characteristics, from demographics to promotion patterns, speak louder than the story of a few more famous men. The officers of the Legion of the United States played a crucial role in not only the establishment of American military supremacy along the western frontier in the late 1790s, but also in the shaping the United States Army as an essential national institution within the early republic. Collectively, the Legion's officer corps directly influenced the U.S. Army from the post-Revolutionary young republic through the late 1840s. This is their collective biography.

During the eight-year period from 1789 to 1796, Congress approved 325 officer commissions, mostly to men who would either later serve in the

²Christopher McKee, *A Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession: The Creation of the U.S. Naval Officer Corps, 1794-1815*, 1st edition (Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 1991), xv.

³Francis Bernard Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army: From Its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1903), 3-1069.

Legion or who were appointed directly to the Legion.⁴ Overall, during that eight-year period, 224 appointments, nearly 69%, were approved for men who served in the Legion. Accordingly, 31% of commissions went to non-Legion officers (officers who would never serve as officers in the Legion). The average Legion officer, much like William Gassaway, received his commission in 1792. However, the largest percentage of Legion officers received their commissions in 1791, with a smaller spike in commissions in 1794. Furthermore, 16% of all commissions during this period went to members of the Society of the Cincinnati. Society members constituted 42% of all appointments in 1789, 1790 and 1791, with most Society commissions approved in 1791.⁵ This suggests that George Washington, Secretary Knox, and Congress, in the years leading up to the Legion, sought officers who had both prior military experience and strong institutional ties to the Continental Army. For non-Legion officers, their commissions followed a slightly different pattern. Rather than 1791, 1794 was both the average and most common year for non-Legion officers to receive their commission. With over 54% of non-Legion commissions occurring after 1793, the increase in non-Legion commissions coincided with both the creation of the Corps of Artillerists and Engineers in 1794 and with preparations for potential hostilities with Britain.⁶ With Congressional priorities shifting by the late 1790s, Legion appointments declined precipitously after 1793, while non-Legion appointments held relatively steady until the end of the period.

The men who received Legion officer commissions represented a distribution of regional demographics that reflected not only national population trends, but also a distribution that was in line with the Army's previous recruitment strategies for military service along the western frontier. In the spring of 1791, violence between Americans and Native Americans along the western Pennsylvanian frontier had become such an issue that Knox believed it merited an additional federal military response. Knox wrote Washington on March 14, 1791, expressing his belief, along with that of

⁴ This time-frame reflects not only the Legion's existence (1792-1796), but also the first commissions granted by a Congress after the ratification of the Constitution. For all statistics not explicitly cited, calculations were made using data made available in:

Francis Bernard Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army: From Its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1903), 3-1069.; Bryce Metcalf, *Original Members and Other Officers Eligible to the Society of the Cincinnati, 1783-1938* (Strasburg, VA, Shenandoah publishing house, 1938). ; Peter Kastor, *Creating a Federal Government Project* (St. Louis: Washington University in St. Louis).

⁵ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

⁶ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 93-95., Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

Major General Arthur St. Clair and Brigadier General Richard Butler, that “raising the levies [troops]...appears to Major General St. Clair, Brigadier General Butler and myself to be proper”.⁷ By the time Knox wrote Washington again on the 27th of March, it appears that not only did Washington approve of Knox’s plan to raise a new military force, but that the groundwork for recruitment was set. Knox wrote that “arrangements are made and in operation for recruiting the two battalions of Levies to be raised in this State [Pennsylvania], and the prospects are good, One company of the Levies is also recruiting in New Jersey...[and] in the territory south of the Ohio”.⁸ While Knox seemed pleased with the speed at which the Army was able to begin recruiting, he warned “that the Wyandots and Delawares will join in the war against us, and that appearances indicated a general indian [sic] War”.⁹ Knox’s concern about escalating conflict resulted in a War Department recruitment strategy that attempted to reach not only large portions of the population, but that also sought out recruits from states who would be more predisposed to serve.

For the levies of 1791, recruitment drives were held primarily in the Mid-Atlantic and in the Northeast. The primary centers for these recruitment drives were Springfield, Massachusetts; Bennington, Vermont; Albany, New York; Christiana, Delaware; Middletown, Connecticut; Trenton, New Jersey, and Baltimore, Fredericktown, Chestertown, and Hagerstown, Maryland. In addition, six stations were established in Pennsylvania including in Philadelphia, Lancaster, and Reading and seven were instituted in Virginia in cities such as Richmond and Fredericksburg.¹⁰ The focus on recruiting in Virginia and Pennsylvania suggests the Army believed it had a better chance of recruiting men who came from states that were most directly affected by the tensions along the frontier. Furthermore, recruitment was handled primarily by Revolutionary War veterans who were sent to their home states to capitalize on their own political networks. Some recruiters, such as John Pratt and Daniel Bissell, would later serve as officers in the Legion.¹¹ By May 30, 1791, Knox informed Washington that “the raising of the Levies, in New Jersey, this State [Pennsylvania], Maryland and Virginia has in general succeeded so well, that I conceived it unnecessary to have recourse to drafting

⁷ Henry Knox to George Washington, 14 March 1791, in *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*, Theodore J. Crackel, ed., (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2008).

⁸ Henry Knox to George Washington, 27 March 1791, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Alan D. Gaff, *Bayonets in the Wilderness: Anthony Wayne’s Legion in the Old Northwest*, Campaigns and Commanders, v. 4 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 33.

¹¹ Ibid., 38–43.

the Militia”, however, “the recruiting...in New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, contrary to all expectations has not succeeded [sic]”.¹² While the Northeast had been expected to be a bastion of support, states in the Mid-Atlantic had exceeded their recruitment expectations. Thus, the levies of 1791 were heavily reliant on support from Mid-Atlantic states and those states in close proximity to the frontier. By January, 1792, the shortcomings of the levies had forced the Pennsylvania governor to request from Knox additional militia at the federal government’s expense.¹³ The failure of the levies helped precipitate the creation of the Legion in 1792 and the Legion’s ranks strongly resembled the levies’ composition.

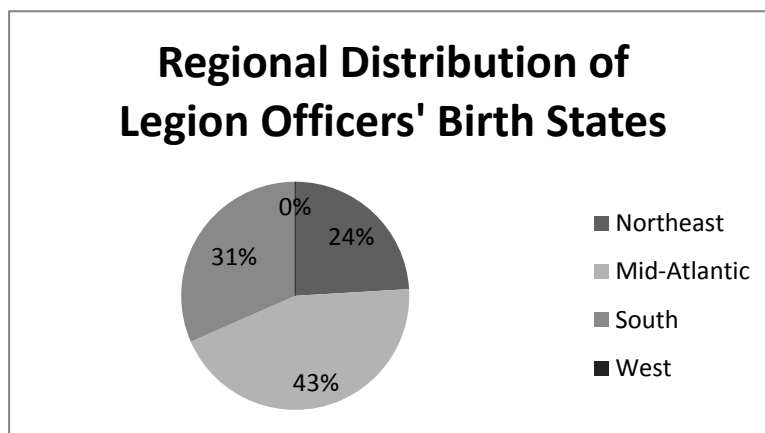
The regional demographics of the Legion of the United States mirrored that of the 1791 levies. In that respect, William Gassaway was, once again, incredibly ordinary. While Gassaway was one of only eight Legion officers from Maryland, the Mid-Atlantic states (New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland) were home to 96 Legion officers or 43% of the entire Legion officer corp. Pennsylvania alone contributed 38 officers, representing 17% of all Legion officers, which exceeded the total number of officers from all Northeastern states combined. The Northeast (Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, and New Hampshire) produced 32 officers, with the largest contingent, 14 officers, coming from Massachusetts and the smallest, one officer, from Rhode Island. Southern contributions to the Legion officer corps were dominated by Virginia’s 37 officers, along with a combined five officers from North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. Between Pennsylvania and Virginia, the two states produced 33% of Legion officers. Overall, the regional distribution of the Legion Officer corps was approximately 24% from Northeast, 43% from the Mid-Atlantic, and 31% from the South. When compared to national population distributions from the 1790 Census, the Legion’s composition had a lower percentage of officers from Northeast (24% vs. 29%) and the West (0% vs. 2%). The Legion had higher percentages from the Mid-Atlantic and South (43% vs. 38% and 28% vs. 31%, respectively). Despite the discrepancies between the Legion and the Census, the Legion generally reflected national demographics. Furthermore, non-Legion officers also tended to mirror the national population with 41% and 26% coming from the Mid-Atlantic and South, respectively. However, the Northeast accounted for only 15% of Non-Legion officers, compared to its relative 29% of the population.¹⁴ Therefore, Legion and Army appointments generally reflected

¹² Henry Knox to George Washington, 30 May 1791, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*.

¹³ Henry Knox to George Washington, 2 January 1792, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*.

¹⁴ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

the nation's regional distribution with the exception of the Northeast. While it appears that Knox, Washington, and Congress sought to build an officer corps that reflected the nation, the low representation from the Northeast may be the result of not only indifference to the campaigns out west, but also that the officer corps was not an attractive career path for men from the Northeast.¹⁵



Regardless of regional background, for many Legion officers their commission in the Legion was the start of their military careers. Among Skelton's critiques of the early U.S. Army, including the Legion, was that its lack of experienced and qualified officers hampered effectiveness¹⁶. There is no denying that the officers of the Legion were highly inexperienced when they received their commissions. Nearly 50% of Legion officers began their Army careers after 1791. By 1792, 27% of the Legion's officer corps had yet to begin their overall military service. However, by the end of 1794, less than three percent of officers had yet to start their military careers. Furthermore, the Legion was not without officers with prior military experience. Some 24% of Legion officers started their careers before 1789. Of those, 45 officers, or 21% of Legion officers, had served during the American Revolution. Almost all of these former Revolutionary War veterans were members of the Society of the Cincinnati.¹⁷ The Legion's commanding officer, General Wayne, was,

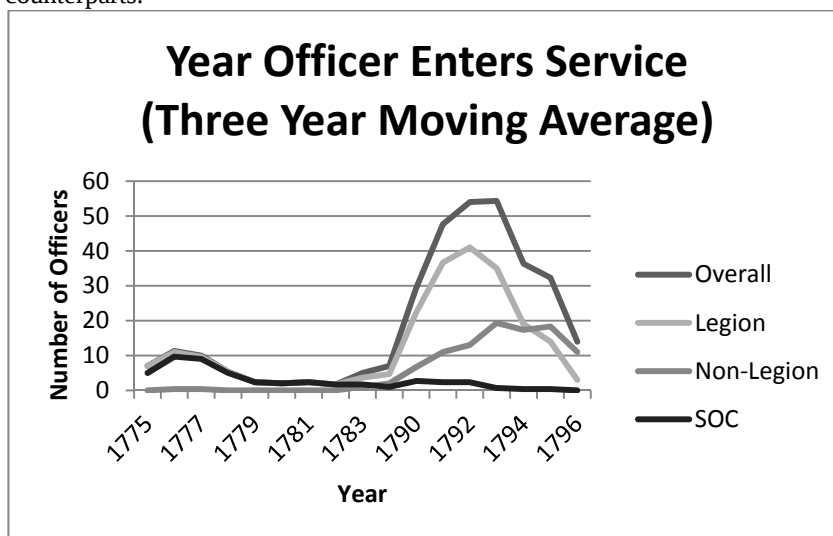
¹⁵ Henry Knox to George Washington, 30 May 1791, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*.

Knox mentions in his letter to Washington that some of the objections to levies recruitment in New England were due to disagreements over the appropriate level of pay offered by War Department.

¹⁶ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 34.

¹⁷ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

himself, a member of the Society. Skelton claims that the Legion was an attempt to recreate the atmosphere and institutional machinery of the Continental Army.¹⁸ If so, Wayne's officer corps would have not only included 45 fellow Revolutionary War veterans, but also a large percentage of new, inexperienced, impressionable officers, that could be more easily fashioned into a new Continental Army-inspired force. For non-Legion officers, the most common starting year for their careers was 1794, while for Legion officers the most common year was 1791. Furthermore, more than 99% of non-Legion officers began serving after 1783, with a majority of those officers starting their Army careers after 1793. Thus, in relative terms, when compared to their contemporaries across the overall Army during this period, Legion officers had more military experience than their non-Legion counterparts.¹⁹



In addition to claiming that the early U.S. Army officer corps was generally inexperienced, Skelton argues that the corps was weakened by high officer turnover. Skelton claims that “a long-term commitment...is central to any definition of professionalism...yet for the thirty years following the Revolution, the most important characteristic of the army officer corps was the instability of its membership”.²⁰ As a result, the officer corps was unable to improve because of the persistent drain of knowledge and experience out of the corps. Furthermore, since military service was not the primary career of the officers in the corps, the Army failed to develop a sense of cohesion and

¹⁸ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 92.

¹⁹ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

²⁰ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 34.

commitment to military life. Ultimately, Skelton claims that this cycle of fluctuation would not end until after the War of 1812.²¹

The issue of officer turnover brings to the forefront two interrelated statistics. The first is the length/duration of an officer's years in service. The second is the cause for the end of an officer's service, which can be analyzed categorically, and then by percentage. With regard to this project, the question of officer turnover becomes not only if officers from this time served for relatively short periods and what caused them to end their service, but also whether or not Legion officers were more likely to serve longer than non-Legion officers and why did their service in both the Legion and the Army end? Furthermore, the length of an officer's service, and the cause for its end, had potential repercussions on that officer's career trajectory (for example, ability to get promoted etc.). How these three broad concepts, duration of service, cause for end of service, and career trajectory, interrelate is key to understanding the legacy of the Legion well into the 19th Century.

While tragic and most likely unnecessary, William Gassaway's death at the hands of Lieutenant Jenifer relegated him, and his one year of total military service, to the lowly status of below average with regard to duration of service. Overall, officers who received a commission from 1789 through 1796 served on average 8.8 years. 39% of officers served longer than average, with an average final departure year of 1801. It is worth noting that 1801 is five years after the last officer received his commission during the period from 1789 through 1796. However, the most frequent duration of service was two years. This suggests, even though the number of officers who served two years represented only 12% of corps, that there was a consistent flow of officers leaving the corps for a variety of reasons. However, more than half of all officers served for five years or more. Skelton uses a minimum service of 20 years to qualify as a "lifetime career commitment" to the officer corps.²² Since 10.7% of officers served for longer than twenty years, there was a contingent of officers who made a career out of their military service, including 10 officers who served for longer than 30 years. With a career range of 44.83 years, officers commissioned during this period did not lack a commitment to service, but rather a lack of consistency in their circumstances²³.

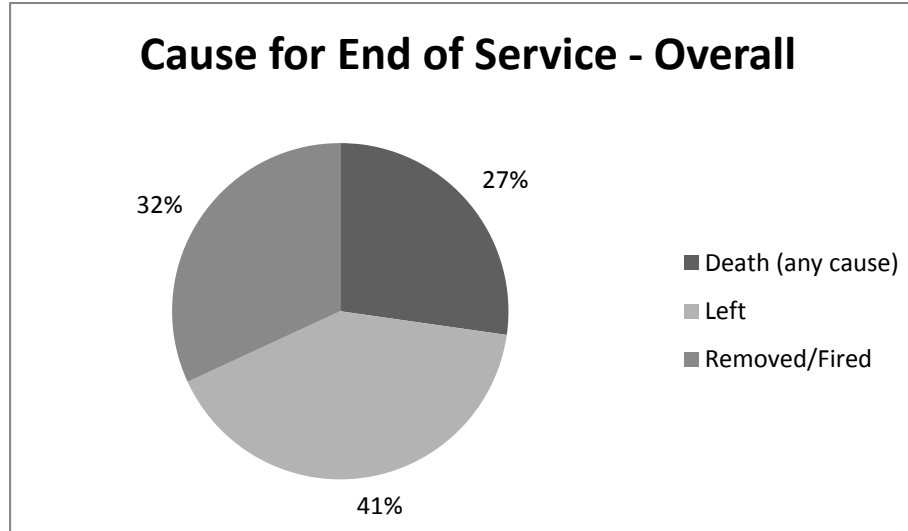
The lack of consistency in the career length of Army officers is further illustrated by the nature of what caused officers to end their careers. William Gassaway was not unique in the general circumstances of his exit from service. While dueling was not a leading cause of death, death was among the leading causes for the end of an officer's service. Overall, 27.2%

²¹ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 34,110.

²² *Ibid.*, 35..

²³ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

of officers commissioned during this period would die while serving in the U.S. Army. Less than five percent were killed in action. When all forms of violent death are taken together (killed in action, killed in a duel, and suicide), they add up to roughly six percent of all officers. Thus, whether through disease, injury, or accident, an officer had a significant chance of simply dropping dead. The poor conditions of the camps along the western frontier were well known and, despite General Wayne's attempts to make his camp at Legionville a "first-rate" camp, without the benefits of modern medicine, maintaining a stable officer corps was a challenge.²⁴ Furthermore, almost a third of all officers, 32%, were removed from the Army. Whether through dismissal or honorable discharges, the Army itself was responsible for the end of many officers' careers. Given the limitations of this project, it would be nearly impossible to verify whether these dismissals were warranted. However, between death and discharge, nearly 60% of officers did not make the final determination to end their service. The 41% of officers that did resign suggests that the U.S. Army as an institution was far from harmonious and faced retention challenges. However, since almost 60% of officers did not dictate the terms of their end of service, the high officer turnover that Skelton takes issue with reflects more the unpredictable nature of life in the Army than it does the officers' individual commitment to serve.



Legion officers tended to serve longer than the average officer, yet they still faced similar circumstances when their careers came to a close. The average Legion officer served 9.8 years, with over 80% serving longer than the most common duration of two years. Over a quarter of Legion officers would

²⁴ Gaff, *Bayonets in the Wilderness*, 99–102.

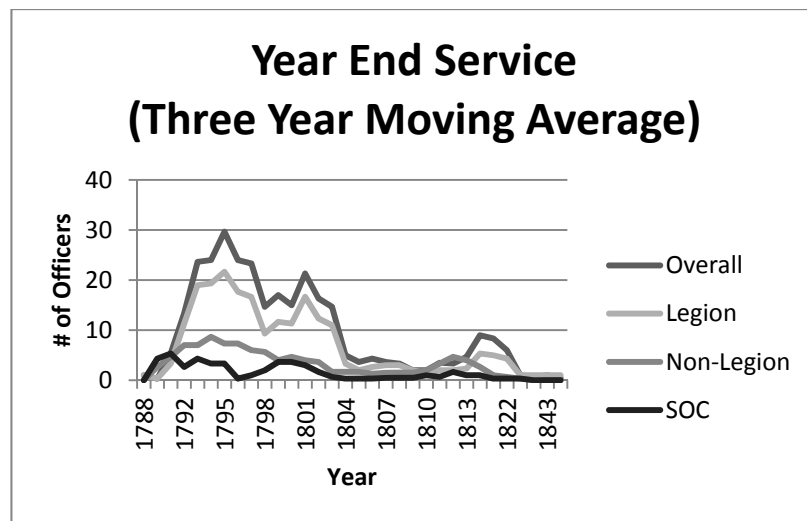
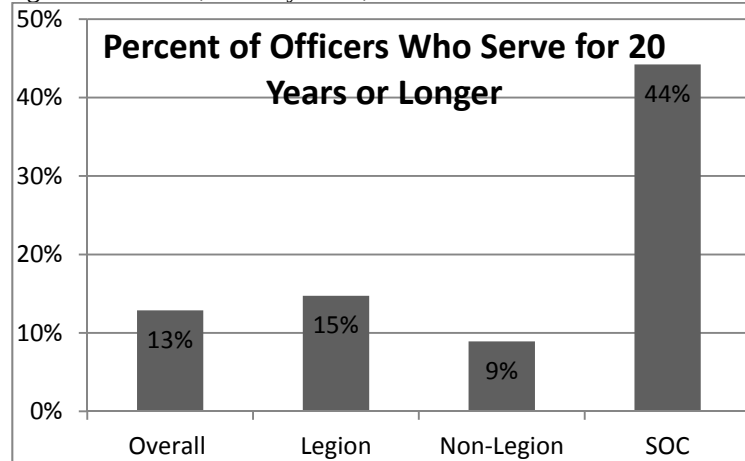
serve 13 years or more and 15% would serve 20 years or longer. The average year of departure for a Legion officer was 1799, with some 42% serving beyond then. By the opening of the War of 1812, 10% of Legion officers remained in the U.S. Army. Major General Hugh Brady was the last Legion officer to leave service, in 1848. Legion officers also faced similar circumstances as the officer corps overall at the end of their careers. Death, removal and resignation accounted for 26.7%, 33% and 39.8% respectively for the ends of Legion officer careers. With respect to the end of the officers' Legion careers, death accounted for 11%, dismissal 12%, and resignation 22.5%. The largest factor in the end of the Legion officers' Legion careers was the end of the Legion itself. 66% percent of Legion officers were still in the Legion when it ended in 1796 and 42% of them had served all four years from 1792 through 1796. Over 57% of all Legion officers elected to continue their service after the Legion and were transferred to other units.²⁵ The Legion officers' tendency to continue service had significant implications for their careers when compared to their contemporaries and Legion officers continued to be a presence in the U.S. Army through the Mexican War.

Unlike Legion officers, who mirrored the overall trends for their length of service, non-legion officers and officers who were members of the Society of the Cincinnati represented opposite sides of the spectrum with regards to duration of service. Non-Legion officers served an average of 6.6 years, while Society of the Cincinnati members served for an average of 18 years. The most frequent career length for non-Legion officers was two years and the most frequent Society of the Cincinnati career was 17 years. The large discrepancy between these two groups can be largely attributed to their circumstances. With more than half of non-Legion officers beginning their careers after 1793, and given that the largest percentage of non-Legion officers would leave in 1796 with no non-Legion officer serving beyond 1825, it is not surprising that non-Legion officers had shorter average careers than either Legion officers or Society members. The average year of end of service for non-Legion officers was 1801. Furthermore, many of the Society members who received their commissions during this period were veterans of the Revolution, which provided them with as much as 14 years of service prior to becoming an officer between 1789 and 1796. The average Society member officer left service in 1794. With regard to the end of their careers, non-Legion officers faced almost the same average proportional causes for their end of service as the overall corps. Meanwhile, Society members had the lowest resignation percentage of any group, 31%, and the highest percentage of officers from this period who died while in service.²⁶ With regard to

²⁵ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

²⁶ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

Legion officers, non-Legion officers and Society of the Cincinnati members, all three groups were subject to relatively similar proportional reasons for the end of their service. Although there was some difference in the average duration of service between Legion officers and non-Legion officers, each group of officers had a significant portion of their respective officers serve beyond the end of the Legion. As such, the question arises if Legion service was a help or a hindrance to an officer's career trajectory. The data suggests being a Legion officer was, in many cases, beneficial to an officer's career.



Empirically, officers who served in the Legion generally promoted faster and held a larger percentage of officer positions in the Army over the course of their careers when compared to their non-Legion counterparts. In terms of rate of promotion, Legion ensigns took an additional six months to be promoted to lieutenant when compared to non-Legion ensigns. However, Legion ensigns took only 5.8 years to reach captain. Comparatively, non-Legion ensigns took 10.333 years to reach captain. Non-Legion officers did take less time than their Legion counterparts in being promoted by captain to major (6.6 years vs. 9.7 years), but Legion officers promoted from major to colonel in over a third less time (10.5 years vs. 15.75 years). Legion officers also took six less months to promote from colonel to brigadier general. Non-Legion officers tended to promote faster from colonel to any general rank, but in terms of the overall number of generals, the Legion was disproportionately represented. Although the Legion represented 69% of all officer commissions from 1789 through 1796, 80% of brigadier generals, 80% of major generals, 80% of lieutenant colonels, 79% of majors, 76% of captains and 92% of ensigns who were commissioned during this period were at one point Legion officers. The only ranks where Legion officers were represented at or below their over 69% proportional representation were colonel and surgeon mate with 64% and 52%, respectively.²⁷ Legion officers enjoyed a larger representation in the ranks of the officer corps than their sheer numbers would suggest. Therefore, it is possible that Legion service may have given an officer the experience necessary for promotion. However, experience gained in the Legion cannot be considered the only reason why these officers were promoted. Politics, in addition to Legion service, also helped shape the career paths of the Legion's officers.

The issues of rank and promotion were as much a question of experience and capability as they were a question of politics. One of Skelton's critiques of the early U.S. Army officer corps was the lack of a clear boundary between civilian life and the officer corps. In the early United States, the blurred lines between the military and civilian sphere often led to officers engaging in, for example, lucrative land speculation as private citizens while holding federal commissions. For Skelton, political concerns, ranging from economics to partisan politics, robbed the officer corps of the ability to focus solely on military affairs.²⁸ Therefore, the previously discussed statistical analysis of Legion officers' career paths overlooks the political and bureaucratic factors that may have also affected these officers' careers outside of Legion service alone. For the Legion, political concerns involving all three branches of government (legislative, judicial and executive) often interfered with the course of Legion officers' careers.

²⁷ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

²⁸ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 72–86.

Even before the Legion was created, and throughout the Legion's existence, Secretary Knox grappled with Congressional restrictions for officers dismissed from the service in 1787. These restrictions complicated the process of promotion within the Legion. In an effort to contain the political fallout from reducing the size of the officer corps in 1787, Congress promised that officers who were dismissed due to Army downsizing in 1787 would assume their previously held rank if they ever chose to return to service. In March, 1791, Knox wrote to Washington expressing his frustration at his predicament. The Army followed a linear promotion system in which vacancies of a rank were filled by the most senior officer of the next lowest rank. In order to convince these older pre-1787 officers to accept commissions for service on the frontier, Knox would have to guarantee, as per Congress's rule, that these officers would retain their old rank and become the senior officers at that rank. This had the potential to upset new officers appointed to the same rank as these older officers, because it would stifle the newer officers' own chances at promotion. Congress's rule was "to prevent them [the older officers] being superceded [sic] in their respective grades by new appointments of old officers of the late war", and never foresaw the situation that Knox faced. Congress had made a promise that was intended to preserve older officers' ranks relative to each other, but did not account for the influx of new officers that Knox needed. Knox proposed instead that Washington authorize a new regimental promotion system that allowed an officer to "always obtain the promotion arising from their own service".²⁹ Although a well-intentioned compromise designed to allow for older officers to retain their old rank, while providing a means by which to justify promoting newer officers, Knox's plan resulted in organizational confusion. On several occasions, Knox informed Washington of disputes between officers over supposedly illegal promotions. In March 1792, several older officers considered resigning after a younger officer was "brought in, over their heads" and Knox warned that these resignations "will affect every officer" and posed a threat to the structural stability of the Army.³⁰ Some circumstances even warranted Washington to intervene personally. On February 19, 1793, Washington rejected the claims of five former Revolutionary War veterans that they had improperly been passed over for promotion back in 1791³¹. Their claims were designed to undermine the authority of newly promoted, less senior, officers in the second sublegion, who had only been appointed to

²⁹ Henry Knox to George Washington, 1 March 1791, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*.

³⁰ Henry Knox to George Washington, 2 March 1791, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*.

³¹ George Washington to Henry Knox, 19 February 1793, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*.

their positions in 1792 and were not in the Army in 1791.³² The Army's and Legion's inability to facilitate orderly and predictable promotions, and the internal struggle that accompanied some promotions, required an unnecessary expenditure of time and effort at the expense of overall cohesion.

In the death of William Gassaway, tensions between the Army and the courts played a role in determining the course of the career of his killer, Lieutenant Daniel Jenifer. General Wayne's dispute with Pennsylvanian courts over jurisdiction in the death of Gassaway was emblematic of several other disputes that had seen Legion soldiers arrested and imprisoned by Pennsylvanian authorities. Dueling was illegal in Pennsylvania and Gassaway's family wanted Jenifer punished as "a murderer and assassin" by the courts of Pennsylvania because his offense was a capital crime in that state.³³ Wayne viewed the circumstances of Gassaway's death as the result of an internal dispute between officers that fell within his purview. Writing to Knox on April 29, 1793, Wayne reiterated that between Gassaway and Jenifer "it was agreed that they should stand back at a given distance, first advance and fire...Ensign Gassaway fell".³⁴ Framing the incident as an orderly and unfortunate accident, rather than murder, Wayne sought political cover from Knox. When Gassaway's family insisted on prosecution, Wayne sent Jenifer to Fort Washington, down the Ohio River, and outside the jurisdiction of Pennsylvanian courts. Wayne later dismissed Jenifer after a court martial for a separate incident of slander. Wayne never held Jenifer officially responsible for Gassaway's death. Rather, Wayne, in his dismissal of Jenifer wrote "Military Discipline is the Soul of all Armies", reinforcing his desire to keep the fate of his officers out of the hands of civilian courts.³⁵

The last source of political interference in the career of Legion officers was from the executive branch itself, in particular the Jefferson Administration. In July, 1801 Meriwether Lewis, of future Lewis and Clark fame, and a former ensign in the Legion, received the assignment to examine the officer register and offer his remarks. Although his review was completed under the auspices of a planned reduction of the officer corps, Lewis's categories of remarks suggest that the driving force of the review was politics. With categories like, "Republican", "Political apathy", "Opposed to the Administration, otherwise respectable officers" and "most violently to do [oppose the Administration] and still active in its vilification", it appears that

³² Henry Knox to George Washington, 18 February 1793, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*.

³³ Gaff, *Bayonets in the Wilderness*, 99–102.

³⁴ Anthony Wayne to Henry Knox, 29 April 1793, in *Papers of the War Department 1784 to 1800* (Fairfax: Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, George Mason University).

³⁵ Gaff, *Bayonets in the Wilderness*, 134–135.

the register was being reviewed for political opponents.³⁶ Skelton argues that the Army was a bastion of Federalist support and, for Thomas Jefferson, vocal Federalist officers would be a threat to Jefferson's control of the military³⁷. Of the eight officers who fell under the category of violently opposing the Jefferson Administration, seven were Legion officers. An additional two Legion officers were listed as "unworthy of the commission they bear."³⁸ Of these nine officers, which included notable figures such as Thomas Cushing and Richard Sparks, a third would leave the Army by 1802.³⁹ The influence of politics in those officers' departure cannot be overlooked and reinforces Skelton's assertion that the Legion lacked the professional wherewithal to remove itself from political concerns.

In addition to the questions of promotion and rank, the Legion's legacy can also be investigated through its officers' contributions in later conflicts, particularly the War of 1812. Skelton makes a point of highlighting the War of 1812 as a necessary infusion of new officers who brought with them a desire to professionalize the officer corps.⁴⁰ Surprisingly, 10% of Legion officers remained in service throughout the War of 1812. Additionally, eight of the 22 Legion officers who had previously left the Army and would later return, returned during the War of 1812. Legion officers in the War of 1812 include Generals Hugh Brady, Daniel Bissell, Ferdinand Claiborne, and Thomas Cushing. Additionally, two of the Legion officers who left in 1802, after being reviewed unfavorably in Lewis's report to Jefferson, reentered service during the War of 1812.⁴¹ Finally, Brady's service continued through 1848 and the Mexican American War. For nearly six decades, Legion officers remained present in the U.S. Army.

Furthermore, while this paper has focused primarily on the unexceptional William Pitt Gassaway and his equally anonymous contemporaries, there were plenty of rather exceptional men who served in the

³⁶ Meriwether Lewis to John Newman, 24 July 1801, in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson Digital Edition*, Barbara B. Oberg and J. Jefferson Looney, ed., (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2008). ; "War Department, July 24, 1801, List of Army Officers", *The Thomas Jefferson Papers Series 1. General Correspondence. 1651-1827*(Washington: The Library of Congress), image 268-280, retrieved April 2015, from The Library of Congress, <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mtj1&fileName=mtj1page024.db&recNum=267>

³⁷ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 72.

³⁸ Meriwether Lewis to John Newman, 24 July 1801, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson Digital Edition*.

³⁹ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

⁴⁰ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 110.

⁴¹ Calculations derived from Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.

Legion and went on to have successful and noteworthy careers. As previously mentioned, Meriwether Lewis became an iconic figure in the famous Lewis and Clark expedition. His future expedition partner William Clark, also served in the Legion. Zebulon Pike, who also led an expedition out west, served as a captain in the Legion. Future president William Henry Harrison started his Army career as an 18 year-old Lieutenant in first sublegion of the Legion and fought at the Battle of Fallen Timbers.⁴² Whether or not these men were successful because of their Legion service cannot be truly answered. However, the Legion formed a common denominator among some men who went on to become historic figures beyond the scope of the Legion.

The 224 men who served as officers in Wayne's Legion of the United States were the lasting legacy of both the Legion's successes and of its shortcomings. These officers were generally drawn from Mid-Atlantic states with large portions coming from Pennsylvania and Virginia. Additionally, for most Legion officers, their service in the Legion was the start of their military careers. Although the Legion did suffer from the Army's overall tendency to bleed officers, Legion officers tended to serve longer than their non-Legion counterparts. Furthermore, the consistent outflow of officers from the Legion and Army was not necessarily a reflection of their willingness to serve. While a considerable percentage did resign, the preponderance of death and removal cannot be overlooked. Additionally, Legion service is correlated to both faster promotion and to holding high rank in the U.S. Army over the course of a Legion officer's career. The Legion was also not immune to the challenges facing the Army's officer corps as it gradually transitioned to a professional force. In particular, the role of politics in the administration of the Legion highlighted that the Legion's officers were not insulated from the politics of the civilian sphere. However, some Legion officers did manage to have highly successful and notable careers both inside and outside of the military. The career trajectory of Legion officers through American history up until the years after the Mexican-American War illustrate that the Legion was a common experience that helped shape the lives of men who went on to shape their country.

⁴² Gaff, *Bayonets in the Wilderness*, 66–67.

From Shirazi to Sidi: The Evolution of Swahili Identity

Destiney Randolph

Destiney Randolph is a History Major studying at Rice University. She wrote this paper during the spring semester of 2015 for the class "Migrations and Diasporas in the Indian Ocean World". She was inspired to write on this topic after hearing an engaging lecture by Dr. Jeffrey Fleisher, an archeologist of Africa, and a professor at Rice University. She would like to thank both him, and my professor for this class, Dr. Kerry Ward. Additionally, She thanks her sister-in-law, Dr. Oluchi Nwosu for her help in the initial editing of this paper, and for her encouragement to submit it for publication.

Until recently, the Indian Ocean region was largely marginalized and seen as being comprised of third world countries with little to offer. In recent decades, this idea has been tested and utterly debunked. The Indian Ocean area has some of the oldest cultural significance in the world, and there is still a great deal to discover about it. Despite the growing popularity of this field, many people still have a somewhat limited knowledge of what countries comprise the Indian Ocean. It is often forgotten that the eastern coast of Africa is also part of this region, and that it has had cultural and economic ties with other Indian Ocean countries for centuries. In this paper, I will explore the changing identity of the people of this region, which has come to be called the Swahili Coast. I will look at not only how Swahili self-identity has changed over time, but also how others have perceived them throughout the centuries and how the notion of identity can be altered due to changing political atmospheres. This examination of identity will include not only people who have remained on the Swahili Coast for centuries, but also those who have been displaced at a later time. In addition, I will discuss the place of the Swahili in the Indian Ocean and show that, historically, it has been much more than just a fringe region with little impact on the rest of the world.

Before discussing the evolution of Swahili identity, we must first identify exactly where the Swahili Coast is located. Modern historians define the Swahili Coast as the area spanning 2500-3000 kilometers from Mogadishu, Somalia to the Cape of Delagoa in southern Mozambique¹. Several island nations are included in this region, including Zanzibar, Pembar, and the Comoros archipelago. Linguists further divide the Coast into three regions: the Bandir Coast, spanning from the Horn of Africa to the Lamu islands, the Mrima Coast, from Lamu to Kilwa, and a third region from Kilwa to Inhambane in south-central Mozambique². In terms of geography and

¹ Chapurkha M. Kusimba, *The Rise and Fall of Swahili States* (AltaMira Press, 1999), 21.

² Michael N. Pearson. *Port Cities and Intruders : The Swahili Coast, India, and Portugal in the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. eBook Collection), 68-69.

resources, the Swahili Coast is far from being a uniform area. Towns directly on the coast were, of course, wonderful sources of fish, and provided valuable ports for trading. However, a bit farther inland, plateaus abound, and were prime hunting grounds³. In these areas, residents hunted a variety of large game, including elephants, leopards, and rhinos; such animals were not only useful for food, but also provided valuable trading goods such as ivory. Still, other areas of the coast hosted thick forests, lush with mangrove trees. As we see, the Swahili Coast was and still is an extremely diverse region.

As stated above, contemporary scholars have defined the Swahili Coast very specifically. Until recently, however, the coast had much more fluid boundaries, and different groups of people have held their own unique interpretations of what encompassed the Swahili Coast. For example, medieval Arab and Chinese traders referred to Africa's eastern coast as Zanj⁴. The first recorded reference of the Zanj was made by an Arab astronomer named al-Fazari, in the 780s. Though he only mentioned it perfunctorily, it was clear that Arabs used this term to refer to both the physical area of the coast, as well as the people who lived there. A later geographer known as al-Ya'qubi was much more thorough in his description of the Zanj. In his book, *Chronicals of Ibn Wadih*, al-Ya'qubi outlined one perspective on the origins of the modern Swahili. He wrote,

The children of Kush and Ham — and they are al-Habash and al-Sudan —divided after crossing the Nile of Egypt. One branch went to the right, between east and west (i.e. to the south). These were al-Nuba, al-Buja, al-Habasha and al-Zanj. The other part went westwards.

From this excerpt, it is evident that medieval Arabs (at least according to this source) very clearly made a distinction between Eastern and Western Africans. This passage also highlights an interesting dynamic in ethnic relations. The al-Habasha who were referenced were actually an amalgamation of African peoples living both in the Zanj and surrounding areas. They included Abyssnians, Nubians, and several other groups of people. This suggests that the Arabs of the past assigned African identity based largely on geographical spacing, rather than cultural, ethnic, or linguistic similarities. At the same time, the actual people of the Zanj would likely have had far more discriminating methods of self identification. This illustrates how variable identity can be, even within a specific time period.

Arab traders of the Middle Ages were outsiders looking in on Swahili culture. As such, it makes sense that they did not take into account certain

³ Chapurkha, *The Rise and Fall of Swahili States*, 74.

⁴ Marina Tolmacheva, "Toward a Definition of the Word Zanj," in *Azania: Archeological Research in Africa* volume 22 issue 1, 105-106.

nuances of identity which only a native would be aware of. With this in mind, we must now consider how Swahili self-identity has changed over time.

Heavy population of the Swahili coast did not begin until the middle of the first millennium B.C.E.⁵. People from farther inland began to move to the coast in larger numbers in order to take advantage of trading opportunities with the greater Indian and Mediterranean Oceans. Using monsoon wind patterns, the people of the coast were able to circumnavigate the entire Indian Ocean in around fifteen months, allowing for multiple voyages throughout a lifetime. Adria LaViolette argues that the active pursuing of such cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, fostered by this oceanic mobility, is the defining characteristic of Swahili identity. Though strong arguments can be made for the importance of other aspects of the Swahili, it is true that this cosmopolitan lifestyle was paramount during the early centuries. The importance of international trade can be seen in artifacts from the Swahili Coast. Goods such as Chinese porcelain, Sasanian ceramics, Indian jewelry, and glass from the Mediterranean all evince that very early on (specifically from the 7th to 9th centuries), international trade was a major component of Swahili life.

Closely connected to cosmopolitanism is the concept of maritimity. Maritimity is not only the use of water passages for food and trade, but for “broader patterns of sociocultural organization, practice, and belief within a society”⁶. Jeffrey Fleisher argues that the close connection that the Swahili had with the sea was one of their most defining traits, and as such, is vital to Swahili identity. According to them, true maritimity, and its implications on identity, did not arise until the 11th century. It was during this time that many changes can be seen in Swahili society. For example, rather than looking primarily to coastal waters for seafood, people began fishing farther into the oceans. Animal remains from several Swahili towns imply that the hunting of sharks became common after the 12th century, showing an increased willingness to go offshore. Also, an Arab scholar of the late 10th century noted that the people of the Zanj used boats specifically engineered to hunt and transport sperm whales. And concerning navigation, the end of the first millennium brought with it the adoption of the Chinese magnetic compass, which insinuates voyages farther into the ocean were being attempted.⁷

Aside from hunting larger sea animals, the Swahili people also began to orient their lives seaward during the early second millennium. Mosques were moved from the center of a city to the shoreline, giving the ocean

⁵ Adria LaViolette, “Swahili Cosmopolitanism in Africa and the Indian Ocean World, A.D 600-1500” in *Archaeologies: Journal of the World Archeological Congress* vol.4 iss. 1, 27-34.

⁶ Jeffrey Fleisher et al., “When Did the Swahili Become Maritime?”, *American Anthropologist*, 2-9.

⁷ Norman C. Rothman, “Indian Ocean Trading Links: The Swahili Experience”, in *Comparative Civilizations Review* issue 46, 81.

religious and not just economic significance. Also, the use of coral and lime to build the fabled “stone towns” of the Swahili coast illustrates how oceanic materials were being incorporated into everyday life. All of this, combined with the fact that long distance trading did increase greatly after the 11th century, does seem to suggest that maritimty did become an important part of Swahili identity. But the question remains, why did it take so long for the Swahili to become genuinely maritime? The answer to this can be found by looking at the prevalence of Islam along the coast.

The rise of Islam brought a new and complicated dynamic to Swahili identity. Though there is evidence of Islamic influence as early as the 8th century, it was not until the 12th century that Islam became truly dominant on the coast. The expansion of this religion is complicated because it both lessened and bolstered previous notions of Swahili identity. As Islam rose in prominence along the coast, I believe it replaced cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism as the single most important factor in Swahili identity. However, with Islam came Arabization. This included an increase in the use of the Arabic language, dress, and trade with other Arabic and Muslim areas. As such, the Swahili Coast became integrated in an international system of Arab culture, which furthered their sense of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism. This trading with far off lands also facilitated the growth of the Swahili into a maritime society, which may be why they did not achieve true maritimty until Islam and Arabization were in a crescendo.

In addition to fostering multiculturalism, Islam was the single most important aspect of Swahili identity because it influenced how trading and economics functioned.⁸ Scriptures from the Koran dictated “fair practice in the market place.” And due to passages such as, “Shu'aib’ told them to use honest scales and to give just measure and weight,”⁹ every major market had overseers called *muhtash*, who were in charge of scales were weighted properly and transactions were being carried out fairly.¹⁰ Apart from this, religious affiliation also affected tariffs. Customs duties began at 2.5% for Muslims, 5% for “protected” non-Muslims, and 10% for all others. It is this pervasiveness of Islam, not only in religious settings, but also in the secular arena, that made it such a vital component of what it meant to be Swahili.

The Arabization of many parts of the Indian Ocean increased trade, but it was not the only reason for Swahili Coast prosperity. The “Golden Age” of the Swahili, spanning from the mid-12th through the 15th century was contributed to by many factors, including the skill of the Swahili. The people of the coast were some of the most proficient metalworkers in the world. They mastered the art of annealing (superheating a metal and then cooling it slowly in order to improve ductility) and oxidizing (used to rid metal of impurities),

⁸ Norman C. Rothman, “Indian Ocean Trading Links: The Swahili Experience”, 80-86.

⁹ Koran 7:85.

¹⁰ Norman C. Rothman, “Indian Ocean Trading Links: The Swahili Experience”, 80.

which made their metal exports highly valuable. They sold their finished products primarily to India and along the Persian Gulf; however, the quality of these metal exports was so high that Indian merchant resold them to parts of Europe, making Swahili craftsmanship sought throughout much of the then-known world. Women from all over wore gold, silver, and bronze jewelry from cities such as Kilwa and Mogadishu. This circulation of precious metals from the coast made it so that Swahili gold was one of the most important factors in maintaining a stable Indian Ocean economy. Also, the 15th century brought more direct trade with China. In 1417, the imperial Chinese fleet sailed to the coast, and they visited again in 1435. With the strengthening of this relationship, the two ends of the Indian Ocean were brought together, creating an even more integrated oceanic system.

The prosperity of the Golden Age of the Swahili leads us to a very important topic in the identity of those on the coast. Many of the raw materials which were used by the Swahili came from regions farther inland, which makes one wonder about the relationship between the Swahili and other Africans. Though there is a notion that coastal people largely kept to themselves and did not interact with people in the interior of Africa, scholarly research has proven otherwise. As of late, the term “umland”, once used only in European contexts, has been adopted by scholars of other areas.¹¹ This term refers to the area directly outside a city or town which is culturally and/or economically tied to that town or city. The fact that this term has been applied to the Swahili Coast shows that coastal peoples did indeed interact with those farther inland. Coastal cities depended on their umlands for crops (the sandy soil of the coast was not good for agriculture) and other raw materials. In his novel, “Port Cities and Intruders”, M.N. Pearson makes an important comparison between the economic systems of India and those of the Swahili Coast. In the former, brokers were extremely important in facilitating trade and commerce. As such, the transfer of goods from the umland to a port city would largely be handled by this third party. Pearson noted a lack of such brokers on the Swahili Coast, meaning that people that lived inland interacted directly and regularly with coastal Swahili. In fact, studies on several Swahili areas, such as Pate and Lamu, have shown that many plantations inland were actually owned by Swahili businessmen on the coast. This frequent interaction led to intermarrying between the two groups, ensuring that they always had closes ethnic ties.

From their interactions with people of the interior, it becomes clear that for most of their history, the Swahili did not see themselves as completely separate from their fellow Africans. However, this perception began to change as Oman gained more influence in the 18th and 19th centuries. Prior to Omani colonization, the Swahili Coast has been under the rule of the Portuguese since

¹¹ Michael N. Pearson, *Port Cities and Intruders : The Swahili Coast, India, and Portugal in the Early Modern Era*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)), 63-73.

the beginning of the 16th century. Despite having occupied the coast for over a century, the constant uprisings from the Swahili made it so that the Portuguese were never able to fully integrate it into their empire. In the 1720s, Oman took advantage of this weakness, and helped the Swahili rid themselves of their European ruler. This assistance was not completely magnanimous, and soon the Swahili Coast had been absorbed into the Omani Sultanate. In fact, in 1840, Sultan Seyyid Said moved the capital of Oman to Zanzibar. This colonization by Oman created a new social structure in Zanzibar, and all over the Swahili Coast. Native Omanis were of course at the top of this structure, and in order to ally themselves with the new ruling class, Swahili elites began to manufacture their own origin stories.¹² According to this newly created story, the Swahili are descended from seven merchant princes from the Shiraz area of modern-day Iran. Each of the princes was said to have sailed down the Swahili Coast and established a town which they ruled over. The proliferation of this origin tale emphasized a clear shift in Swahili self identity (at least among the upper classes). Now, their identity was inextricably connected with being of foreign descent, and this differentiated them from people who lived in the interior.

Omani rule also contributed to the reformation of Swahili identity by introducing large scale slavery. Slaves were often brought from the inland, which further made the Swahili see themselves as being different, and, in this case, superior. Now, rather than business partners or comrades, non-Swahili Africans were looked down upon. Michael Pearson notes this change in attitude in the following passage:

Newly imported slaves were despised as ‘barbarians’ or as uncultured ‘ignoramus’...those [slaves] who were most successful in such struggles were slaves who had been born into coastal culture and religion...these slaves commonly attained social positions that had been denied to their ‘barbarian’ forbearers.

This passage highlights an interesting double standard in the valuing of multiculturalism. As previously stated, the rise of Islam and Arabization allowed the Swahili Coast to be part of a greater network of international Islam. And Omani colonization only reinforced that willingness to take part in foreign cultures. However, native African culture was excluded from this multiculturalism, and systematically repressed throughout the colonial period. This identification with foreign powers, and the apparent rejection of African culture would later prove to be detrimental to the Swahili people.

Omani colonization was highly influential for the Swahili, but European rule illustrates how they were perceived by outsiders in the mid-

¹² Jonathan Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888* (Heinemann), 85-86.

modern era. The “scramble for Africa” in the late 19th century divided this continent among European nations, and the Swahili Coast was not exempt from this power struggle. England and Germany ended up with primary control over eastern Africa, and their initial encounters with the Swahili set the foundation for the Colonial Theory.¹³ This theory asserts that the complex civilizations found on the Swahili Coast are a product of Arab colonization, and not of African ingenuity. This idea was so widely asserted, that the 1911 version of *Encyclopedia Britannica* stated “The energy and intelligence derived from their Semitic blood have enabled them to take a leading part in the development of trade and the industries.”¹⁴ In the racially insensitive world of the early 20th century, Swahili identity was seen as being a mix between a superior Arab culture, and an inferior and primitive African culture. It is partially due to this line of thinking that until the 1980s, most people believed that the Swahili language (called Kiswahili) was a genuine mix of Arabic and Bantu languages. Like the Colonial Theory, this would too be disproved.

Scholars now know that the Colonial Theory was very heavily flawed. Though there had been Arab influence prior to the 18th and 19th centuries, it was not until this time that the Omani actually colonized the Swahili Coast. As such, the buildings, trade routes, and technology created on the coast prior to this were largely due to the work of the Swahili, not outside forces. As addressed previously, one of the defining characteristics of the coast is the extensive use of coral and lime. Mosques and tombs using these materials date back as early as the 11th century, long before any colonization, and before Islam has even reached its peak on the Swahili Coast¹⁵. Even later religious buildings have architectural features that are distinctly African. Tombs dating back to the 13th century have been found, and were ornately adorned with decorative panels (sometimes made of Chinese porcelain), and other valuable goods¹⁶. The extravagance of these gravesites is not found anywhere else in the Islamic world during this time; this is likely because Muslim graves are traditionally supposed to be very modest. However, the ornate nature of tombs is not uncommon in traditional African culture. Thus, the idea that native Africans could not be responsible for the creativity and architectural ingenuity of the Swahili Coast has been debunked.

Additionally, advances in the study of linguistics in recent decades have made it very clear that Kiswahili is indeed a Bantu language. In the 1980s, linguists began exploring the nuances of the Swahili language, and found that it is closely related to Sabaki, a group of languages that are spoken

¹³ Chapurkha, *The Rise and Fall of Swahili States*, 27.

¹⁴ “Swahili”, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 26, 11th ed., 177.

¹⁵ Jeffrey Fleisher et al., “When Did the Swahili Become Maritime?”, in *American Anthropologist*, 9.

¹⁶ Felix Chami, “Cities and Towns in East Africa”, in *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures* 2nd ed., 109-113.

in Kenya.¹⁷ These Sabaki languages are in turn related to languages prominent in northeastern Tanzania (appropriately called the Northeast Coast languages); by studying these tongues scholars have been able to show how they spread throughout eastern Africa. Supposedly, people speaking the Northeast Coast languages were living along the coast of northern Tanzania in the early first millennium. From Tanzania, they migrated north to Kenya, when their language splintered and evolved into a Sabaki language. Throughout the next several hundred years, the Sabaki language too splintered, until several languages, including Swahili and Comorian emerged. Swahili itself does have significant Arabic influence; however, most of the words borrowed from Arabic have to do with subjects such as religion, law, and trade. Arabic arrived too late for it to have an effect on grammatical structure, or other fundamental aspects of Kiswahili. This linguistic analysis is highly important because it exemplifies the foreign influence that the Swahili received due to their interregional trading networks. Simultaneously, it firmly marks Kiswahili as fundamentally African, couching the identity of the Swahili people in Africa, rather than abroad.

We have now seen how Swahili identity has changed through the early 20th century, but how do modern Swahili combat issues of identity? Jeffrey Fleisher has been studying the archaeology of the Swahili Coast for several years, and while excavating there, he has asked local peoples about their origins.¹⁸ According to him, many Swahili still claim that they originate from the seven Shirazi merchant princes. Additionally, a fair amount sees themselves as fundamentally different from other Africans. This ideology led to significant problems for the Swahili during the 1960s and 1970s. It was during these decades that African territories began gaining their independence, and forming their own states. As this occurred, countries with significant Swahili populations (such as Somalia and Tanzania) began to question whether the Swahili were truly African.¹⁹ The Swahili had been associating themselves with foreign origins for over a century at this point, and they had now come to be associated with colonial powers. This sense of otherness made them a target for political violence during the opening years of independence, and made it more difficult to attain citizenship in the newly formed nations. As such, the Swahili began to re-brand themselves once more, this time, seeking to accentuate their African roots. The actual term “Swahili” became more popularized and “Shirazi” was used less. This shows a trend away from being associated with the Middle East.

¹⁷ Thomas Spear, “Early Swahili History Reconsidered”, in *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* vol. 33 no. 2, 257-290.

¹⁸ Jeffrey Fleisher, “Who are the Swahili” (lecture, Rice University, Houston, TX, March 25, 2015).

¹⁹ Pearson, M. N. *Port Cities and Intruders : The Swahili Coast, India, and Portugal in the Early Modern Era*, 17.

Perhaps the best example of how changes in identity and politics interact is the Zanzibar Revolution in 1964. The year before the revolution, Tanganyika (modern-day Tanzania) and by extension Zanzibar, had been given its independence by the British. Until this point, the Arab minority on the island had managed to hold onto the power that it had gained during the Omani Sultanate. They held a monopoly on most business ventures, despite being less than 20% of the population. Zanzibar chose to be governed by a constitutional monarchy, led by Sultan Jamshid bin Abdullah. When the first parliamentary elections were held upon independence, ethnic tensions increased exponentially and political parties were based largely on race. Three separate elections had to be held due to accusations of fraud, and in the end despite winning 54% of the popular vote, the majority African party only won thirteen out of the thirty-one seats in Parliament (less than 42%). A coalition government led by the majority Arab party won the remaining eighteen seats, and thereby the most power in the government, much to the anger of the African population.

Early in the morning on January 12, 1964, between 600 and 800 - mostly African- revolutionaries attacked several police stations and armories, gaining possession of an assortment of weapons. The rebels took over important government buildings, eventually forcing the Sultan and other top members of the government to flee. The number of people who died due to the revolution has been highly contended. The interim government that was created claimed that only fifty to sixty people were killed, while other, more fantastical sources say that 20,000 people died. According to a CIA report by the U.S. government, "competent authorities put the figure at approximately 4,000", most of who were Arab.²⁰ The fact that Zanzibar went from the capital of the Omani Sultanate, to the site of a massive slaughter in barely a century, shows the extreme shift in Swahili identity in Zanzibar in particular, and to a lesser degree, in the Swahili Coast as a whole.

Modern Swahilis still face issues with balancing their African and Arab identities. One major battle has been between *dini* (religion) and *mila* (local culture). *Mila* is said to encompass "ritual practices involving dancing, healing, spirit possession, invocations, and offerings which are associated with the 'Bantu heritage' of the Swahili culture."²¹ Such traditions can often be in contradiction with orthodox Islamic values. For example, the manner in which *maulidi*, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, is celebrated has been highly contested. The recitation of certain prayers is complimented by small drums and tambourines in some areas of the coast (particularly in northern Kenya), and the actual prayers supposed to be said in an intonation that almost sounds melodic. This combination has caused the ire of orthodox Islamic scholars for

²⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, *Intelligence Study- Zanzibar: the Hundred Days' Revolution*, May 2007.

²¹Kai Kresse, *Philosophising in Mombasa: Knowledge, Islam and Intellectual Practice on the Swahili Coast* (Edinburgh University Press 2007), 82-84.

years, some saying that it is against, or at the very least undesirable the eyes of Sharia law. In this situation, we see an expression of local culture, the use of indigenous instruments, can be religiously provocative. And we also see that despite this conflict, many Swahili are maintaining their connection with traditional African culture, which again, illustrates how their allegiances have shifted from the 1800s to today.

So far, this paper has traced the change in identity of Swahili people who have remained on the Swahili Coast. However, there is a significant population of people who claim Swahili origin, but find themselves thousands of miles from their ancestral homeland. These people are called Sidis. They are the descendents of Africans, mostly from eastern Africa, who were brought to India at as early as the 13th century.²² The reasons for these migrations varied immensely. Arab merchants often traded in slaves; these slaves could be sold for a variety of purposes, from doing housework, to being soldiers in an army. In the mid 16th century, it is thought that one of the kings of Bengal had an army of up to 8,000 Africans. Swahili men also willingly served in Indian armies, further bolstering the number of African in the subcontinent. When the Portuguese forced their way into the coast at the beginning of the 16th century, the slave trade increased dramatically. Thousands of slaves were taken not only to Portuguese colonies in the Americas, but also to India. This is because in 1505, Portugal gained control of several coastal areas of India, including Goa, Daman, and Diu, and these new colonies became “Portuguese India”. As such, the European power had easy access to slave markets in India.

The Sidis of today are certainly different from their predecessors. Many of the original Africans married with local Indians, giving their offspring a dual identity. However, despite being several generations removed from their African ancestors and being surrounded by a different culture, Sidis have managed to retain their Swahili identity surprisingly well. Edward Alpers notes that people perform a *dammal*, which is modeled after a traditional African drum dance, at certain Islamic rituals, showing their dedication to their culture. In his experience, “the Sidis took pride in their African descent and felt confident about the intrinsic worth of their culture”. In addition to this, it seems that the Sidis of Gujerat had very different “self perceptions, worldviews, and lifestyles” than the Indian Muslims around whom they lived. According to Alpers, “the Sidis are neither religiously rigid nor too deeply concerned with flaunting their religious identity as Muslims”. The attitudes of the Sidi toward their African heritage and toward Islam have created a fair amount of hostility among other Muslims; their practices are seen as almost heretical, and in need of the pruning of orthodoxy. As can be imagined, the Sidis are an extremely marginalized group in India. In total,

²² Edward A. Alpers, Forward to “Sidis and Scholars: Essays on African Indians” (Rainbow Publishers, 2004), xi-xiii.

there are only about 50,000 Sidis in the entire country, less than .004% of India's total population. And many of the Sidis are scattered in small pockets throughout the country, making them even less visible. This, combined with the fact that they have not assimilated to the dominant culture, has caused widespread poverty and very little governmental representation.

The current state of the Sidi is indeed tragic; however, it has forced a fascinating dynamic of identity. As previously stated, most Sidi ancestors were from the Swahili Coast, or at least near it. As such, they were primarily Muslim upon arriving in India. However, throughout the years, this changed; some likely converted to Christianity due to the influence of the Portuguese, and others have taken up Hinduism, the dominant religion in India. Whatever the reasons, the ethnic Sidi population is now comprised of followers from all three religions, *and they are okay with that*. The fact that they have been so heavily marginalized has made it so that the Sidis define themselves primarily along ethnic and historical lines, rather than those of religion. This is a significant contrast from their Swahili ancestors. I have argued that Muslim identity evolved to become the single most important aspect of Swahili identity. But now, even though the Sidis live in a country with a large Muslim population, their identity has shifted. Why is this? It could be because of how they are perceived as "other" by non-Sidis. Since Sidis are religiously diverse, they occupy more than one place in the religious composition of India. Thus Sidis that are Hindu are in the majority religion, those who are Muslim are in the large minority, and those who are Christian are in the smaller minority. If the discrimination of Sidis was due completely to religious differences, it would stand to argue that those who were a part of the majority religion would not be subject to it. However, Sidis are fairly uniformly marginalized, which means that they are seen as different due to their ethnic origin.

Recently, Sidis of all backgrounds have been attempting to alleviate their centuries-long suffering. At the *Sidis at the Millennium: History, Culture, and Development*, conference in 2000, Sidis from Gujarat, Bombay, Karnataka, and all over India came to voice their concerns and appeals. Many called for some type of pan-Indian Sidi union to be formed. And others addressed the hypocrisy of the Indian government in their treatment of the Sidi people²³. Sidi dance performances are used in official celebrations, and in recent years, Sidi people have been hired to perform for representatives from African countries. In this way, the Indian government uses the Sidi to make itself appear a more diverse and culturally accepting entity. However, at the same time, very little is being done to address the issues of Sidi poverty. On the contrary, government documents of the past have claimed that the Sidi remain impoverished due to their own refusal to adapt to modern life. And despite fevered attempts, the Sidi have only been given the title of "Scheduled

²³ Prita Sandy Meier, "Performing African Identities: Sidi Communities in the Transnational Moment", in *Sidis and Scholars: Essays on African Indians* (Rainbow Publishers, 2004), 86-99.

Tribe” in one province, Gujarat. Groups placed in this category often receive educational and economic subsidies, which many of the Sidi desperately need. However, this is a double-edged sword because this designation has certain negative connotations, and may serve to further alienate the Sidi from their Indian neighbors. Once again, we see how identity can be significantly impacted by social, political, and economic forces. And just as the Swahili had to fight to be seen as truly African in their postcolonial nations, so do modern Sidi have to assert themselves to become full and equal citizens of India, rather than just a fringe group.

The evolution of the Swahili Coast identity was century’s or centuries’ long endeavor. The people of the coast went from being fishermen, subsisting on what was nearby and living in tiny villages, to traders and merchants who helped the growth of a trading network which spanned three continents. In the case of the Sidis, one can see how identity is a very real and pressing issue, but for the Swahili, why is the history of their changing identity important? Fully understanding how a group of people identify themselves, and how their past has shaped their present is vital in today’s political environment. In the West, mass media almost constantly reports on conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, often between opposing ethnic groups or religions. And like a parent scolding their bickering children, we try to implore different groups of people to live harmoniously without completely understanding the depths of their conflict. If there is fighting in Kenya between Muslim Swahilis and Christians, we may see this purely as a religious conflict without looking at the broader implications of what religion means to the identity of the combatants. For the Swahili, Islam was a significant component in creating their “Golden Age”; it provided them with connections across vast expanses of space and it gave them a defining quality which made them unique from people on the interior. As such, any perceived undermining of Islam by outside forces would not only be religiously unacceptable, but would also challenge a major component of their identity. This line of thinking may also help us understand that Western models of governing are simply not going to be applicable in all regions. We promote a kind of democracy which values a separation of church and state, but for many people around the world, there is no clear differentiation between secularity and religion. Religion is prevalent in their everyday activities, so to ask them to separate the two may border on heretical. Comprehending these nuances of identity may therefore add a greater depth of understanding to international negotiations, which could not only end conflicts more quickly, but even prevent them altogether.

Identity is not a static concept. It is akin to a living organism, forced to adapt to changing political and social atmospheres. And in fact, it is not a single organism, but a colony, filled with individuals who make up a larger body. The colony that is Swahili identity is comprised of their African roots, Arab influence, history of multiculturalism, legacy as a great trading empire,

and a thousand other characteristics that make the Swahili so unique. In a world that seems to be nurturing the growth of one unified global identity, the Swahili (and their Sidi relatives) have remained distinct, and will no doubt remain so for many years to come.

Storming the Castle: The Battle for Hungary and the Siege of Budapest.
1944-1945

Brandon Wethman

CDT Wethman is a military history major at USMA who wishes to eventually pursue a masters and doctorate in military history with a special focus on modern central Europe (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Poland). He wishes to thank Dr. Waddell for instilling his knowledge and sharing his passion for military history and, to LTC (R) Raymond Hrinko and MAJ Erik Davis who taught him so much while studying in Europe. A special thanks to his parents for their unending support in everything he does.

Budapest is known as one of the most picturesque cities in all of Europe. Its medieval castle, baroque architecture, and imperial landmarks annually attract millions to marvel at its beauty and wander its exciting streets. Despite its aesthetic qualities, Budapest's beauty hides the scars of an extremely tumultuous history as Hungary's capital and most historic city. Over the past one thousand years, Budapest (especially the Buda side of the city) has experienced no less than twelve sieges.¹ One of those sieges, the Soviet siege of 1944-45 remains one of the most brutal sieges in modern history. With regards to sieges of the Second World War, the struggle for Budapest on par with the battles of Leningrad, Stalingrad and Berlin. Lasting from 3 November 1944 until 11 February 1945, the siege of Budapest would last 100 days, ultimately bringing about the total destruction of the city, Soviet occupation, and eventually a communist regime.² Despite its acceptance as a major engagement on the eastern front, the reasons behind its occurrence and why the battle escalated so drastically does raise many questions. Why were there so many German forces in Hungary (particularly SS armor units) despite being sorely needed to stem the Soviet tide in Poland? Why was Hitler so committed to holding Budapest and Stalin just as determined to take it? What made the fighting in the city so tenaciously difficult for the Soviet attackers against the German and Hungarian defenders? The German occupation of Hungary, the Soviet desire to draw away precious German reserves from the Berlin-Warsaw axis, and the physical makeup of the city itself would all play key roles in making the Battle for Hungary and the Siege of Budapest one of the most epic struggles of the Second World War.

Hungary had been one of Nazi Germany's strongest allies since participating in the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia in April of 1941 and Operation *Barbarossa* in June of 1941.³ Hitler persuaded Hungary's de facto

¹ Krisztián Ungváry, *The Siege of Budapest: 100 Days in World War II* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2002), xxv.

² Ibid., xxv-xxvi.

³ Deborah S. Cornelius, *Hungary in World War II: Caught in the Cauldron* (New York, NY: I. B. Fordham University Press, 2011), 144-45.

dictator, Admiral Nicholas (Miklós) Horthy, to join the Axis Powers by promising a strong economic partnership, the eradication of communism from Europe and territory Hungary had lost after World War I.⁴ Hungary's importance to the German war effort was not principally manpower or military equipment but mainly grain production and the oil reserves of the Lake Balaton region.⁵ Hungary also acted as a critical supply route for oil from the Rumanian oilfields of Ploesti to Nazi Germany.⁶

Although the war initially appeared to be going well, Operations *Uranus* and *Little Saturn* in the winter of 1942-43 would quickly change the situation. These operations not only sealed the fate of the German 6th Army in Stalingrad, but they also annihilated the Hungarian 2nd Army holding the German left flank on the Don River.⁷ From this point on, Hungarian forces undertook minor occupation duties until the frontline reached the Hungarian homeland.⁸ By August 1944, the Soviet war machine was positioned in Rumania, ready to take the entire Balkans with a brilliant deep exploitation offensive.⁹ The *Iassy-Kishinev* Operation brought the Red Army to the gates of Budapest.¹⁰

As Soviet forces reached the Árpád Line, the Hungarian defensive works along the Carpathian Mountains of their eastern border, political chaos broke out in the Hungarian leadership.¹¹ Admiral Horthy had been secretly attempting to contact the Allied forces after the disaster on the Don River.¹² Relations with Germany were also rapidly deteriorating over Horthy's insistent protection of Hungarian Jews against Nazi policies.¹³ In his memoirs, Horthy reflects the impossibility of remaining allies with Germany stating "Between the realization that, in the reorganization of Europe, no matter what form it took, we should be made a vassal state and our determined will to defend Hungary's right to independence, no compromise was possible".¹⁴ Upon learning of Horthy's desire to pull out of the war, Hitler quickly initiated Operation *Margarethe* in March of 1944, which would lead to the German occupation of the country.¹⁵ In October he would also launch Operation

⁴ Ibid., 138-44.

⁵ David M. Glantz and Jonathan House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler* (Lawrence, KA: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 218, 225.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Norbert Számvéber, "The Army of the Horthy Era: 1919-1945," In *Illustrated Military History of Hungary*, eds. Károly Bozsonyi (Budapest, Hungary: Zrínyi Publishing, 2012), 195-198.

⁸ Ibid., 199.

⁹ Glantz and House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler*, 218.

¹⁰ Ibid., 218-226.

¹¹ Számvéber, "The Army of the Horthy Era: 1919-1945," 203-05.

¹² Cornelius, *Hungary in World War II: Caught in the Cauldron*, 232-39.

¹³ Ibid., 245-47.

¹⁴ Nicholas Horthy, *Memoirs* (New York, NY: Robert Speller & Sons, 1957), 208.

¹⁵ Horthy, *Memoirs*, 284-288.

Panzerfaust, in which German commandos under the famed Otto Skorzeny captured Horthy's son. This caused Horthy to retire and was forcefully exiled to Germany. Horthy would remain a prisoner in Germany for the rest of the war.¹⁶ The German takeover enabled the fanatical fascists of the Arrow Cross Party to take over the country.¹⁷ German involvement in Hungary would lead to the commitment by both sides of large quantities of resources, men and materials. The escalation of force would ultimately culminate in the Siege of Budapest.

In the autumn of 1944, the Soviets began advancing rapidly into Hungary. Under the direction of the Stavka appointed Marshal Semyon Timoshenko, Marshal Rodion Malinovsky's 2nd Ukrainian Front made spectacular success by quickly capturing the southern Carpathians, Transylvania, and nearly all of central Hungary east of the Tisza River.¹⁸ Malinovsky was also assisted by Marshal Petrov's 4th Ukrainian Front, the 5th Air Army, the 8th Air Army and sizeable units of newly turned Rumanian allies.¹⁹ This Soviet invasion culminated in the capture of Debrecen.²⁰ Despite Malinovsky's force's need for an operational pause, Stalin insisted that the advance towards Budapest begin immediately for "political considerations".²¹ Malinovsky heavily protested that after such heavy fighting, five days were needed to wait for the reinforcements of the 4th Guards Mechanized Corps to assist the 46th Army's drive towards Budapest.²² Stalin ignored his pleas and the offensive was carried out prematurely. As a result, the Soviet attack was eventually bogged down at the triple belt Attila fortification system around the city.²³ The Soviets were also unable to encircle the city due to the Margareithe Line defenses between Budapest and Lake Balaton to the south, the redistribution of Hungarian and German reserves in the area and bad weather.²⁴

Although the Soviets initially failed in their objective of capturing the city, the increasing threat of a Soviet encirclement of Budapest caused the Germans to begin sending substantial reserves to restore the situation. German forces in the area, under the command of General Johannes Friessner, initially consisted of just the German 8th Army (Group Wohler) and 6th Army (Group Fretter-Pico), with the only operational reserve being the 23rd Panzer

¹⁶ Ibid., 348.

¹⁷ Ibid., 328-33.

¹⁸ Kamen Nevenkin, *Take Budapest!: The Struggle for Hungary, Autumn 1944* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2012), 24-33.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 48.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 81.

²⁴ Glantz and House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler*, 221-24.

Division.²⁵ Soon after the Soviets captured Debrecen, the OKH committed the III Panzer Corps and Group Wohler's XVII Army Corps.²⁶ After Malinovsky's failed attempt at encircling Budapest, the OKH sent not only the 3rd and 6th Panzer Divisions, but also three 60-tank Tiger battalions.²⁷ Even after the city had been encircled, the German high command continued to send strong armor reserves to try and relieve the city, namely the elite IV SS Panzer Corps.²⁸ Ultimately the Germans would commit the 1st, 3rd, 6th, 23rd, 24th Panzer Divisions and the lavishly equipped divisions of the IV SS Panzer Corps to operations in and around Budapest.²⁹ Although these reinforcements made the continuing Soviet offensive more difficult, it ultimately was a brilliant success for Stavka and Soviet strategic planning. Because the Germans chose to use these precious armor reserves in the Hungarian theatre, the Soviets faced weakened German defensive capabilities in Poland. This would prove absolutely devastating for the Germans facing Zhukov's *Vistula-Oder* Offensive later in 1945. Although it would now take longer to capture Budapest, the Soviets were in a position to more quickly reach their ultimate goal of Berlin.

A short operational pause came after the initial attempt to encircle Budapest failed. On 20 December, the rejuvenated Soviets launched a massive two pronged assault to finally trap the city. The southern pincer against the heavily defended Margareithe Line was led by the Marshal Tolbukhin's 4th Guards Army.³⁰ Using combined arms and concentration of firepower in key sectors, the 4th Guards Army obliterated the defensive line and allowed a second echelon of the Soviet forces to complete the encirclement of the city.³¹ By 27 December, the Soviets had finally closed off the entire perimeter of Budapest, entrapping two Hungarian divisions and four divisions of the IX SS Mountain Corps inside the city.³²

Although encircling Budapest was a great success, the Soviets still had much to deal with. Not only did the Soviets now have to endure the bloodbath of urban combat, but they also had to deal with the constant threat of a German relief force from the west cutting open an escape route for the surrounded forces or reinforcing the besieged city. As the siege lines were established going into 1945, both Hitler and Stalin began pushing their armies harder for control of the city. Stalin was determined to capture the city quickly to complete the collapse of Hungary and continue his march westward. This

²⁵ Glantz and House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler*, 122.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 223.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 224.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 225.

³⁰ (Colonel) S. Alferov, "The Offensive of the 4th Guards Army in the Budapest Operation," *Soviet Art of Warfare in the Great Patriotic War* 9 (1982): 18-19.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 23.

³² Glantz and House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler*, 224.

would allow him to claim as much as possible before the war was over.³³ Hitler was determined to hold his ally's capital, declaring it a *Festung* or Fortress, thus forbidding any surrender and requiring his troops to fight to the last man. He hoped of somehow saving the Reich by stemming the Soviets before they could reach Vienna or Munich.³⁴

Obergruppenführer (SS General) Karl Pfeffer-Wildenbruch, commander of the IX SS Mountain Corps, assumed command of the besieged forces and began requesting aerial resupplies by the Luftwaffe and establishing defensive strong points throughout the city even before it was completely encircled.³⁵ Marshals Malinovsky and Tolbukhin, commanders of the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts respectively, began to prepare their armies to assault the city by utilizing massed artillery, air superiority, armor support and urban assault teams.³⁶ Both the Soviets and Germans had not seen this level of urban combat since Stalingrad. This lack of experience would contribute greatly to the appalling casualty rates throughout the battle.

Budapest's unique topography and physical structures also contributed greatly to the siege's ferocity. Unlike much of central Hungary, Budapest has many hills both in and around the city. On many of these hills lie actual fortresses (such as Buda Castle and the Citadel of Gellért Hill) or buildings that could easily be made into defensive strong points. These hills gave the Germans and Hungarians prime locations to spot Soviet units and make a final stand if needed. The thick stone buildings of Budapest's old city could also be used by infantry to make every city block a nightmare to clear for the Soviets. The Germans also controlled all the bridges across the Danube River and the city metro, giving them the ability to easily cut off Soviet advances when appropriate. The Germans would make full use of urban warfare's defensive advantages.

The Soviets would answer the challenge of taking Budapest by systematically clearing the city from both east and west. Due to Pest (the city east of the Danube) being much more flat and open, the Soviets would emphasize the majority of their attack from this direction. This would not only be easier for the Soviet infantry and armor to secure but would also deprive the Germans of their primary aerial resupply zones.³⁷ Malinovsky and Tolbukhin also planned to slowly advance from the west to the walls of the city citadel and Buda Castle, both being utilized as command points by the Axis forces.³⁸ Tactically, the Soviets emphasized the heavy use of grenades, submachine guns, flamethrowers and even direct armor and artillery fire on buildings.³⁹

³³ Krisztián Ungváry, *The Siege of Budapest: 100 Days in World War II*, 52.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., 53.

³⁶ Ibid., 97-101.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Krisztián Ungváry, *The Siege of Budapest: 100 Days in World War II*, 129.

As the Soviets systematically advanced block by block through the city in January, the Germans launched three relief attempts from the west, dubbed Operations *Konrad I, II* and *III*. All three of these operations failed at the expense of even more German armor reserves.⁴⁰ Every day, the situation became more and more desperate for the doomed garrison of the city. By the end of January the Soviets had captured all of Pest, reached the walls of Buda Castle and forced the Germans to destroy all of the bridges across the Danube River, including the famous *Széchenyi* Chain Bridge.⁴¹ The final phase of the battle saw the final fall of Buda Castle and a desperate breakout attempt by what was left of the garrison, with almost all killed or captured.⁴² By 11 February, all resistance had ceased.⁴³ After 100 days of hell, 493,000 lay dead and Budapest had fallen.⁴⁴

The battle for Hungary and the siege of Budapest not only had extremely important effects on the eastern front and Hitler's eventual destruction, but also affected Hungarian history for the next 45 years. Scars, such as bullet holes along the walls of the city citadel, can still be found hidden amongst the city's current beauty. The invisible scars of the Arrow-Cross Party, Nazi occupation and Communist takeover still haunt the Hungarian people today. This destructive battle not only teaches many military lessons, but also how war can affect a city and its people.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 188-200.

⁴¹ Ibid., 152-164.

⁴² Ibid., 201-256.

⁴³ Ibid., 186-87.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 427-32.

Maintaining the Frontier: An Analysis of Roman Fortifications and the Frontier of the Eastern Roman Empire in the Fourth Century C.E.

Erik Conrad

Erick Conrad is a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities where he studied history and Arabic. He wrote this paper during his final semester in spring 2015. Before attending the University of Minnesota, he went to school at Black River Falls High School in Black River Falls, Wisconsin. Erick would like to acknowledge Dr. Bernard Bachrach for sparking his interest in the subject matter, Dr. Lorcini for her guidance on the project, and his peer Jordan Jennings for her keen editing eye.

Abstract

Although a fair amount of material exists on the matter, many scholars still strive to find an accurate conclusion regarding the primary function of the frontier fortifications in the Eastern Roman Empire. Some of these conclusions differ from each other as a result of different disciplines in history, notably military and economic histories. This paper aims to observe some of the arguments posed by scholars regarding the *limes*, more specifically the frontier fortifications in the Eastern Roman Empire in the fourth century CE and their supposed relation to a defense-in-depth strategy. In addition to undermining the argument revolving around the Romans employing a defense-in-depth strategy in the east, this paper suggests that the primary function of the frontier fortifications was to secure the frontier from both external and internal threats. As a result, maintaining and securing the border from both kinds of threats was the main function of the *limes* fortifications.

As long as a state expands its borders, it creates the need to spend resources in order to protect them. This idea holds true for the Roman Empire. Even after the divide of the Eastern and Western halves of the Empire at the turn of the fourth century CE, protecting the frontier from various threats remained clear. Particularly in the Eastern Roman Empire, more political stability was visible, but an increasing amount of external forces was placing pressure on the eastern frontier. These external forces included various nomadic tribes and a growing Neo-Persian Empire. The acquisition of the eastern provinces in the Middle East date back to Trajan's conquests two centuries earlier. During this period, the emperor Trajan went farther east than any other emperor and conquered and annexed portions of the Parthian Empire near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Although Trajan's motives remain debatable, his conquests in the east established the need to protect the Roman frontier.

Many questions exist pertaining to the fortifications that dot along the *limes* in the Eastern Roman Empire. One question in particular remains unclear and will be answered throughout the course of this paper. What was

the primary function of the fortifications along the *limes* in the Eastern Roman Empire during the fourth century CE?

The fourth century, after all, is an interesting period for examining the Roman frontier. The Empire at this time experienced a split between east and west and both halves underwent consistent bombardment from external and internal threats. Additionally, the east dealt with a growing imperial power, the Neo-Persian Empire, and also saw a period of continuity and longevity unlike its western counterpart, which fell to barbarian forces in the fifth century. The east also benefited from an increase in trade and commerce from the Silk Road that brought economic diversity and prosperity to the Eastern Roman Empire. All of these factors shed light on the significance of the *limes* and fortifications in the east since they both influenced and were influenced by the phenomena described above. That being said, the primary function of the fortifications along the *limes* of the Eastern Roman Empire in the fourth century CE was to secure the frontier from both internal and external threats. As a result, this idea does not suggest that these fortifications served to defend against impending enemies solely, but rather, focused on protecting the citizenry and economic interests of the empire by means of ensuring the security of the frontier region in the east.

Historiography

The study of the Roman frontier is often complicated. To that end, the aim of this historiography section is to act as a short bibliographical essay that demonstrates the major scholarly works that have been done and the issues that have arisen for the study of the Roman frontier in the east. Additionally, this section hopes to provide a shadow of doubt for areas that remain understudied and illuminate questions that need to be addressed.

The idea of a frontier, a major concept revolving around the fortifications in the east, deserves attention. The following ideas are assumed in regards to the Roman frontier. First of all, the frontier needs to be viewed as a frontier zone instead of a boundary line.¹ This suggests that viewing the fringes of the empire as having a concrete border is inaccurate because it creates the notion of an "us" and "them." As a result, the second concept is that a "frontier zone unites and integrates those who are culturally diverse" unlike a frontier line which separates and differentiates.² Since the former is assumed, it appears valid that the eastern frontier integrated a variety of cultures. Lastly, the final assumption is the Romans attempted to Romanize or assimilate those individuals who were integrated into the empire or living along the frontier.³

¹ Hugh Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 5.

² C. R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: a social and economic study* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1994), 72-73.

³ Stephen Dyson, *The Creation of the Roman Frontier*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 5.

This concept appears legitimate considering that it was easier to assimilate individuals in the frontier than bring in people from other locations.⁴ Although studies of the Roman frontier are certainly more complex, they still play a significant role in terms of how they influence one's perception of frontier fortifications.

In addition to understanding the ideology behind the frontier, a brief synopsis of the term *limes* deserves some attention. Defining the term *limes* is problematic in that it held a different meaning among individuals in the Roman Empire, as well as meaning something different across different time periods and locations.⁵ Isaac states that the traditional view of the *limes* by scholars is as follow: "[The *limes* are] fortifications linked by roads along a fixed boundary."⁶ Additionally, source material from the period suggests that the term in the fourth century CE simply referred to the *limes* as frontier districts.⁷ For the most part, however, the term *limes* in this article will be defined as a system of road networks along the frontier that are accompanied by fortifications.

One explanation for these fortifications assumes that the Eastern Roman Empire employed a defense-in-depth strategy in order to protect the empire.⁸ The concept separated the *limes* into an inner and outer *limes* system in which the outer *limes* was further east and near the edge of the frontier while the inner *limes* was closer to the Mediterranean Sea and major settlements. The theory of defense-in-depth proposed that the fortifications enforced this strategy by using the outer *limes* as the first line of defense against an external threat. Coincidentally, external forces would have to go through the inner *limes* once it penetrated the outer *limes*. The theory of defense-in-depth typically assumed the notion that the outer *limes* would delay the encroachment of external forces long enough for auxiliary legions to come along and eradicate the threat. This method of defense was defended by Edward Luttwak in his book "Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire" in which he proposes that a defense-in-depth strategy was employed by the Romans in order to protect the eastern frontier.⁹ Further discussion and arguments regarding this concept are mentioned in more detail later on.

Scholars agree that these fortifications were not intended to act as "a military barrier against nomadic tribes."¹⁰ Rather, nomadic populations

⁴ Dyson, *The Creation of the Roman Frontier*, 5.

⁵ Benjamin Isaac, "The Meaning of the Terms Limes and Limitanei," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 78, (1988), 125-135.

⁶ Ibid., 125.

⁷ Isaac, "The Meaning of the Term Limes and Limitanei," 132-135.

⁸ Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire from the first century A.D. to the third*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979), 130-190.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ S. Thomas Parker, *Romans and Saracens: A History of the Arabian Frontier*, (Philadelphia: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1986), 9.

frequently ventured past the frontier and entered Roman territory. There are many reasons for nomadic populations to cross the border. Many foreign nomads crossed the frontier and became integrated into the army. Ammianus Marcellinus, a Roman general, wrote an extensive account of his military experience in the Roman Empire. Many of his chapters include excerpts of Saracen forces that became integrated into the Roman military. In one example, Marcellinus describes a scene where an integrated Saracen-Roman soldier attempted to fight Germanic tribesmen,

A body of Saracens...being more suited for sallies and skirmishes than for pitched battles, had been lately introduced into the city; and, as soon as they saw the barbarian host, they sallied out boldly from the city to attack it. There was a stubborn fight for some time; and at last both armies parted on equal terms. But a strange and unprecedented incident gave the final advantage to the eastern warriors; for one of them with long hair, naked-with the exception of a covering round his waist-shouting a hoarse and melancholy cry, drew his dagger and plunged into the middle of the Gothic host, and after he had slain an enemy, put his lips to his throat, and sucked his blood. The barbarians were terrified at this marcellous prodigy, and from that time forth, when they proceeded on any enterprise, displayed none of their former and usual ferocity, but advanced with hesitating steps.¹¹

Other individuals crossed the frontier for economic reasons. In terms of the Middle/Near East during the fourth century CE, many goods traveled across the silk roads and were brought into the Empire. As a result, this caused a lot of foreigners to come into the Empire to trade and demonstrates that the Empire did not intend to keep the borders closed to outsiders.¹²

Several scholars have proposed ideas regarding the function of the fortifications along the frontier. Mayerson suggests that a military border could not contain raiders since it is not practical to think that the Romans could stop an enemy who frequently lived and moved freely within the frontier itself.¹³ As a result, he proposes that the main purpose for the fortifications was

¹¹ Due to the limited availability of primary source material, the works of Ammianus Marcellinus will be the main primary source for this paper. Although other sources exist on the matter, many of them remain to be translated into other languages. Ammianus Marcellinus, *The Roman history of Ammianus Marcellinus, during the reign of the emperors Constantius, Julian, Jovianus, Valentinian, and Valens*, trans. C.D. Yonge, (London: G. Bell, 1902), 622.

¹² Benjamin Isaac, "Bandits in Judaea and Arabia," in *The Near East under Roman Rule*, (New York: Brill, 1998), 144.

¹³ Philip Mayerson, "The Saracens and the Limes," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 262, (1986), 39.

to establish protection for surrounding settlements and, more importantly, the *limes* or frontier road systems that interconnected these settlements.

In addition to the research by Mayerson, C. R. Whittaker takes the idea further by proposing that the fortifications assisted in protecting the *limes* road system by providing troops for caravan escorts.¹⁴ Therefore, the Arabian frontier was not intended to be a defensive system that defended and stopped impeding forces, but rather assisted caravans and protected the economic interests of the empire from bandits. This approach is clearly economic, but it also offers insight on other ideas regarding a militaristic approach to understanding the *limes* fortifications. Benjamin Isaac, like Whittaker, uses the road system to establish the purpose of the fortifications and suggested that protecting the roads remained important. By securing the roads, the Roman Empire protected the frontier by means of internal security since observing the road implies that internal threats are being recognized before they moved into other population centers deep within the frontier.¹⁵

Moving forward, a few important questions to ponder are: why might the Roman Empire spend resources protecting the frontier? What exactly is there to protect in the eastern frontier? A quick geographical survey is needed to fully understand the significance for finding the purpose these fortifications served. In terms of the fourth century CE, one sees a major increase in settlements, both urban and rural, in the Negev region.¹⁶ What remains more interesting, however, is that "during no other period was the Negev so densely occupied and populated."¹⁷ With this in mind, major population and agricultural growth show the need for fortifications in order to protect the regions, these settlements, and their populations. An argument could be made, however, that since the fortifications were built along the frontier prior to the increase in settlements and populations in the region, they served a different function. It is important to remember that the fortifications could serve different functions over the course of time; to that end, it remains probable that the function of the fortifications likely reflected the changes occurring in the region. As a result, geographical information allows for a deeper understanding of the frontier region and its relation to the fortifications.

Equally important, but even more complex, are the troops stationed at or near these fortifications in terms of understanding the significance of frontier fortifications. Often referred to as the *limitanei*, or border troops, scholars debate who they are and what their relation to the fortifications might be. In terms of studying the Roman frontiers, the *limitanei* are relevant since they were positioned along the frontier with the intent of protecting it. In many

¹⁴ Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 51-53.

¹⁵ Benjamin Isaac, *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 3, 99-101.

¹⁶ Rehav Rubin, "Settlement and Agriculture on an Ancient Desert Frontier," *Geographical Review* 81, no. 2 (1991), 197.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

ways, the *limitanei* are often regarded as part-time peasant soldiers who worked their fields and fought along the borders in order to protect their own, as well as the Empire's, interests.¹⁸ Scholars suggest that the *limitanei* were not professional soldiers, but were supervised by the Roman government and given elementary training in order to respond to threats along the frontier.¹⁹ Additionally, another idea suggests the *limitanei* were actually professional soldiers under the command of a *dux limitis* (frontier commander), which suggests that the *limitanei* were responsible for protecting multiple provinces and were not always confined to the borders of the Empire.²⁰ Although a finite definition does not exist for the *limitanei*, one thing remains clear; they were designed for protecting the frontier in some way and they had an initiative to do so. Their existence and their relation to the fortifications seems to suggest that the empire was protecting the frontier from a threat of some kind.

Lastly, the historiography section of this article would be incomplete without a brief synopsis of the contemporary Arab population that inhabited the region during the fourth century CE. Unfortunately, current work related to the fortifications in the Arabian frontier lacks proper acknowledgment of Saracen society outside of the Roman frontiers. This is surprising considering that the Saracen nomadic peoples play a significant role in terms of their relationship to the Eastern Roman frontier. In terms of the societal set-up of the Saracens, they mostly lived in a nomadic and tribal society, a direct contrast to the sedentary settlements of the Romans in the frontier.²¹ Due to this system, many tribes likely differed from each other; however, some tribes were used as political tools both by the Romans and Neo-Persian Empire.²² In times of conflict, tribes offered themselves as military allies in an attempt to gain wealth from their neighboring empires. Two notable clans include the Jafrids of Ghassan and the Nasrids of Lakhm who established courts within the Neo-Persian and Roman Empires and organized for military action against the opponents of their allegiant empires.²³ As a result, the tribes certainly placed pressure on the frontier of the Roman Empire

Additionally, the nomadic nature of the population also suggests that Saracen populations traversed into the Roman frontier in order to satisfy their pastoral needs. As mentioned earlier, many Saracen nomads often integrated themselves into the Roman frontier often becoming members of the border troops used to protect the eastern frontier and other frontier regions as well.

¹⁸ Edward Luttwak, 171.

¹⁹ Isaac, *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East*, 208.

²⁰ Isaac, "Bandits in Judea and Arabia," 459.

²¹ Robert G. Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs: from the Bronze Age to the coming of Islam*, (London: Routledge, 2001), 113-117.

²² Ibid, 116-117.

²³ Ibid.

Defense-in-Depth

Although many issues and arguments exist concerning the theories behind the purpose of Roman frontier fortifications in the east, one particular concept that remains problematic is the affiliation of the fortifications with a defense-in-depth strategy. As stated above, the purpose of the defense-in-depth strategy attempted to slow impeding forces from penetrating the frontier.²⁴ Many issues persist, however, in terms of seeing the fortifications as fulfilling this function.

First of all, this theory assumes that these fortifications were mainly used against external threats, which remains problematic when considering that the Romans faced an opposition from within as well. Banditry was a reality for frontier settlements; the bandits were often Saracen nomads who crossed into the frontier zone.²⁵ As a result, the existence of Saracen nomadic threats within the confines of the frontier demonstrate an issue with the defense-in-depth strategy because the "outer" *limes* was intended to be the first contact that ultimately held the responsibility of delaying the enemy so reinforcements could arrive. Even if the fortifications could respond to bandits in the settlements of the frontier, it is likely that the bandits could outmaneuver Roman reinforcements. Marcillenus describes Saracen bandits as "ranging up and down the country, if ever they found anything, [they] plundered in a moment" and "carry it off with rapid swoop."²⁶ If Marcillenus accurately depicts the speed in which Saracen bandits operate, then a defense-in-depth strategy seems difficult to implement since a combination of requesting troop reinforcements, reinforcement preparation, and the time it takes reinforcements to get to their destination appears to be a long process.

Ultimately, one needs to consider the amount of time it takes for an auxiliary legion to respond to frontier fortifications as reinforcements. Many legions established themselves within cities. Major urban centers in the East including the cities of Bostra, Gerasa, Philadelphia, Petra, and Aila, contained detachments of soldiers.²⁷ With this in mind, one sees that sending reinforcements to assist fortifications is logistically unsound. Let's consider the distance of the city of Madaba to the nearest known fortification of Jiza (figure 1). The site at Jiza is thought to have contained a combination of a large reservoir and a fortification of Roman origin.²⁸ The settlement of Madaba is approximately 25-30 kilometers from the Jiza site, which is assuming a direct path between settlements. No road remains, however, to determine if the two sites are connected. This is problematic since a road connecting the sites would lessen the time it would take for reinforcements to move between each

²⁴ Luttwak, *Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, 130-190.

²⁵ Isaac, *The Limits of Empire*, 91-99.

²⁶ Ammianus Marcellinus, 11.

²⁷ Glen W. Bowersock, "Limes Arabicus," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 80, (1976), 222.

²⁸ Parker, *Romans and Saracens*, 41.

location. There is also the issue of elevation in this region. Jiza sits at about 681 meters above sea level while the elevation of Madaba is lower by a 100 meters.²⁹ The difference in elevation and the lack of a road suggests that the process of providing reinforcements between settlements and fortifications is implausible because the time it would take for a fortification to receive a message to a city with a garrison, combined with the amount of time it would take for the garrisons to equip themselves and travel to Jiza would be extensive. As a result, bandits could continue to plunder the frontier quicker than the Romans could provide reinforcements. Therefore, the employment of a defense-in-depth strategy appears unlikely for the frontier regions of the Eastern Roman Empire.

Alternatively, Parker argues that the fortification at Jiza was intended to protect the reservoir and the city of Madaba itself.³⁰ This argument assumes that the fortification of Jiza was intended to reinforce the inhabitants of the city of Madaba. To a certain extent, however, this is not an example of the Roman Empire employing a defense-in-depth strategy. First of all, a defense-in-depth strategy implies that a fortification along the frontier held the responsibility of delaying enemy forces from further entering the fringes of the empire. Auxiliary troop reinforcements would then respond to the threat as mentioned earlier. To that end, a defense-in-depth strategy does not match the function of the fortifications according to Parker's point. Rather, he determines that the function of the fortification, or at least more specifically the fortification at Jiza, served as a point in which the garrisons at Jiza came to reinforce the settlement at Madaba, not the other way around.

There is some legitimacy to Parker's point, which helps to prove that a defense-in-depth strategy is less plausible. First of all, an examination of the forces at Jiza within the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Or. 37.16), shows that the garrison stationed there primarily consisted of cavalry units.³¹ With this in mind, it makes sense that the site at Jiza contains a large water reservoir. Due to Jiza's location in modern day Jordan, the desert topography required the construction of canals and reservoirs in order to preserve water. Unlike camels, horses require more water over a shorter period of time; therefore, the presence of the reservoir supports the notion that cavalry units were stationed there since horses in desert climates require a greater amount of water. The presence of the cavalry, however, tells a great deal about the function of the fortification at Jiza. Cavalry units themselves are not tactically useful defensively. Their mobility allows them to be more useful as reinforcements than as defensive units. Additionally, if we note the location and topography of the fortification in comparison to the city, one sees that the city is downhill

²⁹ Parker, *Romans and Saracens*, 41.

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ This particular interpretation of the *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 37.16 comes from S. T. Parker. For more on his interpretation of this section of the *Notitia Dignitatum*, see S. Thomas Parker, 41.

from the fortification which suggests that the fortification supplied reinforcements to the city (and not the other way around as a defense-in-depth idea would suggest) since it would be more strategically sound to have reinforcements come downhill to preserve time and energy. As a result, it makes sense that the cavalry acted as auxiliary reinforcements as opposed to serving the function of delaying enemy incursions along the frontier.

Indeed a defense-in-depth defense does not make sense in light of cities reinforcing the frontier fortifications and vice versa; however, what about fortifications reinforcing other fortifications? Applying a defense-in-depth strategy to Roman frontier policy is inaccurate even when viewing the *limes* fortification system as a complex network of reinforcement stations. If we consider the distance between fortifications, we see that many fortifications are over a day's march away for auxiliary troops. It is important to remember as well that if reinforcements are needed to aid in another fortification, other fortifications need to be notified in some way. This means that the distance between each location needs to be doubled to accommodate the distance it would take for the fortification to be notified as well as account for the distance that it would take for the reinforcements to get to their destination. If we examine the location of some fortifications on the far eastern portion of the frontier, more specifically the site of Imtan, whose closest sites are Jebel Druz and Azroq respectively, we see that troops would have to travel considerable distances in order to provide reinforcements. More attention will be given to the latter site of Azroq since it is connected to Imtan by road (figure 1). Parker speculates that the garrison could have held a small auxiliary force.³² This means that the forces likely contained a mixture of both cavalry and foot soldiers. Since a legion of troops only marches as fast as their slowest unit, this needs to be taken into account in considering the legitimacy of whether the fortifications functioned as providing reinforcements for other fortifications who were delaying the march of enemy incursions. As a result, a defense-in-depth strategy appears less legitimate since the distance between sites would take an excessive amount of time.

Additionally, one major component of Luttwak's idea of defense-in-depth assumes the Roman Empire practiced and utilized long-term planning or "grand strategy."³³ "Grand strategy" is often defined as the "allocation of a state's resources to meet its major objectives."³⁴ Kagan argues, however, that this does not accurately describe Roman frontier policy simply because the empire did not recognize the concept of long-term planning even though objectives at the state level were being accomplished.³⁵ With this in mind,

³² Parker, *Romans and Saracens*, 20.

³³ Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire from the first century A.D. to the third*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979), 130-190.

³⁴ Kimberly Kagan, "Redefining Roman Grand Strategy," *The Journal of Military History* 70, no. 2 (2006), 333.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 333-362.

there is no definitive proof that the fortifications served a defense-in-depth function since this concept requires long-term strategic thinking.

Another issue with the defense-in-depth theory stems from the assumption that enemy adversaries would attack fortifications directly, or at the very least, the surrounding area. Realistically, however, the majority of Saracen forces are not equipped to deal with a siege against a Roman fortification.³⁶ A siege of a Roman fortification, although small, would still require siege equipment, which the Saracens did not have.³⁷ Additionally, the siege would require a lot of time and other resources, such as food, in order to maintain the siege. Realistically, however, Saracen forces were not equipped for sieges, mostly due to their pastoral and tribal lifestyle. This mode of living often kept them mobile and forced them to move wherever their livestock would go. With this in mind, a lack of sedentary lifestyle means everything is transported; therefore a surplus of food or resources needed to maintain a siege is not logistically probable.

To that end, it does not make strategic sense for Saracen nomads to attack, take, or control Roman fortifications because they would serve no purpose for the Saracens due to their pastoral lifestyles. Although occasionally, one sees Saracen nomads taking their flocks to reservoirs at certain sites, the Saracens do not have a reason to attack the fortifications directly. With this in mind, a defense-in-depth strategy is less plausible. One of the major assumptions of the Romans employing a defense-in-depth strategy is the garrison's task to delay external threats until reinforcements arrive.³⁸ If the Saracens do not have a reason to attack the fortifications, then a defense-in-depth strategy seems less believable since the strategy assumes that there is an external force to be stopped.

This does not suggest that Saracen nomads were not a threat to the frontier altogether. Many Saracen nomads partook in banditry, although this statement should not be viewed as an overarching statement for the entire nomadic population. The Saracens, as mentioned above, had an interesting relationship with the Romans, and were often integrated into the Roman military to fight against external threats.³⁹ In terms of the Saracen bandits, however, they had more intentions to invade small settlements and often raided the countryside.⁴⁰ Therefore, the main Saracen bandit threat in the Eastern frontier had no intention of attacking frontier fortifications directly, but had a higher motivation to raid Roman developments deeper in the frontier past the fortifications. The trouble for the troops, in that regard, was not with

³⁶ Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs* 229-247.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, 134.

³⁹ See Ammianus Marcellinus, 622. for description of Saracen forces defending Roman garrisons against Germanic tribes.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

the Saracen population, but banditry in general.⁴¹ A defense-in-depth strategy does not make sense because there is no threat of an enemy incursion attacking fortifications in the *Arabia Petraea* during this period. Therefore, a long-term strategy network consisting of troop reinforcements from other fortifications seems unlikely.

Lastly, some evidence suggests that the fortifications had individual functions as well which complicates a defense-in-depth argument.⁴² According to Bowersock, "no province of the Roman Empire had so great a diversity of geographical and climatic features as Arabia."⁴³ The diversity in the topography and climate suggests that different needs for the fortifications may have been possible. Additionally, the fortification structures themselves also demonstrate unique traits between themselves, which leads one to believe that individual fortifications functioned differently from each other. After all, some fortifications consisted of watchtowers while others did not.⁴⁴ The differences between the fortifications makes it difficult to support an overarching strategy such as defense-in-depth since various functions can be attributed to each fortification.

Overall, purporting that the Romans used defense-in-depth as their overarching grand strategy is difficult to prove in itself.

"Many questions scholars ask about grand strategy, namely, the appropriateness of goals, the relationship between ends and means, and the gap between conception and execution are not answerable for most of the history of the Roman Empire because the documentary evidence with which to determine the goals of the Roman state does not survive."⁴⁵

Since no evidence exists concerning Roman grand strategy, proposing universal concepts such as a defense-in-depth strategy are difficult to prove since it implies the notion that the empire was employing an overarching strategy in which to protect the economic interests of the eastern frontier.⁴⁶

In all, the use of a defense-in-depth strategy seems difficult to prove in light of various counterpoints. The threats coming from within the frontier, the inability of other fortifications and cities in being able to supply reinforcements for the area in need, the tactically inaccurate assumption that enemy Saracen nomads and bandits would interact directly with the fortifications help disprove the theory. Additionally, the potential for different

⁴¹ Isaac, "Bandits in Judea and Arabia," 125.

⁴² On fortifications serving individual functions see Greg Fisher, "A New Perspective on Rome's Desert Frontier," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 336, (2004), 54.

⁴³ Glen Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 5.

⁴⁴ For example see Figure 9 in Benjamin Isaac, *Limits of Empire*, 196.

⁴⁵ Kagan, "Redefining Roman Grand Strategy," 350.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 350-354.

functions within fortifications, and the lack of primary source evidence to prove the existence of grand strategies, such as defense-in-depth, are all arguments that debunk the defense-in-depth strategy as suitable for understanding the primary function of the frontier fortifications in the Eastern Roman frontier.

Frontier Fortifications: Primary Function and Analysis

Now that the defense-in-depth strategy has been disregarded as an inaccurate representation of the primary function of the frontier fortifications in the Eastern Roman Empire, other ideas need to be brought into consideration. It remains clear that the fortifications serve a function to protect the frontier from some sort of adversary. The adversary confronting the Roman frontier consisted of both external and internal threats. The empire underwent consistent bombardment from external enemies in all frontier regions of the empire, but most notably one of the largest external threats to the Eastern Roman frontier was the growing Neo-Persian Empire. Additionally, bandits also posed a threat to the economic and social well-being of the frontier of the Roman Empire.⁴⁷ To that end, the primary function of the fortifications along the *limes* system in the fourth century CE was to secure the frontier from both internal and external threats. By doing so, the empire could focus on protecting the citizenry and economic interests of the empire by ensuring the security of the frontier region in the east.

One of the major opponents of the Eastern Roman Empire during the fourth century was the Sassanid Persians. These individuals should be treated differently from the Saracen nomads who interacted with the Romans farther south. Ammianus describes the individuals in the Persian province of Parthia as "fierce and warlike, and they are so fond of war and battle that he who is slain in battle is accounted the happiest of men, while those who die a natural death are reproached as degenerate and cowardly."⁴⁸ Naturally, this quotation should be taken lightly considering Marcillenus is a Roman soldier himself and has undoubtedly formulated a bias towards Rome's enemies; however, this statement remains important for this discussion. For the most part, it shows the Neo-Persians as enemies of the Roman state. As long as the empire sustains enemies, it creates a need to protect its borders. In essence, this accounts for the need to have frontier fortifications in the Empire. Conflict between the Neo-Persian Empire was a reality along the frontier of the Eastern Roman Empire. The fortifications along the *limes* system could, therefore, be used to secure the frontier by means of protecting the frontier from the external threat of the Neo-Persian Empire.

The Neo-Persians and Roman empires also employed the help of allies in the Arabian Peninsula during times of conflict. Many of these allies came from specific tribes that partnered with the Roman and Persian state and

⁴⁷ Isaac, *The Limits of Empire*, 91-99.

⁴⁸ Ammianus Marcillenus, 338.

often fought other tribes.⁴⁹ Saracen tribes usually integrated themselves into the customs of the empire they were supporting.⁵⁰ For the most part, the imperial states often bought the support of their allies since many tribes saw the opportunity to find a profit.⁵¹ With that being said, one sees that external threats of the Eastern Roman Empire stretch farther south below the Sassanid Persian Empire. One of the more notable Arab tribe that was loyal to the Persian Empire was the Lakhmids.⁵² This suggests that Rome's external enemies included Saracen tribes as well. Marcillenus often describes Saracen adversaries as follows, "never desirable to have either for friends or enemies."⁵³ This quote summarizes both the Saracens as being both allies and enemies to Marcillenus despite distrusting them as a people. It is clear Marcellinus is referring to Saracen integration by claiming the Saracens are undesirable as friends. Nonetheless, by stating that the Saracens are not desirable as enemies demonstrates that Marcellinus sees the Saracens as enemies who endanger the eastern frontier.

This brings into question the use of the fortifications along the frontier of the Eastern Roman Empire. By the time of the fourth century CE, the Roman Empire in the east begins experiencing a greater amount of pressure along the frontier. The Neo-Persian Empire is expanding westward towards the frontier which puts increased pressure on nomadic people who are being pushed westward towards the frontier as a result. To that end, the major concern was not to prevent Saracen nomads from crossing the border.⁵⁴ As a matter of fact, it was not difficult for nomads to cross into the frontier and for the most part, no evidence suggests that there was always trouble with the nomads.⁵⁵ This means that the primary function of the frontier fortifications, in terms of dealing with external threats, was not to stop "barbaric" forces from coming within the Empire altogether. Rather, the function of the frontier fortifications was to recognize threats along the frontier that may have endangered the social and economic wellbeing of the Empire. In some cases, attempting to stop forces from coming into the Empire was the primary function; however, many cities contained walls and garrisons of their own that could protect against external threats.⁵⁶ When discussing the province of Arabia, Marcillenus proves invaluable in terms of his description of the frontier fortifications. "[The province of Arabia is] studded with strong forts and castles, which the watchful solicitude of its ancient inhabitants has erected

⁴⁹ Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs* 116-117.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 239.

⁵³ Ammianus Marcillenus, 11.

⁵⁴ Isaac, "Bandits in Judaea and Arabia," 144.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 125-136.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 136.

in suitable defiles, in order to repress the inroads of the neighboring nations."⁵⁷ Primarily, Marcellinus is pointing out the importance of the fortifications by acting as the "watchful solicitude." In many regards, this helps support the notion that the primary function of the fortifications was to ensure the security of the frontier. By acting as a "watchful solicitude" the fortifications helped ensure the security of the frontier by observing the *limes* frontier road network for any potential external threats from crossing into the confines of the empire.

The fortifications equally served the function of maintaining internal security as well. If we consider the nomadic nature of Saracen bandit raiders, then the fortifications clearly aimed to secure the frontier internally from such threats. One question to consider, however, is why bandit incursions appeared to be an issue for the Romans in the East. In other words, why might the Roman Near East be more susceptible to bandit raids than other parts of the Empire? Quite simply, the answer may be due to regional economies. The Eastern Roman Empire sits directly on the Silk Road which was continuing to flourish as a result of the resurgence of the Neo-Persian Empire. This ultimately helped re-establish stronger trade connections with Rome and other East Asian societies. As a result of this continued flux of trade, Roman roads witnessed countless merchants and caravans. For this reason, banditry seems plausible as an internal issue within the Eastern Roman Empire. The existence of traders along the Roman *limes* likely attracted bandits to the area since raiding traders allowed them to gain access to booty. As a result, the Roman Empire needed to employ protection in order to counter potential bandit incursions. To that end, Fisher makes a point when he claims that the fortifications along the frontier served the purpose of internal policing, protection against banditry, and control of roads.⁵⁸ In other words, the function of the frontier fortifications also protected the Empire from internal threats that jeopardized the Empire's economic interests.

The issue of banditry along the frontier of the Eastern Roman Empire was not a new phenomenon during the fourth century. Rather, the Eastern Roman frontier underwent consistent problems with banditry throughout its occupation of the Near East. Biblically speaking, evidence shows that many individuals, other than just merchants and traders, were victim to banditry throughout the area.⁵⁹ Emphasis should be placed on the road network as well, since many of these biblical examples seem to draw from incidents that occurred along the Roman network of roads.⁶⁰ Therefore, it seems that the bandits were operating along the road and targeting anyone that they came across. In essence, the bandits described here appear to act similarly to how we might perceive a highwayman to act. Although instead of imposing tolls on

⁵⁷ Ammianus Marcellinus, 29.

⁵⁸ Fisher, "A New Perspective on Rome's Desert Frontier," 54.

⁵⁹ For more specific examples regarding biblical stories concerning banditry, see Benjamin Isaac, "The Limits of Empire," 91-101.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

individuals along the network, the bandits likely camped along the road and preyed on unsuspecting travelers in order to obtain the booty needed to sustain their livelihoods. With this in mind, it seems clear that the Roman Empire would employ a strategy that would protect the roads of the frontier from such issues. This strategy likely resembles a theory proposed by Benjamin Isaac in which frontier fortifications focused more on internal police duties and less on foreign defense.⁶¹ For this reason, the fortifications assisted this strategy of internal policing of roads by supplying troops to protect the frontier from bandit threats. As a result, it makes sense when one sees the garrison of troops move from fortifications and cities to the roads in the southern provinces which suggests a heavier emphasis on internal policing and protecting the economic interests of the empire.⁶²

Additionally, a closer look at the fortifications themselves also helps conclude that the fortifications served a function of maintaining internal security. Careful treatment of the "fortification" needs special attention. The fortifications that dot along the frontier regions of the Empire differ widely from each other, even serving more specific functions than their counterparts.⁶³ In some cases the fortifications referred to throughout this article actually refer to watchtowers. If we observe some of the sites along the *limes*, one sees that many fortifications rest along the road, but do not seem to be near any settlements. These sites often bore watchtowers in which the fortification could surveil the road for any internal threats. One example includes Tsafit Tower (Figure 2). The figure shows a tower built on top of a hill overlooking a road. Since banditry seemed to occur frequently along the *limes*, it is plausible to assume that the tower was used to look out for internal threats along the frontier roads. Additionally, its location on top of a hill allowed for a greater line of sight to spot enemies in the vicinity. To that end, the fortifications served a function of maintaining internal security, by positioning watchtowers along the *limes* the Eastern Roman Empire could maintain internal security of its frontier by surveilling and policing for any potential internal threats that jeopardized its economic interests there.

The body of evidence suggest that the fortifications along the *limes* system appear to serve the function of both securing and maintaining the frontier of the Eastern Roman Empire by means of protecting it from both internal and external threats. As a result, the Empire could secure its economic interests there since many internal and external threats tended to interrupt commercial trade and political and societal security. Perhaps this idea allowed the Eastern Roman Empire to maintain control of its southeastern frontier for the following millenia unlike the west which continued to suffer from impeding barbarian forces. Many factors, however, likely contributed to the

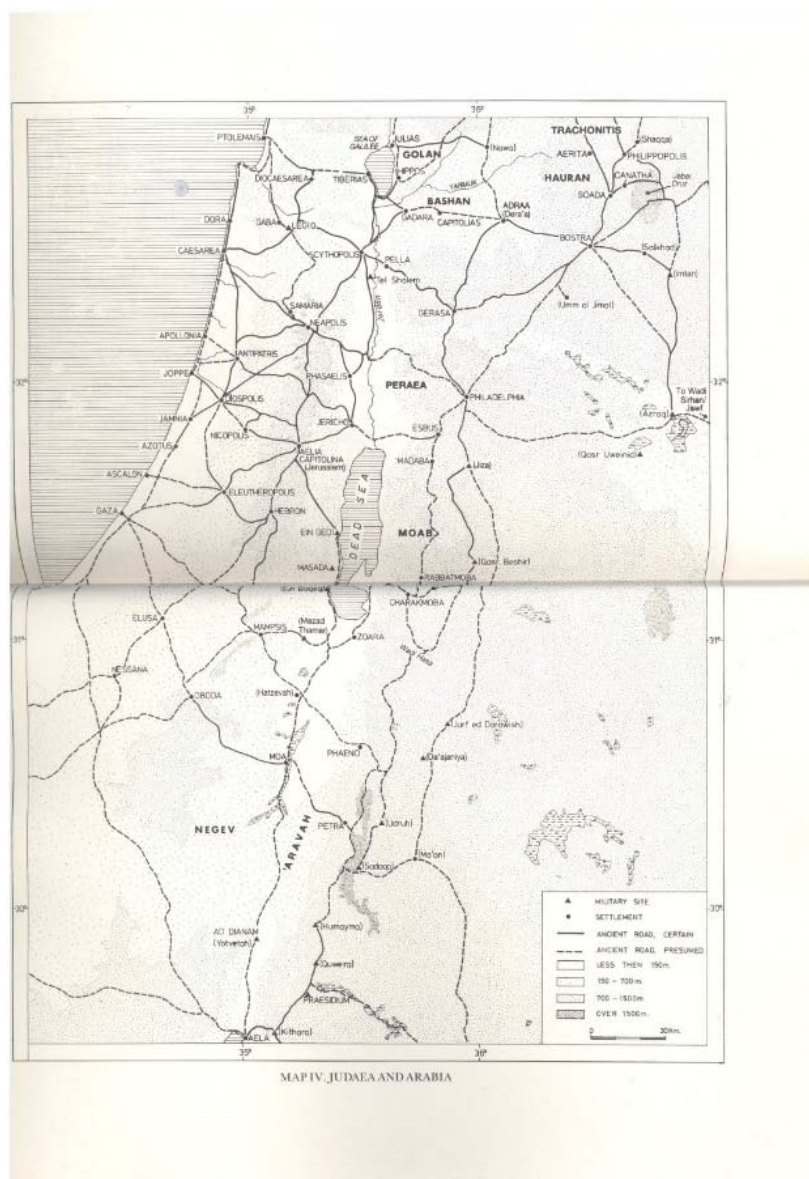
⁶¹ Benjamin Isaac, "Bandits in Judea and Arabia," 152.

⁶² On the movement of troops see Benjamin Isaac, "Bandits in Judaea and Arabia," 136.

⁶³ Fisher, "A New Perspective on Rome's Desert Frontier," 54.

Eastern Roman Empire's ability to maintain its southeastern frontier. Nonetheless, the impact of the fortifications along the frontier remains significant for understanding the *limes* and Roman frontier defense.

Figure 1⁶⁴



⁶⁴ Image taken from Benjamin Isaac, *Limits of Empire*, 500-501.

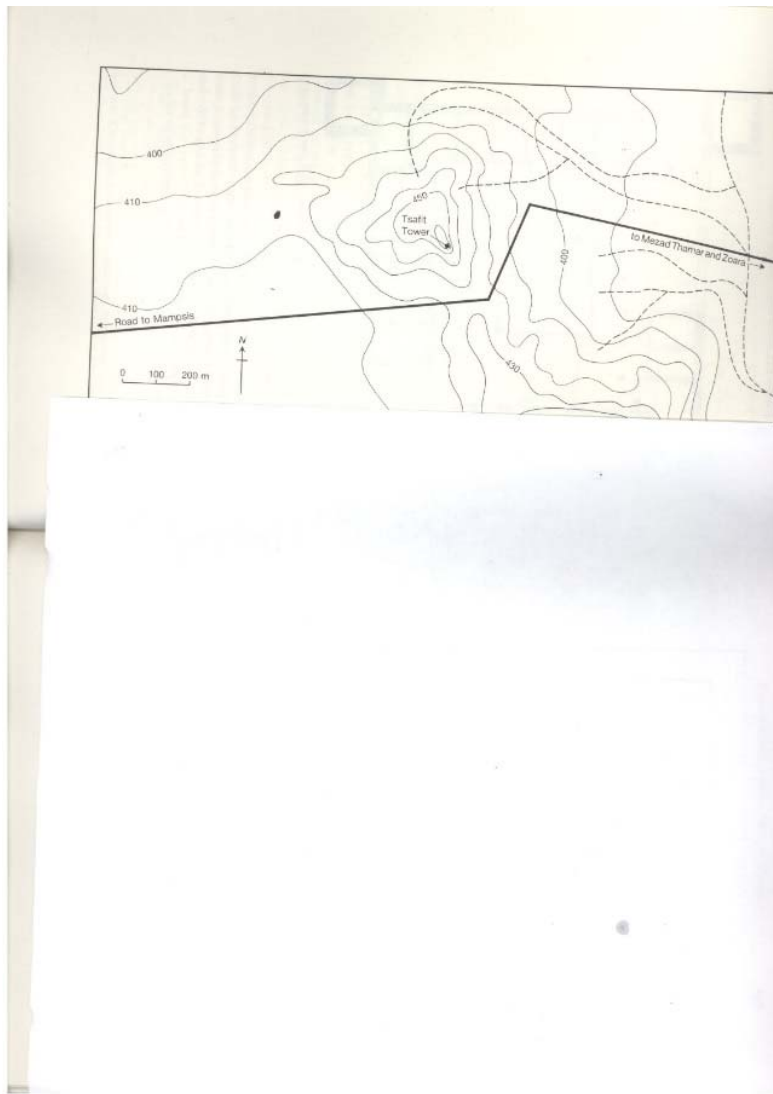


Figure 2⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Image taken from Benjamin Isaac, *Limits of Empire*, 196.

X's Predictions: How They Were Right, With Limitations

Maxwell Schwartz

Maxwell Schwartz is a senior studying at Colombia University. He wrote this paper for the class "Russia and the Soviet Union." He wishes to thank Professor Tarik C. Amar (instructor of the course) and David Allen (TA of the course and current PhD candidate in the Columbia History Department) for their guidance in the writing process.

George Kennan's 1947 "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," written under the pseudonym "X," foresaw the decline of the Soviet Union due to internal, already sprouting "seeds of decay." Just as proponents of Marxism-Leninism saw capitalism as an inherently flawed system doomed to collapse in on itself under the pressure of the proletariat, so too did Kennan propose that Soviet-style communism of the immediate postwar period, i.e. Stalinism, was doomed to fail from within. As such, he proposed that a policy of "long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies"¹ could prevent Soviet aggression until the system brought itself down. This claim, at the broadest level, appears to be accurate. With the benefit of almost seven decades of added history, the present-day historian can corroborate – with certain provisos, historical corrections, and addenda regarding Soviet intent and timing – Kennan's claims as they applied to the immediate postwar geopolitical environment and also as they predicted the fall of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev. His notion of seeds of decay planted by the Stalinist system was prescient, even though he slightly misunderstands Stalin's motivations and his timeline is skewed by a lack of knowledge of the coming de-Stalinization reforms and the oil shock of seventies.

The central claim of Kennan's paper and core motivation for adopting a policy of containment is summarized in this passage:

[W]ho can say with assurance that the strong light still cast by the Kremlin on the dissatisfied peoples of the western world is not the powerful afterglow of a constellation which is in actuality on the wane? This cannot be proved. And it cannot be disproved. But the possibility remains (and in the opinion of this writer it is a strong one) that Soviet power, like the capitalist world of its conception, bears within in the seeds of its own decay, and that the sprouting of these seeds is well advanced.²

Kennan's position is that *Soviet* communism, not communism more broadly considered, will necessarily fail. He writes: "Lenin, had he lived, might have proved a great enough man to reconcile these conflicting forces to the ultimate

¹ George Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1987 (republished from 1947), 861, JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20043098>.

² *Ibid.*, 866.

benefit of Russian society,”³ to create a viable communist regime without resorting to Stalinist tactics if given the opportunity. However he does qualify this as being “questionable.”⁴ Kennan is not convinced of the merits of a Marxist system, but he is not ready or able to tackle that issue in this essay. His focus is, rather, on how Marxism-Leninism became Stalinism and how this planted the seeds of Soviet collapse. He writes:

Of the original ideology, nothing has been officially junked...But stress has come to be laid primarily on those concepts which relate most specifically to the Soviet regime itself: to its position as the sole truly Socialist regime in a dark and misguided world, and to the relationships of power within it.⁵

His argument addresses those specifically Soviet concepts. He views Marxism and the project of the pre-WWI Bolsheviks as “for the most part nebulous, visionary, and impractical.”⁶ He viewed the general theory as being bound for destruction. However he does recognize, in congruence with later scholars such as Peter Holquist,⁷ that it was “The circumstances of the immediate post-revolution period” that “made the establishment of dictatorial power a necessity” and thereby determined the nature of Soviet Marxism going forward. Moreover, he sees Lenin’s successors as being controlled by their extreme senses of insecurity and a “particular brand of fanaticism, unmodified by any of the Anglo-Saxon traditions or compromise, [that] was too fierce and too jealous to envisage any permanent sharing of power,” yielding a system of absolute Party rule.⁸ In ascribing such a focus on “doctrinaire ‘rightness’” to Lenin’s successors, he ignores pre-Revolution Bolshevik ideology which had insisted on the rule of a vanguard. Indeed, he ignores that Lenin, who he suggests is a compromiser who might have been able to avoid Stalin’s violent absolutism, refused to join in a pan-socialist alliance and also refused to accept the election results to the Constituent Assembly. But Kennan is generally right in his claim that it was Lenin’s successors who actually ensured the rigid absolutism that came to define Soviet socialism.

Kennan continues by saying that the post-Lenin Soviet rulers, i.e. those of the Stalinist era, “have continued to be predominantly absorbed in the struggle to secure and make absolute the power which they seized in November 1917.”⁹ This endeavor was “primarily against forces at home,

³ Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” 854

⁴ Ibid., 854.

⁵ Ibid., 858.

⁶ Ibid., 854.

⁷ Cf. Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia’s Continuum of Crisis, 1914-1921* (Cambridge: Harvard U. P., 2002).

⁸ Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” 853-854.

⁹ Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” 855.

within Soviet Society itself” but also “against the outside world.”¹⁰ This observation of pre-war Stalinism is true. As Stalin continued to attack what he viewed as the increasingly intransigent and resistant class enemies of the proletariat at home, his stated fear of “capitalist encirclement” and the West’s hostility toward socialism also raged. Even when capitalism was dead within Russia, Kennan argues, this stated fear of foreign intervention and aggression was extreme and vital to the legitimization of the “organs of suppression” within the Soviet Union. Kennan succinctly states that “it became necessary to justify the retention of the dictatorship by stressing the menace of capitalism abroad.”¹¹

Stalin’s regime coopted fear of Western encroachment on the socialist project to affect change, especially mass industrialization, within the Soviet Union. Stalin’s industrial buildup prior to the Second World War – the collectivization efforts, the export of grain to fund industrial infrastructure and capital investment, and the use of forced labor to those ends – was clearly motivated in part a Bolshevik anti-agrarian desire to create a functioning proletariat-based system. But a greater animus lay in the fear the imperialist West and its hostile aims. The regime was deeply concerned by those “great centers of military power, notably the Nazi regime in Germany and the Japanese Government of the late 1930s, which did indeed have aggressive designs against the Soviet Union.”¹²

Kennan, however, rejects this fear as a primary motive, stating that “there is ample evidence that the stress laid in Moscow on the menace confronting Soviet society from the world outside its borders is founded not in the realities of foreign antagonism but in the necessity of explaining away the maintenance of dictatorial authority at home.”¹³ He says that the Soviets do harbor a powerful and visceral antagonism toward the capitalist nations of the world. Indeed, he argues later in the paper that the antagonism is a key element of Soviet foreign policy, but he rejects the notion that the West posed a realistic or direct threat. He instead posits that the “innate antagonism between capitalism and Socialism” which animated the Soviet side of the Cold War was ideological, not based in realistic security concerns.¹⁴ Here, Kennan’s position is too reductionist.

He essentially underestimates Stalin’s insecurities and fails to recognize the thread in Russian-turned-Soviet history of the fear of foreign antagonism and invasion. Stalin was deeply xenophobic. In a sense, his xenophobia was particular to him, but it was, broadly speaking, characteristic

¹⁰ Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” 855.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 859.

¹² *Ibid.*, 857.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 857.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 858.

of the Russian and Soviet psyche throughout history.¹⁵ He was deeply insecure about Russia's historical place in the world. He saw it as a historically bullied entity and the victim of relative backwardness. Now that Russia was the Soviet Union, he saw the world ready to gang up on his nascent socialist empire. This paranoia of the foreign and Western was result of a dark and suspicious cynicism, the same cynicism which "led him astray by ascribing to Western governments the same capacity for conspiring that he attributed to himself and his regime."¹⁶ Kennan's argument that Stalin's regime was irrationally anti-West was true, but not for the stated reasons. Stalin's personality, not just his ideology, played into the regime's distrust of the West. Indeed, even his successors would demonstrate anxiety regarding Western intentions.¹⁷

Thus, Kennan's imagination of the Soviet Union was faulty. He perceived the Soviet Union as a nation that was driven by the leadership's self-righteous drive to establish communism when, in reality it was also driven by a very Russian fear of Western encroachment and invasion. Nonetheless, his position that absolutism and violence fundamentally changed the character of the Soviet Union and created a system that would collapse in on itself was correct, evidenced by the creation of an economic system that simply failed to improve the lives of the proletariat it served.

The Soviets thought that their grand economic growth of the postwar period would serve their people and interests as long as popular interest lay in the establishment of a successful socialist state. Kennan, however, saw Soviet postwar industrial buildup as potentially the "powerful afterglow of a constellation which is in actuality on the wane."¹⁸ He concedes that the position could not be proved, but since he puts it forward as a strong possibility, it merits some discussion.

The present-day critic of Kennan might argue that this analysis was premature. Could a simple afterglow beat the United States into space, develop thermonuclear weapons, create one of the world's most impressive metallurgical and heavy industrial systems, and continue to project its influence well into Europe and the increasingly important "global south"? These *ex post facto* objections do not discredit the perceived reality at the time, for Kennan did not yet know about the Space Race or the full extent of the Cold War. Nor do they prove that the Soviet Union was not declining and simply burning through its last reserves of fuel. These achievements do not discredit the position that the U.S.S.R. was just the afterglow of its former

¹⁵ Vladislav Zubok and Constatine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge: Harvard U. P., 1996), 22.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁷ Note, by means of anecdotal evidence, that Andropov was so fearful of Western invasion that he ordered spies to observe London government buildings at night to discern whether or not an invasion was imminent.

¹⁸ Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 866.

glory by 1947. Indeed, one could see the achievements of the Soviet Union just as one sees the spectacular light of an exploded star – as a spectacle which is really just the visual phenomenon that accompanies the actual death and decay, a grandiose *rigor mortis*. As Kennan notes: “This cannot be proved. And it cannot be disproved.”¹⁹ But an analysis of the Soviet industrial system does indicate that the postwar buildup was not a sign of vitality but of short-run state power. It is likely that without the oil windfall of the 1970s, the timeline would look more favorable to Kennan’s argument that the seeds of decay were already well-advanced and that the Soviet system was already on the wane.

Kennan concedes that the Soviets had impressive industrial capabilities and an impressive ability to rebuild in the aftermath of World War II. “The Kremlin,” he says, “has also proved able to accomplish its purpose of building up in Russia...an industrial foundation of heavy metallurgy, which is...continuing to grow and is approaching those of the other major industrial countries.”²⁰ Kennan had not even yet reached the 1950s, “the best decade of postwar Soviet growth...[which] witnessed the most rapid expansion of the Soviet epoch – national income growth reached 7.2% annually.”²¹

But his concession is not that the Soviet Union was on the rise or in the midst of sustainable viability. Rather, he makes the point that Soviet economic gains were the prime example of how the socialist empire was continuing to use and deplete finite political, social, and economic capital. Here, Kennan appreciates potential more than he does achievements. He sees that what fueled the Soviet recovery was a deteriorating inertia that was bound to die. That is, rather than supporting the Russian claim that such a buildup proved the superiority of socialism in mobilization and industrialization, the buildup’s sapping of morale and resources would be devastating to the system. The economic growth was, in his view, likely a hollow indicator of former greatness and a last great push encouraged by the inertia of a world power yielding despotic abilities to coerce labor. It was not one that could not last, especially without the institutions, popular support, and infrastructure required to undergird such an industrial complex. He summarizes his doubts of the Soviet economic system stating:

...Soviet economic development, while it can list certain formidable achievements, has been precariously spotty and uneven. Russian Communists who speak of the “uneven development of capitalism” should blush at the contemplation of their own national economy...Here is a nation striving to become in a short period one

¹⁹ Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” 866.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 863.

²¹ Mark Harrison, “Soviet Economic Growth Since 1928: The Alternative Statistics of G.I. Khanin,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, 1993, pp. 146, <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/mharrison/public/eas93.pdf>.

of the great industrial nations of the world while it still has no highway network worthy of the name and only a relatively primitive network of railways...But maintenance is still a crying deficiency of all Soviet economy. Construction is hasty and poor in quality. Depreciation must be enormous.²²

The incomplete success of the postwar economic surge, and its human toll, is exemplified by Magnitogorsk, as discussed by Stephen Kotkin in *Magnetic Mountain*.²³ Kotkin argues that Magnitogorsk, considered particularly illustrative of Soviet industry more broadly, was a masterful example of the quantity- and output-focused industrial machine. To that extent, it was a bright spot in the Soviet mission to prove that socialism could muster the resources of a country to produce fantastic results. However, it also proves Kennan's points that "the building of heavy industry...has been carried out a terrible cost in human life and in human hopes and energies" and that it "involved the neglect or abuse of other phases of Soviet economic life, particularly agriculture, consumers' goods production, housing, and transportation."²⁴ Magnitogorsk pumped out a fantastic amount of steel, but a large portion of its workers lived in tents, far from their places of work and at high cost to morale. Additionally, such success stories as Magnitogorsk were marked by the use of forced labor from the Gulag system.²⁵

Given the violence and coercion that Stalin paired with economic mobilization, it is not unreasonable to think that the miserable conditions would have been cause for serious unhappiness. Robert C. Tucker describes the postwar period as one of "mass disenchantment."²⁶ He comments "In a society founded on the presumption of belief, that [disenchantment] signified the beginning of a crisis."²⁷ Kennan and Tucker, and indeed many others, concur that Stalin ruled by fear rather than belief and that "a widespread failure of belief was both a part of and a cause of the crisis bequeathed by Stalin to Soviet society."²⁸ Robert Service posits that most people were more interested in focusing on eking out their harsh existences, not communist

²² Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 864.

²³ Magnitogorsk is a city in Russia that was the site of a large mining and industrial complex. For an in-depth analysis of Magnitogorsk and the Stalinist society that it exemplifies, see Stephen Kotkin's *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as Civilization* (U. of California Press, 1997).

²⁴ Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 863.

²⁵ "...a segment of the labour-force used for the construction consisted of Gulag prisoners" (Robert Service, *A History of Modern Russia: From Tsarism to the Twenty-First Century*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 2009), 191).

²⁶ Robert C. Tucker, *Political Culture and Leadership in Soviet Russia: From Lenin to Gorbachev* (Wheatsheaf Books, 1987), 121.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 120.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 122.

doctrine.²⁹ Service claims that while they were not dissidents, they were no enthusiastic communists either. Between the system's failure to deliver the level of material well-being that it promised and its brutalization of the populace, support for it was certainly lower than what the Soviet leaders would have hoped. In a realization that the Soviets' "economic destiny" was predicated upon the degree of "Russian unity, discipline, and patience,"³⁰ Khrushchev tried to improve the system for the common man. He put an end to the brutal tactics of Stalin and the Gulag. He also promised in 1958: "We shall overtake and outstrip the USA, in per capita production of meat, milk and butter!"³¹

It may be argued that Kennan overestimates the degree to which unhappiness was actually an element of the society. "Russian unity, discipline, and patience" were not yet at critically low levels, and they would not be in the near future. After all, the society did not fracture under an impatient desire to increase its economic well-being outside the bounds of the socialist system in the "ten to fifteen years" that Kennan expects.³² Kotkin's *Magnetic Mountain* implies that unhappiness and unrest did not dominate society as completely as Kennan understands, but that people learned to live within it. Perhaps more importantly, the liberalizing reforms of Khrushchev, though not entirely effective, eliminated some of the demoralizing factors Kennan points to and thereby delayed the social upheaval foreseen in "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." It was likely because of the reforms that some people remained convinced that socialism was the proper way well into the last years of the Soviet Union. In the 1960s, according to Kotkin, "most people simply wanted the Soviet regime to live up to its promises," and "A strong allegiance to socialism – understood as a state responsibility for the general welfare and social justice – remained very much a part of ordinary people's worldview."³³ Even as late as Gorbachev's ascendancy in the 1980s, "The Soviet Union was not in turmoil."³⁴ The population was, for the most part, willing to accept the economic situation, for employment was high. Dissidence was manageably low, and "Soviet patriotism was very strong."³⁵

Post-Stalinist reforms were instrumental to the resurrection of faith in socialism among the Soviet population and the forestallment of the social crisis that Kennan foresees. In 1947, the Soviet people were still in the shadow of Stalin's violent absolutism, yet to see the relative light of Khrushchev and subsequent leaders. As such, Kennan's view of the coming

²⁹ Service, 199.

³⁰ Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 862.

³¹ Tucker, *Political Culture and Leadership*, 122.

³² Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 862.

³³ Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970 – 2000* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2008), 44.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

³⁵ Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, 27.

popular upheaval would take a longer time than he realized. Considering the inextricable tie between the population's happiness and its economic well-being, it is likely that de-Stalinization, in conjunction with the relative economic success of the 1970s, helped stave off extreme social distress. Stalinist industrial policies planted the seeds of popular discontent, but they remained dormant thanks to Stalin's repression of dissidence and then post-Stalin efforts to alleviate the plight of the people.

The centrally planned industrial sector of the Stalinist years also planted the seeds of industrial and economic decay. These projects, despite their initial success, were ultimately doomed to failure in the long-run. The centrally planned economy, without proper price indicators or incentives, could not adapt properly to the demands of production or the changing world.³⁶ As Kotkin writes in *Armageddon Averted*, Soviet industry's obsession with quantity of output rather than quality of production yielded a highly inefficient and energy-guzzling system which produced steel that had little practical use and poor-quality consumer goods. When factories were judged simply by output tonnage, their managers were not incentivized to create materials that were useful for the economy. Orders from the center – that broken, power-hungry political arena apparently devoid of economic sense – compelled producers to produce in a ridiculous manner. The Soviet Union sought strength and legitimacy in these factories,³⁷ using heavy industry to focus on manufactures for the military but not for consumer goods.³⁸ This is the singular focus on industry that Kennan criticizes as unsustainable and unreasonable, for it fails to address the needs of the country.

The only factor that seems to have sustained the Soviet economy through the 1970s and '80s was the oil windfall of the '70s. As early as the '50s, the United States recognized that oil was the keystone of the Soviet economy; without it, Russian industry could not function.³⁹ Its gas-guzzling industrial sector needed oil badly, especially because inefficiency necessitated even more raw material and energy than similar industries elsewhere in the world. A lucky combination of the identification of oil fields in Siberia and the spike of oil prices (due to the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the Arab oil embargo) provided much needed fuel for Soviet industry and income via oil exports.⁴⁰ Oil acted much as grain did in Imperial and Stalinist Russia: its exportation financed industry and the government. But just as Tsar Nicholas II and Stalin exported grain despite domestic need, late Soviet Russia exported oil despite domestic industrial needs, creating shortages. And just as Russia had gotten lucky in the 70s, it got unlucky in the '80s when both oil production and oil prices started decreasing, thereby simultaneously decreasing export-

³⁶ Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*.

³⁷ Ibid., 18.

³⁸ Service, 304.

³⁹ Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, 15.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 15.

derived revenue and directly hampering industry, the sector with the highest production of the Soviet economy. So, as Kotkin says, oil “merely delayed the inevitable.”⁴¹

The concurrently vulnerable yet immovable nature of the Soviet economy points to the fact that despite Khrushchev's claims to the contrary, the U.S.S.R. was never really in a position to outstrip the U.S. or achieve the economic greatness that would have legitimized socialism. Kennan writes:

It is difficult to see how these deficiencies can be corrected at an early date by a tired and dispirited population working largely under the shadow of fear and compulsion. And so long as they are not overcome, Russia will remain economically a vulnerable, and in a certain sense impotent, nation, capable of exporting its enthusiasm and of radiating the strange charm of its primitive political vitality but unable to back up those articles of export by the real evidences of material power and prosperity.⁴²

Although the Soviet population may not have been as dispirited as Kennan claims, at least not after the end of Stalinism,⁴³ the Soviets did indeed fail to achieve substantial economic reform necessary to strengthen their system. The centralized planning encouraged inefficiency. It may have built an unparalleled system of heavy industry,⁴⁴ but when the system became obsolete it “proved very bad at taking its rust belt down.”⁴⁵ Western, market-based economies, on the other hand, proved much more adept at handling transitioning away from heavy industry.⁴⁶ So by the late years of the Soviet Union, just as the American economy was reinvigorated and shedding its own malaise, the Soviet system was sinking deeper into obsolescence. It was inundated with decades-old, out-of-date technology and unable to transfer assets to other, more dynamic sectors.⁴⁷ With this failure to overcome capitalism, the Soviet Union lost legitimacy by its own metric. Kotkin argues: “From its inception, the Soviet Union had claimed to be an experiment in socialism, a superior alternative to capitalism, for the entire world. If socialism was not superior to capitalism, its existence could not be justified.”⁴⁸

⁴¹ Ibid., 16.

⁴² Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” 864.

⁴³ At the very least, the population was no longer subjected to the same “shadow of fear and compulsion” after Khrushchev's reforms.

⁴⁴ The Soviet economy, which was 70 percent heavy industry, was more reliant on heavy industry than any other country in the world (Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, 17).

⁴⁵ Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, 17.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 17.

⁴⁷ N.B. The Soviet Union's efforts at creating a high-tech sector were less than spectacular.

⁴⁸ Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, 19

Although the failure to create a viable economic system made military competition with the United States entirely unviable, the Soviets kept up the competition. Kennan notes that matters of prestige were very important to the Soviet Union.⁴⁹ Perhaps this explains why the leadership was so willing to spend so much on an arms race with the United States. According to Vladislav Zubok's *A Failed Empire*, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov argued that "there was too much inefficiency and too many costly mammoth projects and a suicidal penchant to pursue the United States in the arms race."⁵⁰ Along the lines of Kennan's postulation, the combination of Western pressure and Soviet considerations of prestige trapped the Soviet Union "in a position where it [could not] afford to yield even though this might [have been] dictated by its sense of realism."⁵¹ While the arms race and Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative may not be as important as some Westerners like to claim, the West really did force the Soviet Union to spend more than it could afford. Some Soviet leaders were evidently aware of that, calling for WWII-style mobilization of the populace to support the arms race. During WWII and the years surrounding it, Stalin employed great force, or at least the threat of it. He also held the threat of being sent to the Gulag to extract taxes and resources. Zubok, as if he were trying to prove Kennan's point that the populace could not be mobilized in such a manner for all eternity, writes:

New realities discouraged the return to the old methods of mobilization. The society had irrevocably changed since the 1940s. The huge human resources Stalin had mobilized and squandered, those millions of the collectivized peasantry, young workers, and enthusiastic party cadres, were no longer available. There was little idealism among the elite educated youth; frustrated consumerism, cynicism, and pleasure-seeking took its place.⁵²

In a system that could not provide the material happiness to instill enthusiasm, even within the young intellectuals that once composed part of the core of support, the only way to mobilize the populace was by force. But not since Stalin had the Soviet system had the ability to use such coercive violence.

With the failure of the Soviet economic system came the failure of the ideological system too. The ideology could not provide what it claimed to provide or demonstrate its teleological claim to superiority over capitalism. The Soviet people, subjected to hardship, were unmotivated. Gorbachev was compelled to pursue reforms in the eighties to save socialism, for Stalinism,

⁴⁹ "While the Kremlin is basically flexible in its reaction to political realities, it is by no means unamenable to considerations of prestige." (Kennan, 861)

⁵⁰ Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 2007), 277.

⁵¹ Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 861.

⁵² Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 277.

especially its absolutist centralization, had created an economic crisis that undermined the ideology. Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika*, often cited as the policies that brought the Soviet Union to its knees, were efforts to fix the decades-old broken elements of the Soviet Union. They were attempts to address these seeds of decay, the sprouting of which was certainly well advanced by the 1980s. Gorbachev's reforms in the late '80s were an effort to clear out the sprouting seeds, to replace the seeds of decay with those of prosperity and vitality. Instead, the policies simply killed the weeds which had been preventing the seeds from blossoming and allowed them to achieve full maturity.

Containment, then, seems to have been an appropriate response to the Soviet Union, especially as compared to the roll-back strategy that would have involved massive military engagements. Although Kennan's timeline proposed in "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" is not consistent with the historical reality and although miscalculates Soviet intentions, his predictions of Soviet weak spots are accurate. Like the capitalism of the Soviets' imaginations, the Soviet socialism of Kennan's writing was deeply flawed in its long-term viability and its ability to maintain order among the proletariat that it failed to appease.