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The Martha and Robert G. Hartje Award is presented annually to a senior in the spring semester. The History Department determines the three or four finalists who write a 600 to 800 word narrative essay dealing with an historical event or figure. The finalists must have at least a 2.7 grade point average and have completed at least six history courses. The winner is awarded \$500 at a spring semester History Department colloquium and the winning paper is included in the *History Journal*. This year's Hartje Paper award was presented to Jacquelyn Nair.

On behalf of all Wittenberg history students past and present, we dedicate this year's history journal to the female faculty and staff of the history department who have come before and those who continue to educate and enrich the lives of others. It is also for those female history students of the past who have moved on to represent Wittenberg around the world and for those still to come; the students of today recognize the women who work to make Wittenberg University truly a great place to learn and grow.

The History Journal Editorial Board

New Perspectives on War and Women

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Hartje Paper: Watching the World Burn: Nero and the Great Roman Fire

Jacquelyn Nair

The song ended on a minor melancholy note that resonated the length and breadth of the ornate palace hall. The producer of such a sound stood at the expansive window gazing out at the megalopolis he ruled. The sun was slowly sinking beneath the soporific city as the inhabitants finished their daily labors and prepared to once again embrace twilight. The emperor's eyes gleamed with anticipation as he watched and waited for the colossal conflagration to commence...

The Emperor Nero Caesar has been remembered in history for a veritable slew of ill thoughts, ill words, and ill deeds. Suetonius, biographer to the first twelve Caesars, records that he had a "naturally cruel heart"¹ and was "universally loathed."² Amongst the more malevolent charges laid at his door by Suetonius and other Roman historians are greed, incest, the murder of his mother, envy, and lewd sexual practices. However, perhaps the most infamous of all of these deeds and actions attributed to Nero is the great fire of Rome in midsummer of 64 CE. Legend and axiom has passed down to modernity the idea that while the bright flames engulfed the city, Nero stood on a rooftop observing, singing, and playing his fiddle.

Beginning on the night of July 18th "the most terrible and destructive fire which Rome had ever experienced"³ started on the level parts of the city and then rushed up the hillside. The flames damaged homes, lands, and took citizens' lives. Almost all the ancient authors, with the exception of Tacitus who lays his castigations upon the fledgling Christians, place the blame upon the Emperor. This is the central debate surrounding the great fire of Rome. Was it the eccentric, and probably insane, Emperor Nero? Or was it a band of Christians, determined to end the Roman debauchery and bring about the end of days that would signal the return of Christ?

Nero was more than prepared to blame the Christians of the city. After the flames had been subdued, he opened his home to many refugees, though the people of the city had very little love for him and "these measures, for all their popular character, earned no gratitude."⁴ Needing to place the guilt upon the head of someone, "Nero fabricated scapegoats—and punished with every refinement, the notoriously depraved Christians."⁵ Tacitus writes that Nero did a myriad of actions against the Christians, including arrest, being torn apart by dogs, crucifixion, and "being made into torches to be ignited after dark as substitutes for daylight."⁶ The idea that the Christians had motive to set the fire has some elements of truth to it. They believed that the flames blazing throughout the city would lead to the apocalypse and the triumphant heralding

return of Jesus Christ.⁷ Their motives were religious in nature, yet one must also look at the other option: that Nero either set it himself, or gave the orders to his officials to begin the blaze.

Suetonius believed that Nero, "pretending to be disgusted by the drab old buildings and narrow winding streets of Rome, brazenly set fire to the city" and being so "enraptured by the beauty of the flames, put on costume and sang the 'Fall of Ilium' from beginning to end."⁸ While it is possible that these ancient authors are simply rehashing stories that rumormongers had begun to spread through the city, if we examine Nero's life we find it is plausible to believe that he would commit such a brazen atrocity. In the primary sources, Nero's life is one of constant eccentric and rather bizarre acts. We have tales of him touring his empire as a singer and performer, jealous and spiteful of men who were his better. He held lavish feasts, raped a Vestal Virgin, attempted to commit incest with his mother Agrippina (and when she warded off his advances, plotted and eventually carried out her death), spent money like it was going out of style, killed his aunt, and was altogether "hopelessly debauched."⁹ When one examines these events, it doesn't take a great leap of faith to imagine that Nero at least ordered the fire to be started, especially when there is evidence he "gave orders to move slowly in the word of extinguishing the fire."¹⁰ While we may never know how the fire started, or indeed who started it, we cannot count Nero out. His paranoia, jealousy, and history of grotesque behavior leave him as a suspect in the great inferno of Rome.

Placing the instrument under his chin and gazing out at the holocaust, Nero gently pulled the bow across the bridge and the seductively violent song began on a minor melancholy note that resonated the length and breadth of the ornate palace hall as down below the screams of the people rose higher and higher.

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¹ Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Twelve Caesars*, Translated by Robert Graves (London: Penguin Books, 1957), 212.

² *Ibid.*, 235.

³ Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, Translated by Michael Grant (London: Penguin Books, 1979), 362.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 363.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 365.

⁶ *Ibid.* It should be understood, however, that Tacitus has no sympathy for the Christians whom he believed to be shameful and conduct degrading practices.

⁷ See Ch. Hulsen, "The Burning of Rome Under Nero," in *The American Journal of Archaeology* 13 (1909), 45-48.

⁸ Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 230. Tacitus also discusses the emperor's rather odd behavior and writes that "while the city was burning, Nero had gone on his private stage...and had sung of the destruction of Troy." See Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 363.

⁹ Walter Allen Jr., Robert J. Barnett Jr., Mary D. Beaty, et al., "Nero's Eccentricities Before the Fire," in *Numen* 9 (1962), 100.

¹⁰ Ch. Hulsen, "The Burning of Rome Under Nero," 48.

The Cult of the Ace: The Airman and His Role in the First World War

John Papic

The new Siegfried rides his red chariot across the sky, though its course falters towards the ground. He fumbles at the crude controls while trying to make a safe landing. His Teutonic comrades in the muddy valley below watch his fall, astonished. "How could this happen to our knight?" they lament. The new Siegfried lands in the territory of his Australian foes. He breathes his last breath into his blood-filled lungs and dies a warrior's death. The Australians climb out from their muddy trenches to take souvenirs off his red chariot, ripping off pieces of the three canvas wings, the machine guns, and the engine. They realize what has been accomplished: Manfred Freiherr von Richthofen, the "Red Baron," Germany's greatest pilot, has just been shot down, an unthinkable act. Official reports later described the hero's passing: "[t]he body of Rittmeister Freiherr von Richthofen showed only one wound: a bullet had hit him in the heart. He was buried with military honours appropriate to his rank."¹

Richthofen's death "did not change the course of a battle or turn the tide of a war,"² but it did signify the climax of an age, a knightly battle in the sky that was unique to the First World War. Aerial warfare was used for the first time in history, and this untested technology and weaponry bred a new species of soldier and hero: the Ace. Although Richthofen was the prime example, he was only part of a larger phenomenon. All the belligerent nations celebrated their pilots as heroes. It seems natural that heroes would be found in the sky, where "the fighter pilots were as distinctive and individualistic as the medieval knight..."³ and through their individual actions they became heroes, in contrast to the bleak attritional trench warfare on the ground. Aces and fighter pilots did not serve as great a strategic purpose as most ground and other operations, such as reconnaissance and strategic bombing; however, their roles in raising morale, contributing to propaganda efforts and acting as the heroes that the trench war lacked made the Aces indispensable to their respective homelands and led to their postwar immortalization.

At the beginning of the war, aeronautics were used primarily for reconnaissance and its combat aspects had yet to be exploited. In the opening months of the war, enemy reconnaissance planes would pass each other civilly; as one French pilot recalled, enemy pilots and observers would exchange waves, "not cordially, perhaps, but courteously... as much as to say, '[w]e are enemies, but we need not forget the civilities.'"⁴ As the war progressed past those first few months, this "courtesy" was forgotten, and aerial combat slowly began to take shape. Air-to-air combat began crudely, with reconnaissance pilots carrying "not only pistols, muskets and rifles, but also bricks, grenades, and other assorted missiles,"⁵ with which they could use to attack their foes. Through the pioneering efforts of French aviator Roland Garros and German

plane manufacturer Anthony Fokker, various systems were developed that allowed pilots to shoot machine guns effectively through their propellers without destroying them and causing their planes to crash. But later the machine gun was made so that it would not shoot through the propeller, making it considerably easier to shoot down enemy planes, treating the entire plane as a weapon. Aerial warfare was transformed forever, setting the stage for the rise of the ace.⁴

As aerial combat became slightly more commonplace, certain pilots were awarded for their prowess in aerial combat. Germany was the first belligerent who made their hero pilots into celebrities, beginning with the success stories of Max Immelmann and Oswald Boelcke in late 1915 and early 1916. After they both had shot down eight enemy aircraft, they were awarded the *Pour le Merite*, Germany's highest military honor by Kaiser Wilhelm II himself. A propaganda campaign on the home front followed, with "postcards, trading cards, press accounts, photographs, and newsreels [bringing] their pictures and news of their exploits into every German home and schoolroom."⁷ The Germans seemed to be the most eager to develop a hero culture around their aces; the stalemate that arose after the failure of the vaunted Schlieffen plan required a press distraction, and the aces were primed to play this role.⁸ The German Aces also came to symbolize the belief the Germans held that they were the most progressive and modern nation in Europe through their embodiment of the "modernist merging of man and machine," that they were "men of steel both in the sense of what they endured physically, but also in the sense of...a strong-willed and highly skilled ruthlessness."⁹ The German public would have their fill of aces throughout the course of the war; even after both Boelcke and Immelmann were killed in action, Germany still had squadrons full of ace heroes to adore and laud. Through December 1, 1917, Germany had nearly twice as many aces (1,093) as France (567), demonstrating their relative superiority in the air.¹⁰ Manfred Freiherr von Richthofen became the most feared ace to arise from these ranks and amassed a most impressive record; before his death on April 21, 1918, he had shot down 80 enemy aircraft, more than any other pilot in the First World War. His red airplane and combat prowess caused him to receive nicknames such as "*le petit rouge*"¹¹ and "The Red Baron," and made him the most identifiable ace (and possibly person) of the First World War. His legacy contributed greatly to the public's stereotypical image of the ace as a chivalrous warrior knight of the air.¹²

France noticed the positive effect that the German ace pilots had on the home front and decided to deify their pilots as well. They reserved special respect for pilots who scored five or more air to air victories, naming them "*l'as de notre aviation* [the ace of our aviation]," from which the widely used term "ace" derives.¹³ The beginning of the campaign was well timed, as it followed the massive casualties inflicted at Verdun in mid-1916 and provided good press in this difficult time. The most famous French Ace, Georges Guynemer, was lionized for his prowess in combat and his lone wolf nature, garnering an "international reputation" and "legendary status" through them. He symbolized the tenacity that the French were to emulate; he had recorded two instances in which he shot down three enemies in one day, and shot down four, once, in another. He had been shot down eight times himself, and frequently disobeyed orders to go on leave or take rest.¹⁴ One of the most famous stories regarding Guynemer was his dogfight with one of the leading German aces, Ernst Udet. Guynemer had the upper hand throughout the duel, but upon realizing that Udet

had jammed his gun, he disengaged, allowing him to live in the name of fair play and chivalry.¹⁵ For this reason, the French often regarded him as the “Roland of our epoch,”¹⁶ and along with other French knights of the air provided the hero roles that their country desperately needed.

The British were a bit slower to recognize their aces as celebrities, because higher command believed all the way up to January 1918 that, “to propagandize the achievements of particular pilots would adversely affect the morale of the [RFC] as a whole.”¹⁷ Military command did not release reports to the press about successes in the air, as the military command favored praising the whole rather than individuals. The reluctance to recognize aces was rather uncharacteristic of British culture because the adventurous air battles and sporting attitudes of the pilots were conducive to the “play the Game” sentiment that was so important to the British since sports became an integral part of the culture in the Victorian period.¹⁸ However, after the disaster at the Somme and protestations by the press and members of Parliament, the British started recognizing pilots more readily, such as the leading British ace at the time, the young Captain Albert Ball, as useful objects of propaganda.¹⁹ With Britain’s rich history involving knighthood and chivalry, it was logical that the ace would become an important cultural hero there as well, as their actions were viewed as, “a return of the Paladin, the champion, who relied on personal skill and courage and who followed a chivalric code of behavior both on and off the battlefield,”²⁰ and were viewed as the most romantic and chivalric defenders of the Empire.

Further exploration into the topic demands an answer to a very specific question: who were these men who put their life on the line for a dangerous and strategically insignificant branch of their countries’ military operations? Of course, the aces were like any demographic and varied from individual to individual, but they did often share certain traits. First, these pilots required a daring sense of adventure—a person of less than extraordinary courage and daring would simply not be cut out for aerial combat. Several of the higher-scoring aces were young; Britain’s Albert Ball did not get to see his twenty-first birthday, Guynemer was twenty-two at the time of his disappearance and Richthofen died when he was twenty-five. The youthfulness of the air corps’ volunteers was logical, as aviation itself was a young branch of service at the time. No aerial combat veterans were present at the beginning of the war, mostly because airplanes had not been extensively used in combat for any purpose before 1914. In this regard, almost every ace received his training during the war at some point. Many celebrated Aces came from middle-to upper-class backgrounds, such as Richthofen, whose family “was the recipient of a hereditary Bohemian knighthood...,”²¹ and several members of the Lafayette Escadrille were upper-class young Americans with ivy-league education. Of course, recruiters looked for such traits and backgrounds in their prospective pilots—only the best and brightest were to fly these very expensive and fragile planes. Almost all had served in some other branch of the military earlier in the war like Richthofen who was a member of an elite cavalry unit on both the Eastern and Western Fronts,²² and most aces had some experience in the ground war in one way or another. Several aces, such as Richthofen and many members of the Lafayette Escadrille, sought transfers to the air corps in order to escape the dull and terrifying trenches and to seek more adventure. Some had extensive experience like Edmond Genet, a member of the Lafayette Escadrille, served both in the American

Navy before the war as well as in the French Foreign Legion during the brutal fighting at Champagne before seeking a transfer to the French air division.²⁸ He summed up his feelings toward the glory of air combat in a letter to his mother in 1916:

This is the most dangerous branch of the service, Mother, but it's the best as far as future is concerned... The glory is well worth the loss. I'd rather die as an aviator over the enemy's lines than find a nameless, shallow grave in the infantry, and I'm certain you'd all feel better satisfied too.²⁹

The Ace's background could be seen as one reason why the public found them so alluring, and played right into the romanticism and adventure that would become synonymous with the air war; while the aces desire for glory was mirrored by the public's desire that they achieve it.

On the ground, meanwhile, the conflict slowly became one of attrition. New weapons such as machine guns and gas killed soldiers like it was an industry in and of itself. The romanticism and sense of adventure at the beginning of the war had left for the skies, as heroes rarely emerged from the trenches. The Ace came to signify all the romantic and heroic elements that were missing from the ground war. Movement over the vast firmament harkened back to fast and furious battles on horseback, and tales of chivalry and bravery in the face of danger were commonplace among stories relating to the aerial war. Richthofen described air combat as, "the remnant of the knightly duel... A chivalrous battle with similar weapons, each with a machine gun and an airplane, some athletic ability and: all that remains is for the heart to be weighed."³⁰ The war in the air was the "Gentleman's War" that was expected to be on the ground; a recorded instance where Max Immelmann helped a pair of British pilots after shooting them down is one of many such examples of the respect the enemies in the sky had for each other. It was not common for pilots to hate their opponents. Those who were shot down by Immelmann and other feared pilots often stated, "it's no disgrace to be caught and shot down by him!" indicating the mutual respect and overall lack of hate between foes in the air.³¹ This went hand in hand with the aforementioned sporting spirit of the British; the famous ace Captain Lanoe Hawker gave Richthofen a wave during a dogfight, "as if he wanted to say 'Well, well, how do you do?'"³² This chivalry and code of honor was another draw for the public towards the air war.

The heroic and romantic nature of these combat pilots made them natural propaganda symbols; as Robertson argues, "the aim of constructing a symbolic hero out of the combat pilots certainly outweighed any intent to explain the real significance of the air war to the public."³³ The best example of aces used as propaganda was the early campaigns centered on Boelcke and Immelmann. The campaign around the two during late 1915 to early 1916 set the standard "to appropriate air-to-air combat specifically for the purpose of demoralizing the enemy and undermining the opposing public's confidence in its leadership."³⁴ German military leadership tried to have Boelcke grounded after Immelmann's death, fearing the effect on morale his death would have. Their efforts were to no avail; Boelcke was not even vanquished by a Frenchman or British pilot, rather, on October 28, 1916, a wingman ran into his plane, causing him to spiral down to the Earth and his death.³⁵

Publicity tours were another common method that utilized aces for propaganda. Boelcke made several, as did Richthofen, to Germany's allies, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire for goodwill purposes.³¹ The British aimed a propaganda campaign against the Red Baron, offering an impressive monetary reward to have him shot down, and a larger reward if his demise was filmed. This campaign only made the German people more confident in their red flyer.³² Film also used aces for propaganda aims. Eddie Rickenbacker, the leading American ace of the war, was filmed in a staged dogfight with captured German planes to demonstrate the Allies' superiority in the skies by having Rickenbacker vanquish an enemy squadron singlehandedly.³³ Aces were also used widely in recruiting propaganda. The success stories of pilots such as Richthofen and Rickenbacker could entice more recruits into the most dangerous and untested branch of the military, which needed new recruits solely because of absurdly high casualty rates.³⁴ Such Aces could adorn posters and convince young men to learn to fly to defend their country, and the danger and adventure attracted many recruits.

The dangerous career of fighter pilot attracted many young adventurers, especially youngsters in neutral America during the earlier years of the war. Some Americans joined the Royal Flying Corps in Britain. In France, an entire squadron was formed for American pilots. In April 1916, the *Escadrille Americaine*, later known as the Lafayette Escadrille, was formed and began its operations over France.³⁵ The squadron caused quite a stir in the States, (not least because it caused controversy over U.S. neutrality)³⁶ and raised interest in aerial combat and the war in Europe. The members of the group were also of great interest to the American public. Many, like Edmund Genet, were former Foreign Legionnaires who transferred to a more glorious assignment; others, like Bert Hall, were soldiers of fortune that loved the limelight. The pilots of the Lafayette Escadrille lived like the celebrities they actually were; they were quartered in an old health spa built for King Louis XV, they feasted on fine food, drove the finest automobiles and had servants appear "at a clap of the hands."³⁷ The squadron also enjoyed the company of "Whiskey" and "Soda," two lion cubs that served as mascots, which further contributed to their roguish and daring image.³⁸ By the war's end, the Lafayette Escadrille had achieved many aerial victories, and the veterans joined up with the American Air Corps upon the entry of America into the war, where they were regarded as living legends, earning the admiration of American pilots such as Eddie Rickenbacker.³⁹

Despite the glory, glamour and heroism, the war in the air "had its grim and dismal side."⁴⁰ And a dismal side there were pilots who suffered from many problems stemming from combat, such as, "[p]hysical stress, sleep deprivation, loss of memory and concentration, grief, and absolute despair."⁴¹ The high mortality rate also affected pilots, even those who were left alive; the death of a friend and squad mate is hard to take, and the uncertainty pertaining to missing comrades was unbearable.⁴² Genet had an especially hard time with the death of wingmen and he and the rest of his squad passed time by predicting who would go next, a most unhealthy and demoralizing habit.⁴³ Also, aerial combat duty was not always as exciting as it was thought to be; patrols would become routine, and bad weather could ground a squadron for days at a time. Genet described his great dissatisfaction with such inactivity in his journal: "[I] am very disgusted with the present prospect of flying. I came here for active service. It sure hurts to sit around like this lazy way. We've got lots of ambition but no chance to

use it on the Boches."⁴⁴

The physical dangers were extreme as well—many aces were lost in combat. Though the losses in the air were considerably smaller than those on the ground, ten thousand to eleven million during the war years, pilots still faced a seventy percent chance of being wounded or killed in action, which were just as bad chances as those of the comrades in the trenches.⁴⁵ Some of the best, Richthofen, Britain's top ace Mick Mannock, Guynemer, American aces Raoul Lufbery and Frank Luke, not to mention Boelcke and Immelmann, all met their fates in the skies over the Western front. Such losses did not only hurt the air forces, they were a subject of great sorrow on the home front; propaganda writers were able to write impressive accounts of the lives of these fallen flyers, and even in death they were able to serve their country.

Despite heavy losses and the apparent mortality of these heroes of the sky, the cult of the Ace only grew after the war's end. Charles Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic Ocean in 1927 only further ignited the existing interest in aces of the Great War.⁴⁶ Books about aces, such as the Floyd Gibbons' fictionalized account of Richthofen's life, *The Red Knight of Germany*, in addition to comic books about the aces sold very well in this postwar period.⁴⁷ These romanticized testaments to the past would serve as a source of inspiration for the next generation of adventurers and pilots, as well as being one of the main reasons why World War I would be better remembered for the romantic war in the air instead of the slow and brutal struggle on the ground. Aces also became the subjects of several popular films, such as *Wings*, *The Dawn Patrol* and *Hell's Angels*. *Wings* won the first ever Academy Award for Best Picture in 1927.⁴⁸ *Hell's Angels* was Howard Hughes' 1930 "Thrilling Multimillion Dollar Air Spectacle,"⁴⁹ with actual airplanes used to act out aerial combat scenes. The elaborate battle scenes made up for the "stock characters, contrived plots, love triangles and other improbable situations"⁵⁰ with their sheer excitement and scale. A scene involving a bombing run by a German Zeppelin was considered especially impressive by film critics of the time, including those at the *New York Times*. The film also portrayed an exciting bombing run on a German munitions dump, and a very large dogfight. The Red Baron even makes a cameo to shoot down the main characters over German lines.⁵¹ It was also a reflection of how the American public wanted to remember the war: heroically fought in the skies by dashing pilots, rather than in the murderous mire on the ground. First World War aces remain in the public consciousness today. Biplanes adorn pizza boxes and ties, gamers can fly against the Red Baron on their computer, and technologically inclined hobbyists build model airplanes to capture the romanticism attained by those pilots so long ago.⁵²

The aces fought on two battlegrounds: in the skies and in the hearts and minds of those who observed their accomplishments; the second seemed to serve a more important purpose. The air combat of the First World War was a last gasp at old world chivalry, where the pilots were "knights" and their planes were "steeds." Aces in later conflicts were not as well known, probably because they did not reach the chivalric plane achieved by the airmen of the First World War. However, even during the war aerial combat began to change. The original purpose of aviation, reconnaissance, as well as strategic bombing had significantly gained importance after the First World War, and the automation of war would slowly push the ace into the annals of history, foreshadowing the mitigation of the ace's role. The ace's fate as the First World War's

ultimate hero was sealed, though they had little to do with the outcome or course of the war at any point in time. Strategically significant or not, the ace and World War I are forever linked in the collective memory and social consciousness of our culture.

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- ³⁵ Flammer, *The Vivid Air*, 55.
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- ⁴⁰ Flammer, *The Vivid Air*, 51.
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- ⁴⁴ Brown, *An American for Lafayette*, 149.
- ⁴⁵ Pisano et al., *Legend, Memory and the Great War in the Air*, 75.
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The War Poet and His Shell Shock: The Journey that Spoke for the Great War

Ruby Daily

The definition of a war is often ongoing and ever fluctuating, influenced by a plethora of individuals and theories emanating from scholars, politicians, the general public and the soldiers themselves. The voice or ideology that finally triumphs does so due to vast and often untraceable subtleties and understandings which are refined and redeveloped according to the needs of each subsequent generation. The Great War, lasting from 1914-1918, has a generally established didactic historical message that has permeated popular thought, namely a lesson in the futility and carnage of a war with no justification, characterized by senseless destruction. Scholarly thought attributes a more profound stigma to World War I as the harbinger, or indeed the catalyst, for the modern age. There is a strong tendency to associate the war with figures that promote this line of thinking, and often these prominent individuals are literary ones.

The emphasis on literature in World War I can be regarded as a manifestation of the decidedly "bourgeois" conflict; a war characterized by the middle-class soldier, who was more highly educated and who filled the ranks in an unprecedented way.¹ As the common soldier was more likely literate than not, at least those from powerful nations such as Britain, France and Germany, the possibilities and perspectives left to history are numerous; however particular visions that adhere to our current developed notions of World War I do hold sway.

One such perspective given to us, and revered as an excellent portrait of this conflict comes from the literary figure, Wilfred Owen, whose poetic contributions rule supreme in the modern memory of this war. Hailed almost universally by academics of English and History, Owen emerges as *the* poet of the war. In *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell, in attempting to "supply contexts, both actual and literary, for writers who have most effectively memorialized the Great War," names poets "of very high literary consciousness like David Jones, Isaac Rosenberg, and of course Wilfred Owen."² The "of course" in Fussell's statement, which attempts to delineate those that have made a substantial impact on the memory of World War I, makes clear that Wilfred Owen is not considered by the academic community to be one of many, but *the* one; he is the "of course" that is less choice and more accepted compulsion.

Texts that only briefly touch upon war literature and poetry find it difficult to avoid Wilfred Owen. More often than not sources explicitly define him as the foremost poet of World War I, "one of the greatest English poets of the twentieth century," and at least one of the most significant contributors to the modern age of literature.³ While it is easy to accept this prevailing wisdom as to Wilfred Owen's dominant status, closer investigation reveals discrepancies to any flowing historical

narrative that might depict the popularity and sovereignty of Wilfred Owen as *the* war poet from his own contemporary time to ours. One might assume that what we call the most important poet of World War I would occupy a similar pedestal during the war itself, but in reality Wilfred Owen's poetry did not resonate with the general public, even in his own country, until later. The messages about World War I that have been distilled so thoroughly in successive ages were not widely accepted in their own time. Wilfred Owen's experiences as a soldier-poet in World War I did come to have profound meaning for a society grappling with war-related issues, albeit not for some ten years after the conflict itself.⁴ Wilfred Owen's work was not even published until 1920, two years after the war's termination, thereby making its effect upon any public (that in actuality was predominantly unreceptive to messages akin to Owen's that were published in war years) impossible.⁵ The question that emerges is, what about Owen's poetry came to be so emblematic for the public consciousness of the war and why did this apparently profound significance not become widespread or important for at least ten years, or even longer after his death? The answer can be found in Owen's initial motivations and incentives for writing war poetry, which were born not only of a writer and poet's desire to communicate experiences but his struggle to comprehend and process his repressed memories of the horrors he had witnessed at the front, which were revealing themselves as 'shell shock' or what we would now call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

This process of literary exploration of personal psychological trauma, termed "self-healing" by Daniel Hipp in his book *The Poetry of Shell Shock*, was the impetus for Owen's war poetry, revealing the quandaries and difficulties of the World War I soldier, particularly the shell shock suffering soldier.⁶ This journey towards healing, of dealing with and overcoming the trauma of war, seems to have been illustrative of issues facing society as a whole after the war, obvious in their identification with and glorification of Owen's efforts to deal with shell shock.

Wilfred Owen's war poetry was written based on his duty as a soldier in early 1917 at the Somme front, where he underwent extremely traumatic experiences, experiences that would ultimately lead to his brilliant war poetry, but not before wreaking havoc upon his psyche and rendering him unfit for duty.⁷ In May 1917 Owen wrote to his mother that he was detained by his doctor from going with his battalion into battle due to being diagnosed with "Neurasthenia," another term for shell shock.⁸ Although Owen made light of the doctor's orders in his letter, "[d]o not for a moment suppose I have had a 'breakdown'...I am simply avoiding one," he had in fact fought in considerably brutal circumstances, the primary of which was an incident occurring in April 1917. While sleeping, he was thrown into the air by a large shell exploding in his proximity. He was then forced to hide in a hole for days with the dismembered parts of a former fellow officer.⁹

Owen was sent to Craiglockhart, a military hospital opened for the specific purpose of treating officers suffering from psychiatric problems related to their war service.¹⁰ There, Owen was put under the care of Dr. Arthur Brock, a proponent of the so-called "ergotherapy," or shell shock recovery through "work and activity." He also believed in confronting one's demons by "facing up strenuously to what they represented and resolve[ing] to do better," and was prone to encourage Owen's artistic endeavors.¹¹ The range of shell shock symptoms that manifested in soldiers were

numerous, including "withered, trembling arms, paralysed hands, stumbling gaits, tics, tremors and shakes, as well as numbed muteness, palpitations, sweaty hallucinations and nightmares..."¹² It would appear that Wilfred Owen's shell shock materialized as terrible nightmares that only plagued him at night. Those around him, like his friend Siegfried Sassoon, could have easily assumed that Owen did not suffer from an extreme case of shell shock. For as Sassoon himself noted during their stay together at Craiglockhart, Owen always appeared "consistently cheerful."¹³ However, as evidenced by poems that Owen wrote while attempting to confront his issues, he was sufficiently disturbed and suffering under agonies of guilt, horror, powerlessness and the senselessness of war.

One of Wilfred Owen's earlier poems, and admittedly his most famous, is "Dulce Et Decorum Est" which was written in October of 1917 and later revised in early 1918.¹⁴ Academics including Daniel Hipp and E. H. Johnston view "Dulce Et Decorum Est" as a rather undeveloped poem, before the full growth of Owen's style, with only a newly emerging shadow of the quality of sophisticated psychological work than he would later achieve.¹⁵ However, Hipp characterizes this poem as an important one not only due to its pervasive popularity but as a "precursor," or the first step in the healing process and indicative of his progression from mere imitation of modernists and anti-war poets like Sassoon to his later, more masterful works, displaying the culmination of his maturity as a poet and his route towards self-healing.¹⁶

"Dulce Et Decorum Est" possesses many of the traits of his later works in a less developed way and, as it was one of his initial attempts to confront his own haunting war experiences, utilizes structures and poetic tools he would later discard. This poem speaks directly to some of the shell shock trauma that Owen was suffering from, touching upon his guilt that emanated from his position as an officer, which left him feeling both responsible for his men and yet helpless to prevent their deaths; the powerlessness of the soldier to truly protect himself from the ghastly mechanics of war, the horror of death, and the inane justifications offered for the gruesome and apparently senseless slaughter of young men. The introductory stanza of the poem seeks to depict the soldiers in the most weary and exhausted light possible as "bent double," "coughing like hags," "drunk with fatigue;" He wrote that they "limped on," and "cursed through sludge."¹⁷ Hipp portrays this introduction as an attempt to demonstrate the "collective experience" of the soldiers, and the "communal bond" that Owen has with his men which he can utilize "to combat his psychological trauma" by becoming a voice for not only himself but for them.¹⁸ This so-called "collective experience" is splintered by the entrance of a voice within the poem "Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!" a sounding alarm issued, presumably by the commanding officer, and perhaps meant to be Owen himself speaking to his men.¹⁹ Although the warning initiates "An ecstasy of fumbling, Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time" it is not enough and "someone still was yelling out and stumbling," apparently a soldier did not, or could not, heed his superiors warning and had fallen prey to the gas.²⁰

There is then a shift in the poem in which Owen reverts to a removed voice, "In all my dreams, before my helpless sight, He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning", a voice that is reflecting upon these apparently past events rather than of them. This sudden departure makes very clear that Owen himself feels responsible for this man's death, if indeed the poem reflects a true incident. If not, it could simply be

a manifestation of the guilt that Owen felt when he was not able to protect his men by the means given to him, when the "Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!" was not enough and an individual for whom he felt responsible succumbed to the horrors of a most likely gruesome death.

Owen's guilt for his inability to protect those under his command and his helplessness at not having the resources to preserve them as he obviously felt obligated to do is evident in poems, as seen in "Dulce et Decorum Est" or "The Sentry." Owen goes on to speak directly to the reader to describe the terrifying death of the poem's gas victim who is "flung" in a wagon, and this explicitly depicted death, clearly meant to disturb the reader, is made into a lesson for those unacquainted with the appalling methods and horrors of a World War I death. His final stanza warns that could the reader have been witness to this horrific end, "My friend, you would not tell with such high zest, To children ardent for some desperate glory, The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori."²¹

Owen's attempt to educate a general audience about the horrific conditions of a war they did not participate in, and yet still urged sacrifice for (albeit with a superficial understanding of its significance), is not unexpected. Owen, like many soldiers, was acutely aware of the ignorance of the civilian population to the daily hell to which they were subjected. However, as Daniel Hipp astutely observes, "the direction of this anger towards an ignorant populace removed from the experience deflects attention away from the real situation of the poem—Owen's personal confrontation with the traumatizing experience and his own feelings of guilt, not his audience's."²² Although Owen attempted to directly confront the psychological issues that plagued him, he was, as of the unwinding of this poem, unable to really delve into these feelings without a hasty retreat through a shift in focus from personal reflection to the lecturing of its (presumably civilian) audience. However, in this final stanza Owen was really doing more than providing a dramatic physical description with which to validate his anger, for in retelling the scene he did not simply proffer the opinion that any individual could not spew patriotic rhetoric after being witness to it, but rather said "If in some smothering dreams you too could pace," or "if you could hear, at every jolt, the blood Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs."²³ In effect, if the audience could feel his sufferings, recall his horrors or experience his dreams, they would be unable to endorse the war and its ensuing deaths.²⁴ Owen was asking his audience to be sympathetic to his torment, and more specifically, his "smothering dreams" or his shell shock itself. Owen was offering his personal experience of war to the reader, and then detailing its effects in terms meant to garner empathy. This poem has become synonymous with a particular historic understanding of World War I, and any reading commonly elicits instant identification with the prevailing understandings of the conflict—that it was not only an unjustifiable exercise in human slaughter and suffering but left indelible destructive marks upon all it touched.

"About 10 million soldiers died in the war," states historian Hew Strachan in *The First World War*, and he furthermore maintains that "those who mourned needed to find meaning in their loss," a statement hard to refute as much of the developed world faced its bereavement with the war's termination.²⁵ The sacrifice, or the near sacrifice, of an entire generation of young men, later termed "the lost generation" in Britain, could not be avoided and society initially clung to the sweeping moral

justifications and cultural values that had previously made war glorious and sanctified. Poets like Rupert Brooke whose poetry lauded the valor and heroics of war with a strong patriotic bent continued to be popular, but as C.G. Jung observed, in 1926 "the war...was not yet over, but was continuing to be fought within the psyche."²⁶ The circumstances of the peace treaty of Versailles in 1918 were unsatisfactory to most involved and lacked the final qualities and ringing triumph that the battered European powers and their populations were seeking.²⁷ Unable to face the dawning truth, a truth of which the war's soldiers had been acutely aware for some time, that the war was possibly not only senseless but worthless, society was left without a language to describe what had happened or an ability to cope with its obvious ramifications. Traditional values like honor, freedom, or valor could not be reconciled with what had passed, and new words and understandings were required to confront the war and its ultimate significance.²⁸ For years however, society apparently could not face either the terrifying truth about the war or the modern principles it had beget.²⁹

With the success of *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque in 1929, however, came an onslaught of war memoirs, eagerly consumed by a society that apparently identified with depictions of an individualistic war experience demarcated by the recognition of the irrational and brutal nature of the Great War.³⁰ Such a sudden crystallization of mass opinion on the war almost ten years after its end, where prior alternate and often conflicting interpretations had co-existed, speaks to society's dire need to at last face the quandary in which it found itself: still struggling not only to establish normality in the wake of sweeping destruction of man, land, language and ideology, but to even define themselves in relation to it.

This challenge, mired in psychological trauma, a struggle to confront emotionally charged issues and a reckoning with the significance of the war bears resemblance to Wilfred Owen's poetry and his similar attempts to come to grips with his shell shock. That a society forming a perspective on World War I as a waste of human life and attempting to cope with the implications of such a recognition and its lasting toll, would relate to, and value, poetry that dramatically tracks an individualistic journey of a similar nature is unsurprising. In a way, society had repressed its fears and dilemmas about the war and, like in shell shock cases, the underlying issues emerged and had to be dealt with through their recognition and exploration, as evidenced by the explosion in the popularity of war novels and memoirs (often colored not only subtly but obviously by anti-war beliefs). In a way, Wilfred Owen's attempts at self-healing through poetry and direct confrontation with the past are a perfect embodiment of society's own endeavors ten years after the fact to come to terms with the war. Perhaps one could even say that society itself experienced a sort of 'shell shock,' crippled by a war that violated every former principle or ethic by which it operated and struggling to cope not only with the realities of the war but the symptoms of the non-recognition of the war and its undeniable effect.

The belated war perceptions that emerged in the late twenties and throughout the thirties were decisive in establishing the historical angle from which World War I would be viewed, a highly cynical viewpoint that characterized the conflict as naught but carnage in vain on a massive scale that produced subsequent generations that, although not directly affected, were still left to grapple with the modern age that the war had precipitated. In essence, Wilfred Owen's poetry is representative of the

journey of society after the war to face up to the toll of the conflict and its enduring consequences. Both must delve into the war in retrospect to answer current questions about identity and the future, both find it necessary, rather than avoid or downplay the painful circumstances, to wallow in the horror, and both emerge, if not cured, at least with a solidified understanding of self and a definite perspective on the war. Wilfred Owen's poetry represents how future ages came to view the war, embodying not only the experience of the soldier in World War I, but a societal attempt to deal with and define it in such a way as to gain perspective and initiate "self-healing."

Whether or not Wilfred Owen achieved the "self-healing" he began at Craiglockhart is unknowable, as on November 4, 1918, he was killed in combat in France, cutting short his young life a week before the war's end.⁸¹ His tragic demise makes Wilfred Owen yet further an exemplary of the war; his early death not unlike the millions of other promising young men that met a similar fate in the war, cutting short the potential they embodied as the future generation. Some of Wilfred Owen's last poems still displayed the violent and haunting disquiet that was a result of his shell shock; however, we can only hope that through his poetic journey he was able to ease at least some of his psychological burdens. In the last line of Owen's last letter to his mother, Wilfred states "I hope you are as warm as I am; as serene in your room as I am here."⁸² Apparently, three days before his death Owen was able to be as serene and warm at the front as was his mother hundreds of miles away in England. Although this claim to serenity may be a pretty lie for his mother's sake, one would prefer to hope that the greatest poet of World War I was able to achieve some of the serenity and warmth he claimed, comfort if not relief from the extensive pain and trauma that led to such enduringly magnificent poetry.

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- ⁴ Dominic Hibberd, *Wilfred Owen: A New Biography* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003), 368.
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- ²⁷ Eksteins, 253.
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A War's Ever-Living Soundtrack: A Historiography of American Popular Music during the Vietnam War

Stu Hartenstein

Throughout America's existence, scholars often regard the Vietnam War era as the most controversial time period in American history since the Civil War. Civil Rights protests, demonstrations, and marches along with protests against American foreign policy in Southeast Asia provided Americans with reasons to speak out against the government. These protests and demonstrations ultimately led to the outbreak of race riots across the nation, such as in Watts, and the death of many college students in campuses nationwide, exemplified in the Kent State incident. With what became known as a nationwide anti-war movement, many of Americans joined the fight to protest the government's policies of inequality, justice, the draft, and American foreign policy in Vietnam. Because of the widespread discontent and dissension to the government and its policies, it is evident why historians and scholars point to the Vietnam War era and the anti-war movement as one of the most controversial times in American history.

But what is most unique about this period in history is the fact that in their protest against the government, Americans expressed their opinions through music that became a trademark of domestic struggle during the Vietnam War era. This era witnessed the folk music revival as the composition of folk music allowed musicians to write in a narrative format to express the views of the American public. The folk revival gave way to the birth of rock n' roll as America's youth used this genre of music to rebel against their parents and challenge society's norms. Country music, however, still remained the choice of many Americans, specifically those who looked to support the government in such a crucial yet controversial time.

At the street corner, the market, stoops across the nation, and in major rallies throughout America's cities, Americans were expressing their feelings about the government, Civil Rights, and the Vietnam War through music. Because of the popularity and historical significance of music's ability to express American opinion, many scholars have embraced its viable purpose to express America's emotions during this period and its ability to provide a way for Americans to remember this controversial period. In the analysis of many scholars, the music of the Vietnam War era has essentially expressed American sentiment through the music rather than influencing American sociopolitical thought for or against the war.

To begin their analysis of the music from this era, many historians start by analyzing the anti-war musical productions from the rock n' roll and folklore genres. The song many scholars address in the analysis of anti-war sentiment is Barry

McGuire's *Eve of Destruction* produced in 1965. Particularly, scholars recognize the song's intent to express a wide variety of fears and issues prevalent in American society at the beginning of the war. For example, David James claims that this song is so "sufficiently vague in its ideological orientation that it could align fear of nuclear disaster with both anticommunist and civil rights issues in suggesting an equivalence between all the 'hate in Red China' and that in Selma, Alabama."¹ Important to note in James' analysis is the fact that the popularity of *Eve of Destruction* can be attributed to its ability to address a wide variety of societal issues and emotions prevalent in American society during this era. Likewise, R. Serge Denisoff viewed McGuire's work as "a breakthrough in a medium whose range of lyrical dissatisfaction was restricted to generational conflict" to emphasize how well the song captured the general American emotion at this time.²

In addition to this scholarship, historian Lee Andresen eloquently explains the theme of the ability of *Eve of Destruction* to become such a powerful and popular song because it "condemns not only the war but also racism, politicians, hate in Red China, conflict in the Middle East, and the dangers of a Nuclear Age."³ Consequently, *Eve of Destruction*, was such a powerful, masterful, and effective work of art that it caused a song in response, *Dawn of Correction* by the Spokesman, to put a more positive spin on the issues addressed in McGuire's potent song.⁴ For scholars, *Eve of Destruction* epitomizes all anti-war compositions in its ability to encompass a variety of issues of the time, and this explains why many historians begin their analysis of anti-war music by addressing and analyzing this specific song.

Another common theme addressed by scholars assessing the music from Vietnam is the fact that most anti-war music attacked the war without attacking the soldiers. David James describes that Phil Ochs' *I Ain't Marching Anymore* and Pete Seeger's *Draft Dodger Rag* were able "to solve the double bind of needing to attack the war without attacking the soldiers," moving on to conclude that this is "common in protest songs of this period."⁵ In addition, Lee Andresen also assesses this theme in Creedence Clearwater Revival's *Fortunate Son*, stating that the song "did not cast blame on those who fought in Vietnam, and the GIs appreciated this and even regarded the song as a morale booster."⁶ Therefore, musicians were able to attain notoriety among both the anti-war movement and the soldiers that fought the war because their lyrics attacked the government rather than the efforts of the soldiers. Similarly, Dorlea Rikard addresses this theme in Bob Dylan's *Masters of War*, where he "indicts the 'masters of war,' but not the soldier."⁷ Additionally, Kenton Clymer also focuses on the "relentlessly grim indictments" in Bob Dylan's songs such as *Blowin' in the Wind* and *The Times They Are-A-Changin'*, where Dylan attacked the government without attacking the soldier.⁸ Although the anti-war music sang out in protest against the war, it is crucial to note that historians and scholars alike agree that anti-war musicians respectfully avoided attacking the soldiers but rather ridiculed the "masters of war."

While the theme of attacking the war without attacking the soldier is apparent in Bob Dylan's music, it also emerges as musicians produced songs that spoke out against government institutions, specifically the draft. According to many scholars, one of the most notable songs that captures American resentment toward the draft is Creedence Clearwater Revival's *Fortunate Son*, produced in 1969. Andresen effectively describes the song and its distinct and remarkable ability to mince "few words in denouncing

the badly flawed system of military conscription" to express American opposition to the draft.⁹ Another interesting theme Andresen identifies in *Fortunate Son* is that it "remind[s] anyone who cared to listen that the United States is far from a classless society and that there are those who were more equal than others."¹⁰ That is, *Fortunate Son* looked to express society's discontent with the fact that the war was being fought by the working and lower classes, while those, as the lyrics of the song foretell, with "silver spoon in hand," or those with social standing and political connections, were often exempt from being drafted to serve in Vietnam. David James also asserts that this work helped to "[promote] a revival of the popular music of the proletarian struggles," signifying that the song was designed to express the voice the "average Joe" in American society against the institution of the draft.¹¹

As Creedence Clearwater Revival questioned the "randomness" of the draft selection, scholars recognize that music began to voice the public's disdain for the government's policies. For example, Clymer addresses *Fortunate Son*, specifically regarding its "debasement of political discourse and endemic lying and manipulation" to illustrate the theme of American contempt for the government, specifically the draft.¹² Ultimately, opposition towards the institution led many Americans to dodge the draft, as was expressed in Phil Ochs's *Draft Dodger Rag*. Andresen comments that this song "represents the mind-set of millions of young men during the Vietnam War who wanted no part of the military and became remarkably inventive in dreaming up ways to dodge the draft."¹³ Dorlea Rikard also comments on this mind-set as she asserts that this particular song "addresses the view of the war from the perspective of the young men who are expected to fight it."¹⁴ Through songs like *Fortunate Son* and *Draft Dodger Rag*, scholars have identified that music regarding the draft had a twofold purpose in expressing discontent with the institution in addition to calling attention to the fact that those with social standing and political connections were not typically selected.

In response to the institution of the draft, many young, college-aged individuals took part in actively protesting the war. After all, these were the young men and women who were expected to fight in it. This ultimately led to riots and the deaths of many students on college campuses throughout the nation. One of the most notable campus-protests took place at Kent State University in Ohio, an event that prompted Neil Young's composition of *Ohio*. In analyzing the song, Kenton Clymer shares that it "[rallied] the countercultural leanings of a mass youth culture...against the entire system," leading the song to convey the American public's recognition that a civil war was at hand.¹⁵ Dorlea Rikard also moves on to assert the song's ability to "express the frustration and horror that Americans felt at this event."¹⁶ Therefore, Young's *Ohio* was so widely popular because, as Bruce Franklin states, it illustrates "how part of the Vietnam War lives in American culture at the dawn of the twenty-first century."¹⁷ That is, *Ohio* expresses the American struggle of the war, its legitimacy, and its continuance. With the American public so violently divided with the institutions and policies of the war, it is evident that Neil Young's *Ohio* was able to capture the American emotions that the country was domestically on the "eve of destruction."

As the nation protested the war, songs also began to question the leadership of the United States and doubt the effectiveness and legitimacy of its foreign policy. One prominent song that ultimately poked fun at national domestic leadership and

government policies was Pete Seeger's *Waste Deep in the Big Muddy*. According to Terry Anderson, Seeger's work was "obviously aimed at the Johnson administration's increasing involvement in the quagmire on the banks of the Mekong River," as the song sings of a "big fool" telling his troops to press onward.¹⁸ In fact, Clymer points out the lyric, "The big fool says to push on!" in his analysis of Seeger's expression of American opposition to President Johnson's firm stance to stay the course in Vietnam.¹⁹ To extend on this belief, Lee Andresen also comments that this song "became a classic metaphor for the American involvement in Vietnam, a land that abounded with bodies of water that were difficult to traverse."²⁰ What is most significant to understand about Anderson and his analysis is the fact that both historians recognize the song's metaphoric relationship to Vietnam with specific regard to the difficulty of fighting through such "traverse" territory. Thus, the United States found itself in a quagmire—an inescapable event that literally left America "waste deep in the big muddy."

Because most scholarship on the music from this time period focuses on the revival of folk music and the emergence of rock n' roll, many scholars often fail to analyze African American and Motown music from the era. Three of the most mentioned songs by scholars from Motown are Edwin Starr's *War*, Marvin Gaye's *What's Goin' On*, and the Temptations' *Ball of Confusion*. Lee Andresen, one of the few scholars to address this genre of music, states that Starr's *War* was "the most vehement denunciation of the Vietnam War."²¹ This song, in the eyes of Andresen, successfully expressed the degree of anger in African Americans because they were being selected to serve and ultimately die in Vietnam more so than their White counterparts. Andresen moves on to assess Gaye's *What's Goin' On* which specifically addressed the "high ratio of African-American dead and wounded in Vietnam."²² Through his analysis, Andresen makes a point that the general theme of African American music from this period, excluded from that pertaining to the Civil Rights Movement, specifically addressed the disproportionate ratio of African American draftees and deaths in Vietnam.²³ Lastly, Andresen concludes his analysis by looking at the Temptations' *Ball of Confusion*, citing that it lists a "host of calamities," such as drug usage rates, racial tensions, and confusion over involvement in Vietnam. The chaos these calamities caused resulted in violent protests across the nation that made the U.S. a domestic "ball of confusion."²⁴ Through African American music during this period, many Motown musicians protested and expressed the notions that African Americans were being selected by the draft and dying more frequently than white men.

In reflecting upon the anti-war music produced in the Vietnam War era, scholars assert that most anti-war music does not explicitly mention Vietnam or its battles, figureheads, and policies. For example, James discusses Bob Dylan's works, saying that he "never mentions Vietnam specifically in any of his lyrics, and by the time the war was a major issue, he had rejected topical reference."²⁵ In addition to this claim, James moves on to say that most of the anti-war music danced around the issue but never provide a "cogent analysis of the war" or described "the war in any detail, in terms of either its historical or political meaning."²⁶ However, Terry Anderson offers an explanation of this phenomena by stating that "popular music reflected the attitudes of the American people toward the war in Vietnam."²⁷ Therefore, the musicians did not need to explicitly mention the specifics of the war because these anti-war songs were expressions of emotion rather than historical or political analyses.

Ultimately, sociologist R. Serge Denisoff contextualizes this debate among scholars by emphasizing that “protest songs became a means of expressing personal disdain” rather than music that analyzed the policies, battles, and leaders of the conflict.²⁸

While many composers from this era wrote songs in protest to various aspects of the conflict, other musicians wrote pro-war songs to support the war and the troops. It is interesting to note, however, that one song scholars seem to place in both the pro-war and anti-war categories is the *I Feel Like I'm Fixin' to Die Rag* by Country Joe and the Fish in 1967. For example, Bruce Franklin places the song in the anti-war category because the piece “expressed the vitality of the [anti-war] movement, its core rebelliousness, and its sense of the Vietnam War as a national exercise in grotesque absurdity.”²⁹ Kenton Clymer also puts this particular song in the anti-war camp because it “expressed the insanity of war, absent of political logic and purpose.”³⁰ Interestingly, both Franklin and Clymer make reference to the ideology of the anti-war movement regarding the lack of a clear and agreeable purpose of involvement in Southeast Asia to justify their rationale for placing *Fixin' to Die Rag* into the anti-war category.

But perhaps what is most interesting to note about this discrepancy among scholars is the fact that this disagreement contextualizes the theme of a divided and polarized society during the Vietnam era through musical analysis. For example, other scholars, such as David James, place *Fixin' to Die Rag* in the pro-war camp because it is “directed primarily to the domestic refusal, to those who are not going to Vietnam.”³¹ That is, it intended to denounce those who abandoned Uncle Sam in “a terrible jam,” as the song sings, in America's appeal for the help of its men. Lee Andresen also places this song in the pro-war category because it “became one of the favorites of young draftees and enlisted men in Vietnam because of its nihilistic message.”³² The commonality in James and Andresen's analysis is that both point to the fact that *Fixin' to Die Rag* ridiculed America's young men who dodged the draft and essentially abandoned their nation in its time of need.

Although scholars cannot all agree on where to place *Fixin' to Die Rag*, they all recognize that the majority of pro-war music came south of the Mason-Dixon line through country-western music. According to Dorlea Rikard, “country music, which has always been more politically and socially conservative than folk and rock music, became the chosen vehicle for pro-war sentiment.”³³ Terry Anderson reaches the same conclusion that the majority of country-western songs “stressed the ideals of the Silent Majority—duty, patriotism, and nationalism” in his recognition that country music was indeed the vehicle for pro-war music.³⁴ Through country music musicians such as Merle Haggard, Barry Sadler, and Johnny Cash, pro-war music found a residence in country-western productions from this period.

Within country-western music, scholars have identified that the majority of the songs attack the rebellious ways of the protestors who spoke out against the government and its policies. Perhaps one of the most well-known country musicians from this era is Merle Haggard, who produced two popular pro-war compositions in *The Fightin' Side of Me* and *Okie from Muskogee*. Terry Anderson analyzes pro-war's disdain for protestors in analyzing *Okie from Muskogee*, sharing that Haggard “combined and expressed the feelings of millions of Americans—their views toward antiwar protestors and the entire youth revolt.”³⁵ Similarly, Lee Andresen addresses this theme through *Okie from Muskogee*, describing the song as a “tribute to political

apathy and parochialism [that] extols the virtues of a college campus where docile student silent majoritarians would never think of criticizing any government policy."³⁶ Likewise, Andresen addresses another popular Haggard song, *The Fightin' Side of Me*, in the same manner, concluding that the piece "makes an issue out of protesting the war...[and] virtually rages against anti-war protesters."³⁷ Through Haggard's compositions, scholars have been able to conclude that a main theme prevalent in pro-war, country-western music is its sentiment to ridicule and shame those who protested against the war and the government.

In addition to blasting the war's protesters, scholars have also noticed country music's support for the efforts of the soldiers. For example, many scholars, such as Dorlea Rikard, point to Barry Sadler's 1966 hit, *Ballad of the Green Berets*, as a song that is "an extremely sentimental and patriotic song about the heroics of the Green Berets."³⁸ Here, Rikard concludes that this song emphasizes the fact that the Green Berets were admirable and were thus deserving of the nation's support. Continuing with this theme, Andresen notes the song's description of "those who qualify to wear the beret as almost superhuman and how difficult it is to join their ranks" to express the pro-war sentiment that the soldiers deserved admiration and support in their engagement of a noble cause.³⁹ This noble cause theme is also prevalent in Anderson's analysis of the song, noting that Sadler "developed many traditional themes about men at war...[such as] honor and pride fighting in a noble crusade."⁴⁰ Many scholars agree that pro-war music often looked to express admiration and support for the brave men and women who served the nation in Vietnam.

While many authors evaluate the works of Merle Haggard and Barry Sadler, others fail to mention other popular country-western songs that also illustrate the themes of attacking the protesters and expressing the sentiment of the noble cause. Andresen points to other songs, such as Johnny Cash's *Ragged Old Flag* and Stonewall Jackson's *The Minute Men are Turning in Their Graves* that additionally illustrate the pro-war themes in country music. In his analysis of *Ragged Old Flag*, Andresen points out the super-patriotic usage of the flag to prove that this war was worth fighting for, thus illustrating the notion that the Vietnam War was indeed a noble cause.⁴¹ Moreover, Andresen's analysis of *The Minute Men are Turning in Their Graves* illustrates the theme of attacking the protesters because they have disturbed this nation's revolutionary heroes by protesting against the government in which they so valiantly fought to defend. Regardless of the anti-war movement's negative spin on the degree of nobleness and legitimacy of the war, scholars show that country music looked to express the sentiment that the soldiers' efforts were indeed both admirable and noble, warranting positive, pro-war renditions of music during this era.

Because most scholars spend their time mainly analyzing and assessing pro-war and anti-war music, music from the aftermath of the Vietnam War is consequently unmentioned in some works. Scholars have come to the overt conclusion that the majority of post-war music reflects upon how Vietnam veterans were treated and the struggles they endured when they returned home from the war. Billy Joel's 1982 hit, *Goodnight Saigon*, is a song that many scholars, such as David James, describe as a "synthesis of sympathy for the soldier with recognition of his trauma."⁴² Here, James asserts American sympathy for the veterans returning home because of the Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSS) many of the veterans battled after the

war. A similar theme is recognized by Terry Anderson, who noted that the song “described the psychological problems of a returning veteran” in addition to paying a “sympathetic tribute” to recognize the efforts of the veterans.⁴³ As a result of PTSS and the difficulties the veterans endured, scholars argue that *Goodnight Saigon* presents a sympathetic way of recognizing the veterans and their efforts.

Similar to *Goodnight Saigon*, The Charlie Daniels Band’s 1981 hit, *Still in Saigon* also addressed PTSS and the struggles of life in post-war society. For example, Andresen notes *Still in Saigon*’s recognition of “the struggle with PTSS [that] has strained relationships with his family.”⁴⁴ Moving on, Andresen also addresses the theme of another struggle at home prevalent in the song because “his younger brother calls him a killer and his father proudly refers to him as a vet.”⁴⁵ Here, Andresen illustrates not only *Still in Saigon*’s expression of the difficulties of a veteran dealing with PTSS but also its effects on the veteran’s ability to interact, specifically with his family. What is also important to note is that the song, as many scholars assert, expresses that the anti-war movement was mainly composed of America’s young, college-aged individuals, whereas pro-war sentiment was generally held by an older generation—their parents.⁴⁶ Regardless, anti-war sentiment and PTSS were two of the many struggles veterans endured in returning home.

While scholars do mention *Still in Saigon* and *Goodnight Saigon* as significant aftermath pieces to express returning veterans’ emotions, many focus analysis on Bruce Springsteen’s *Born in the U.S.A.* James recognizes the sympathy theme in Springsteen’s piece, stating that the song “appealed for sympathy for the veteran by locating his problems...socially and politically in a depressed economy and lack of government assistance.”⁴⁷ Andresen also recognizes the song’s ability to express the veterans’ frustration with the lack of government aid and unemployment by commenting that it “is distinctive among all the war music because it at least hints at the issue.”⁴⁸ Lastly, Andresen states that the song allowed veterans to “stand back and give the government the finger, and some of the public too, for the way they treated [them].”⁴⁹ It is also important to note, as many scholars confirm, that the song’s chorus, “Born in the U.S.A.” is not a lyric that intended to invigorate nationalism in Americans, although it was successful at this as many presidential candidates used the song in their campaigns during the 1984 election. But the American public could not understand the purpose of the song—to express the frustration of the veterans who have returned home only to be denied government assistance and employment by their homeland.⁵⁰

Although this song was not produced in the aftermath of the war, Creedence Clearwater Revival’s 1969 hit, *Bad Moon Rising*, is another song that expresses the struggles many veterans endured. Through this song, Andresen shares that it is unique because it actually “allows one to appreciate vicariously the feelings the soldiers had prior to a particularly dangerous mission.”⁵¹ In his analysis, he points to the lyrics, “don’t come around tonight, it’s bound to take your life, there’s a bad moon on the rise,” and shares that the song “fills even the casual, detached listener with a sense of foreboding.”⁵² Kenton Clymer also analyzes the song’s intent to express support by showing the American public the daily life of a soldier in Vietnam, but instead, the song attained “massive mindless public ‘support’ for the troops—no matter what their mission.”⁵³ The overarching theme prevalent in the music of the aftermath, or songs

of support regarding the soldier, is that these songs appealed to express the veterans' frustration with the American public and the government regarding support and assistance in post-war society. Thus, many authors assert that these songs paint the picture of the veteran as a victim, and these veterans essentially deserve sympathy for their struggles at war and upon their return home.

In reflecting upon each category of American music regarding the Vietnam War, nearly every scholar reaches the same conclusion that the music from this era was not intended to influence the American public. Instead, music from the Vietnam War era reflected the attitudes and emotions of the American public toward the war in Vietnam, regardless of whether they were pro-war or anti-war. For example, historian Terry Anderson recognizes that "many authors have demonstrated that popular music often reflects sentiments held by society, and certainly this is true during the Vietnam War."⁵⁴ Les Cleveland, a popular historian who has written extensively on the pop-culture during this period, agrees that the music regarding the Vietnam War era "related directly to the passions and anxieties of an entire generation of people."⁵⁵ Dorlea Rikard also shows that even in the context of how the soldiers viewed the war, music "served as a strategy for survival, as a means of unit bonding and definition, as entertainment, and as a way of expressing emotion."⁵⁶ Therefore, the purpose of songs from this period was not to influence pro-war or anti-war sentiment but rather to express the feelings of Americans regardless of their stance regarding the war and its policies.

As scholars begin to look at the larger picture of the significance of music from the era, hindsight has led them to recognize that the modern-day popularity of these songs can also be attributed to the fact that these songs are a way for Americans to remember the war. Again, Rikard reaches this theme, commenting that "music is not only a commentary on the war, [but] it becomes an integral feature of a whole country's remembrance of that war," moving on to assert that the music essentially, and specifically in the context of the recent years, "enters our collective memory."⁵⁷ As Kenton Clymer simply states, "music is a way of remembering," a way of remembering pro-war sentiment and anti-war emotions in addition to recalling the wild events, policies, and leaders the songs from the Vietnam War era all address from the music of the period.⁵⁸

As Nixon began to withdraw troops in 1970, American popular music that was once consumed by the Vietnam War began to return to its traditional themes of romance, courtship, and heartbreak. Interestingly, Don McLean's widely popular 1972 hit, *American Pie*, sings of "the day the music died." Although musicians such as Bruce Springsteen and Billy Joel wrote songs about the veterans in the 1980s, it is a bit ironic is that McLean's epic song was indeed the last song of the Vietnam War era and essentially marked "the day the music died." The music of the Vietnam era is so profoundly written by some of the most famous musicians and has thus attained timeless popularity from generation to generation. Throughout America's history, never has dissension over a war or government institution and policies been so openly addressed by popular song.

In the final analysis, the music from the Vietnam War era provides individuals with a remarkable way to view the events of the Vietnam War at home and abroad. Perhaps the music from this period is so important to scholars of many disciplines,

such as historians, sociologists, music theorists, and music historians, because it is such an all-encompassing way for America to reflect upon the major events and issues of the war. Response to government leadership, the draft, the threat of nuclear destruction, racial tensions, questioning the purpose of war, pro-war sentiment, support for the troops, and the struggles veterans faced in the post-war era are all expressed through the wide range of topics and issues musicians addressed through song during and after the war. Therefore, the music of the Vietnam War era is a living diary that enables historians to analyze American reaction and emotion to government actions and policies from such a unique and powerful source in music.

While time travel is not possible, music provides scholars with a mode of transportation to one of the most controversial and most contested events in American history. In this sense, music is essentially a cross-generational lens for scholars of all ages to reflect, analyze, and remember the events of the Vietnam War. Remarkably, the music from this time period has provided Americans and scholars with an oral history that yields the opportunity for them to look at the war from the living testimony of the general American public rather than simply looking at dates and facts recorded in documents and textbooks. The music from this era must not be taken for its entertainment value but rather its fundamental purpose to stimulate a contested memory of America's most controversial eras because it expresses American emotions regarding the war. In the final analysis, music provides scholars with an ideal prism from which to view the ways Americans responded to the Vietnam War.

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Joan of Arc : By the Standard or By the Sword

Kent Wilson

Joan of Arcadia, the "Maid of Orléans," is one of the most celebrated historical figures of all time. Her life is one of the most compelling and researched stories ever recorded, from her humble upbringing as a peasant woman to her divine rise to power to become the most important figure of the Hundred Years War. Joan is known as many things; a Catholic saint, a heretic, an inspirer, a poster child for Feminist scholarship, a national heroine of France, but what about Joan as a soldier? Historical scholarship collectively agrees that Joan, whether she was conscious of it or not, reversed the decline of the French in the Hundred Years War. What is disputed is the extent of her military contribution to this sudden reversal. When looking at the historiography Joan's military involvement, there is a clear slope in change of interpretation. Early historical scholarship is much more prone to belittle Joan's military accomplishments as products of other leadership, luck, and naïve courage. Modern scholarship of Joan almost unanimously presents the opposite point of view, showing her to be extraordinarily intelligent and a military genius. This change is primarily due to two effects: a change of emphasis on sources and the change of historical scholarship. But before exploring the historiography with regards to Joan's military career, it is important to have a brief background of Joan's life and what it was that Joan actually did.

Joan was born in approximately 1412 AD, according to her claim that she was 19 years old when asked her age during her trial in 1431.¹ She was born in Domremy, a small village in northeastern France that was surrounded by hostile Burgundian lands.² She was born into a life of peasantry under her parents Jacques and Isabelle. At age twelve, Joan claims to have first had her visions while alone in a field. These visions would ultimately tell her to lead the expulsion of the English from France and bring the Dauphin Charles VII to Reims for coronation as King of France. At age sixteen, Joan petitioned for and finally received a visit to the Royal Court at Chinon to meet privately with the Dauphin. During her travels to Chinon, Joan wore men's clothing for fear of attack. From then on she would always be in male attire, until her capture. She in some way impressed the Dauphin, who made inquiries to her validity by ordering an inspection to see if she truly was a virgin. After being found a virgin, she persuaded the Dauphin to send her to the city of Orléans with an army to help relieve it from English siege.

On May 4, the French attacked and took the fortress Saint Loup and the next day captured the deserted fort of Saint Jean-la-Blanc. Assaulting the enemy again, despite opposition of French General Jean d'Orléans, "the Bastard," Joan opened the locked city gates and captured the fortress of Saint Augustine, sustaining fatigue and heavy losses.³ Then on May 7, Joan attempted an attack on the fortified boulevard Les

Tourelles, despite the war council's opposition. During the battle, she was wounded by an English arrow above her breast, precisely where she previously predicted she would be hit. Instructing the Abbé of Paquerel to stay near her, she explained "[f]or I have much to do, more than I ever had yet, and the blood will flow from my body, above my breast."⁴ She would be taken off the field, but would lead the final charge to take Tourelles. The battle of Tourelles was the last vital battle for Orléans as Joan was able to cross the bridge into the city of Orléans, despite the few remaining English soldiers.⁵ And so on May 8, 1429, ten days after Joan's arrival, the French had raised the Siege of Orléans. This proved to be Joan's most celebrated and impressive victory.

After this success, Joan convinced the Dauphin again to give her command of the army with Duke John II de Alençon to make their way to Reims for his coronation. She experienced a string of successes taking Jargeau June 12, Meung-sur-Loire on June the 15, and Beaugency on June 17. Then on June 18 Joan's army achieved a devastating victory over the English Commander Sir John Fastolf at the battle of Patay.⁶ Following the battle, the army traveled to the city of Auxerre, occupied by the English-allied Burgundians, and accepted its surrender on July 3. Next, the army reached the city of Troyes, performed a four day siege, then accepted the city's surrender without any losses. Joan and the army finally made it to Reims on July 16 and the coronation of King Charles VII followed. This was the peak of Joan's success.

With the amount of success the French had made, the French royal court negotiated a truce with the Duke of Burgundy, Phillip the Good, despite Joan's adamant requests to quickly attack Paris.⁷ The truce was later broken by the Burgundians, and on August 15, the French army of around 6,000-7,000 was met by an English force of 8,000- 9,000 led by John of Lancaster, the Duke of Burgundy. They fought, but no victor prevailed as the English remained fortified and tried to provoke a French attack that would never come.⁸ Lancaster left the next day to reinforce Paris, and the French assault of Paris followed on September 8. Joan was again injured, as she was hit in the leg by a crossbow arrow.⁹ However, she still continued to direct her troops, until the next morning when she received the order to withdraw the attack, suffering her first major defeat.¹⁰ Joan fought at La Charité briefly, but would withdraw the seemingly impossible attack. Hearing of Phillip the Good's plan to siege the French city of Compiègne, Joan left to defend the city, rallying men and winning a few small skirmishes outside the city of Lagny on her way.¹¹ On May 23, 1430, Joan was surrounded and captured by Burgundian forces after ordering a retreat and being the last of the French to leave. This marks the end of Joan's career as a soldier of the French Army.

Although Joan was held by the Burgundians until she was bought by the English government, King Charles VII never attempted to pay her ransom. Her highly controversial trial was conducted in Rouen, France in 1431 and as a result she was tricked into signing an abjuration document pertaining to her conviction of heresy.¹² In exchange for her life, she was forced to wear women's clothing to avoid execution for the repeated offense of heresy¹³. However, in prison she was later found in male attire. Some historians believe she was sexually assaulted and wore it in defense. Others believe that her dress was stolen, and she had no other clothes to wear. In any event, she was unfairly found violating her abjuration and was burned at the stake on May 30, 1431. This trial would later be deemed a political scam and unjust under canon-

law found by the retrial, or the "nullification trial," starting in 1452 and ending in 1456. The ecclesiastical court found Joan innocent and a martyr.

When answering the question if Joan was a significant contributor to the French military strategy, most modern historians would view the transcripts of Joan's "condemnation trial" as a skewed interpretation of her success, and find the nullification trial testimonies much more truthful. Early historians reverse, however, this same argument back upon the transcripts of the nullification trial. The most outspoken voice of this argument comes from medieval historian Edouard Perroy. Published in 1945, Perroy's book, *The Hundred Years War*, argues that the second trial is less conclusive when compared to the first because it tries to "prove too much."¹⁴ He argues that the trial was not performed in an entirely objective manner. First he describes the trial as being performed "too late:"¹⁵ "[i]ts testimony relates memories already distant and, so to speak, hazy with legend."¹⁶ Besides the time gap of over twenty years, Perroy also argues that the testimonies were embellished with the agenda to clear Joan's name. He writes that the testimonies "come from these same comrades of hers, legitimately and sincerely anxious to clear her memory of an infamous condemnation, and at the same time rehabilitate a king now victorious."¹⁷ With his reluctance accept the validity of the nullification trial as a source, it is understandable that Perroy takes the viewpoint that Joan is anything but a military genius.

In the chapter of his book devoted to Joan's military career in the Hundred Years War, he states vehemently that "[s]he knew nothing about the art of war, and thought that abstaining from oaths and brothels was enough to earn victory for her soldiers."¹⁸ To provide rational explanations to Joan's success, Perroy attributes them to the simplicity of medieval warfare, good fortune, and the silent influences of her fellow officers.

Perroy states that "the art of war didn't matter too much, and thus courage, confidence, and boldness made up for it."¹⁹ Explaining her celebrated victory at Orléans that seemed so "improbable," Perroy believes was actually quite a winnable situation for the French. He explains that the English suffered terribly during the six-month siege through the winter. Supply difficulties had led to sickness and desertion.²⁰ This long deterioration left the English with less than 4,000 men, too few to affect a close blockade as well as adequately man the fortifications they had built.²¹ He also cites many examples of Joan's generals not receiving any credit for battles won. One instance is at the crushing French victory at the Battle of Patay. Perroy describes Charles acting as a "chivalrous prince" when he gives all the credit of the victory to Joan when she had not reached the actual engagement until the battle was already over.²² He also attributes the English surrenders at the cities of Auxere, Troyes, Chalons, and Reims to "skillful negotiations" from contacts of Charles, rather than Joan's holy intimidation and strong attack plans. In sum, Perroy emphasizes the original trial, and concludes that Joan in fact "did not lead them, she left that duty to the captains such as Denois, Alençon, and Richmond."²³

Perroy, however, was neither the only nor the originator of this interpretation of Joan's career. Those who came before him, like Frenchman Anatole France in his biography of Joan published in 1909, also had the same view of Joan as a naïve mascot with powerful people around her. France was one of the first historians to take a strong

stance on whether Joan was a military strategist or not. He refrained from using the explanation of "a miracle" and instead found rational excuses for Joan's success that belittle her down to a bold, but lucky, peasant girl.²⁴

Perroy and France's views on Joan's military abilities were based on their emphasis of the condemnation trial as opposed to the nullification trial. It is clear that as traditional historians, they were afraid of an overwhelming bias of the nullification trial. However, the scholarship they practice is equally as biased. Perroy and France are both traditional historians who focused primarily on male behavior, with little consideration of females.²⁵ Because of this, neither France nor Perroy put Joan as the subject, nor do they interpret history from her point of view. This is most obviously seen as Perroy only attributes one chapter to the military career of Joan in his book, *The Hundred Years War*.

However, over time the nullification trial has gained prominence as a source and has become the most cited source when considering Joan's military capabilities. At the end of the war, the English were forced to leave France forever and Charles VII appointed an investigation of Joan's trial and a formal appeal on November 17, 1455.²⁶ It was closed on July 7 1456, concluding Joan's innocence, and charging of Bishop Pierre Cauchon with heresy for convicting an innocent woman.²⁷ The condemnation trial was considered unjust under canon-law for four primary reasons. The first was that no person officially accused her of a crime, and there was no evidence provided her with a crime.²⁸ The second was that Bishop Cauchon was found guilty of instructing the tampering of the recording to make Joan appear guilty.²⁹ The third reason was that Joan was supposed to be housed in an ecclesiastical prison and guarded in prison by women. Instead she was treated as a prisoner of war and was chained and guarded by male soldiers.³⁰ The fourth and final violation was that as a minor, Joan was supposed to be represented by a guardian, but was not.³¹ Thus, the nullification trial was forever labeled as a politically corrupt injustice.

Viewing Joan as a martyr grew increasingly popular, causing more attention and scholarship towards Joan's "divine" story. This was most evidently demonstrated by her canonization as a Catholic saint on May 16, 1920. Her story grew and grew, making her one of the most popular Catholic saints. During World War II even The United States used Joan as a symbol of female patriotism, much like "Rosie the Riveter" during World War II. She is depicted on a World War II propaganda poster, urging U.S. female citizens to contribute to the war effort by buying war saving stamps.³² On the poster she is illustrated wearing shining metal armor with her sword raised as the poser boldly reads "Joan of Arc Saved France, Women of America save your Country, Buy War Savings Stamps."³³ Her story had now taken off, and was adopted as a source of inspiration on a world-wide scale. After her canonization, Joan faded as a uniquely bold peasant women, became the official National Heroine of France and an icon of the rise of feminism.

With the growing popularity of her story, the post -World War II era brought with it a surge of scholarship that idealized Joan as the true producer of French victories throughout her military career in the Hundred Years War. This interpretation began before World War II, spearheaded by Vita Sackville-West in her simply titled biography *Saint Joan of Arc*. Sackville-West believed that Joan was not necessarily a military genius, but "we must grant her genius of personality."³⁴ Joan excelled because

she was a leader led by her single-mindedness and ability to deal with situations as they arose.³⁵ She also believed that Joan was very much responsible for the majority of the military decisions. In reference to the French army during the battle of Orléans, that “[s]he [Joan] had them all under her control, as not even officially their leader.”³⁶ Sackville-West’s obliquely differing opinion from earlier traditional historians like Perroy and France is due to her use of the testimonies and opinions of Joan’s fellow generals in battle: The Bastard, Jean d’Aulon, Jean Paquerel, and Louis de Contes.³⁷ These testimonies were ignored by the traditional historians as too biased towards Joan.

It is important to point out that although Sackville-West is considered strictly as just a novelist, her novel is mentioned in many subsequent historians’ works. Historian Stephen W. Richey later introduced her biography “[a]lthough Sackville-West’s book is a popular biography, it is still an invaluable tool for a scholar of Joan.”³⁸ He further labels her work, writing that it has “yet to be surpassed in the English language for its completeness and depth of detail.”³⁹ Most other historians agree, like Nadia Margolis, who comments in her book *Joan of Arc in History, Literature, and Film* that Sackville-West’s biography is “considered the best English language biography of Joan,” calling it “balanced, well-researched, and carefully presented.”⁴⁰ This source can thus be recognized as a legitimately composed interpretation of Joan’s military career that coincidentally fits into the developing slope of interpretational change.

When fully entering post-World War II scholarship on Joan, the traditional historian’s interpretation of her as a mere mascot wanes as the nullification trial gains more prominence as a source, and the influence of Feminist scholarship grows. Medieval historian Régine Pernoud, who wrote extensively on Joan, fits right in this trend, as she aligns herself with Sackville-West. She, like Sackville-West, primarily uses the testimonies of those closest to Joan, her fellow generals. She also puts emphasis on the nullification trial over the condemnation trial.⁴¹ One example displayed her caution towards the condemnation trial was expressed by the dismissal of any chance for Joan to share any memories or additions to her relief of Orléans.⁴² She also agrees with the notion that Joan made many of the military decisions as she cites the Bastard’s testimony where she convinced all of the captains and lords of royal blood to march towards Reims for the Dauphin’s coronation, rather than march on to Normandy.⁴³ Along with this idea, Pernoud again aligned with Sackville-West, argues that Joan’s greatest asset or “mode of action” was her ability to inspire and lead.⁴⁴

However, Pernoud adds one more aspect of Joan’s military abilities that differs from Sackville-West, as well as draws Pernoud even further from the traditional historians view: Joan’s ability to make tactical decisions. This characteristic was not as well explored by Sackville-West, as she maintained that Joan’s intelligence was just her courage and determination. She cites an example at the battle of Tourelles, where the French isolated the bastide by collapsing one of the arches that supported the bridge.⁴⁵ According to the city’s account book, there was an exact amount paid to a fisherman Jean Poitevan to build a barge in order to burn an arch down.⁴⁶ Pernoud argues that this hints to Joan being responsible for the suggestion. As Pernoud’s interpretation draws closer to the view of many current modern historians, it is imperative to not only understand where she fits in the spectrum of the overall historiography of Joan’s military contributions, but also how she got there. The change in source emphasis

is clear - the early traditional historians use the condemnation trial, and the post-canonization historians use the nullification trial. It is also clear that the growth of Joan's popularity on a world scale was due to both her nullification trial and most especially her canonization. However, one of the most prominent factors lies specifically within the last two authors.

Pernoud and Sackville-West are fairly unique as historians due to their sex. They both were a part of the emergence of female scholarship within history, as members of the first wave of feminism. As reviewed in Norman J. Wilson's book *History in Crisis; Recent Directions in Historiography*, traditional historians focused almost entirely on male behavior, and gave little importance to female.⁴⁷ As a result, "early women's history challenged the male predominance by exploring the history of women who had previously been neglected in historical accounts."⁴⁸ Thus, feminism as a new field of history not only focused on the woman as a subject, but also portrayed her from her own perspective.⁴⁹ Simply put, feminism elevated women as the subject of study by stepping into their own shoes. Perroy and Sackville-West do this to some degree by representing Joan's side of the story, but the following modern historians really place an emphasis on the use of writing from Joan's own voice and experience.

Medieval military historian Kelly DeVries also writes through Joan's perspective, despite being a male. His book *Joan of Arc: A Military Leader*, was published in 1999 and is solely devoted to answering whether or not Joan was a military strategist. He states boldly in his introduction that he means to prove that "Joan of Arc was a soldier, plain and simple," further adding that "Joan put military aggressiveness into an army that had been put into a psychology of defeat."⁵⁰ His source use falls in correspondence to his predecessor Sackville-West when he cites French vernacular chronicles written twenty years after her death, and the nullification trial testimonies of her generals.⁵¹ However, he differs with the inclusion of the use of condemnation trial to prove his thesis, but he gives Joan a voice for her own military accomplishments.⁵²

DeVries first points out Joan's military success to her simple but challenging military agenda. DeVries quoted Joan predicating that first, the English will be defeated and driven out of Orléans. Second, the King shall be anointed in Reims, and third the city of Paris would return to the King's rule.⁵³ DeVries simply points out that Joan completed the first two of these daunting tasks, and blames the third task's failure on King Charles VII himself. In regards to the loss at Paris, DeVries claims Joan and her army not only fought the English, but also the apathy of their monarch.⁵⁴ He explains that Joan's strategy was "very diverse and well planned out," having built a bridge across the Seine allowing for attacks on multiple sections of the walls.⁵⁵ They knew it would take a while to work, but the plans "were not allowed to reach fruition," as DeVries put it.⁵⁶ Due to the Kings "impatience" and "propensity of bad council," the attack was halted.⁵⁷ So in essence, Joan's biggest failure, according to DeVries, was not hers at all.

Joan's involvement in the planning of attacks was proven in the battle of Troyes. After being put in charge of the siege, she quickly set up the French gunpowder against the walls, while ordering soldiers to make bundles of sticks in order to fill in the moat around the town.⁵⁸ This presents Joan as a quick thinker and knowledgeable of conducting siege assaults. DeVries also presents her growth of military understanding. Although Joan's attacks on Jargeau, Meung-sur-Loire, and Beaugency were impressive

victories, the mistakes she made at Jargeau were not repeated at all in Meung-sur-Loire or Bueaugency.⁵⁹ DeVries believes that this proves Joan was very intelligent and quickly learned the art of war.

Lastly, as a military historian, DeVries examines the French assaults after Joan's career ended in the French army. He concluded that French military leaders, whether or not they ever fought with her, started to adopt her tactics of engagement/frontal assault.⁶⁰ While this was a costly method, it proved to be the most effective way to fight off the English.⁶¹

In the end, DeVries portrays an intelligent, courageous, and knowledgeable woman in military assaults. With the use of her testimony, as well those of her co-commanders, he was able to portray her in this light. However, he also used a comparative method of her military success to future French military assaults in the Hundred Years War. He was effective in that regard as well, contributing more credibility to Joan's actually clever tactics.

The most recent scholarship on Joan that attests to the question of her military skill is entitled *Joan of Arc: The Warrior Saint*, and was published in 2003 by Stephen W. Richey. Although Richey is considered a free-lance researcher, this in no way should belittle his book on Joan. As a personal testament, Richey does an outstanding job not only using the essential primary sources, but also in collaborating with Joan's entire historiography. Every historian previously mentioned was thoroughly examined and accounted for in Richey's book. As seems fit, Richey ends the historiography in keeping with the general trend of increased idealization of Joan's military accomplishments. To Richey, Joan was simply a genius and was able to learn quickly and revolutionize French warfare. Richey does this in two unique fashions. He uses both a Feminist approach, as well as a Presentist's approach to examine her genius.

The first way he does this is also evident in DeVries, but not to the same degree. Richey immerses himself in the testimony of Joan of Arc, adopting a very Feminist approach by portraying her through her voice and experience. The most prominent examples demonstrate her remarkable intelligence as shown when being questioned during her trial. In the first example, Joan was asked a trick question by Bishop Cauchon. She was asked if the saints who appeared to her in her visions hated the English. By answering "yes" she would be saying that these Catholic saints would then hate their own Church's followers, since the English were Catholic.⁶² By answering "no" then she would destroy her credibility of making war on the English.⁶³ She cleverly answered back, "[t]hey love that which God loves and hate that which God hates."⁶⁴ A second similar and better known instance occurred with another trick question. She was asked if she was or was not in God's grace.⁶⁵ If she answered "yes" she would have sinned by presuming to know God's mind.⁶⁶ However, if she answered "no" she would be condemning herself.⁶⁷ She again answered with astonishing skill, "[if] I am not, God put me there, and if I am, God keeps me there."⁶⁸ Richey deduced that her quick thinking in the courtroom could explain her victories on the battlefield.

The second way he interprets Joan as a military genius is through the use of Presentism. Presentism is a modern historical way to interpret history by looking at it through the present. As described in Wilson's book "the past does not change but our understanding of it changes, so in effect the present determines the past."⁶⁹ This way of study emphasizes teleology, or the idea of a linear past. The development of

progression or decline over time is accounted when reading history. Richey does this through Joan's use of modern military tactics.

Having been a tank crewman and graduate of West Point Military Academy, Richey applies his modern knowledge of warfare in his analysis of Joan's military tactics. When he does so, he finds that Joan's tactics are actually very similar to his own. Richey argues that Joan uses many of the British and American modern principles of war still taught today. These principles are as follows: "objective," "offensive," "maneuver," "mass," "economy of force," "unity of command," "surprise," "security," and "simplicity."⁷⁰ Rather than explaining these pretty self-explanatory terms or reiterating each example used in Joan's career, the importance is that there were multiple examples for each of these principles of war used by Joan. By using this Presentist approach, Richey finds that Joan of Arc was a military tactician well ahead of her time.

In addition, Richey uses similar examples of scholarship as DeVries and the post-canonization historians. These examples were demonstrations of Joan's power over her men, her careful planning of sieges, and the praising testimonies of her co-commanders in the nullification trial. What makes Richey a modern historian is his use of these two modern concepts of historical interpretation, Feminism and Presentism.

The historiography of Joan's controversial military career, by standard or the sword, has undoubtedly developed through a consistent continuum of change. In the beginning, traditional historians did not practice history in a way that was conducive to analyzing of Joan as a military leader. They also avoid using the nullification evidence for fear that the real history had been tampered with by Joan enthusiasts. As the historiography progressed into the early Feminist movement, there was a rise in female scholarship that made Joan a historical subject. Along with this, the coronation of Joan into Catholic sainthood helped launch her story into world popularity, evoking many Joan enthusiasts. Finally, with the emergence of Feminism and Presentism as respected schools of interpretation, Joan's story was heard through her own testimony and experiences, as well as her comparison to our modern age. Although this historiography displays a uniquely consistent progression of interpretation, its grander proclamation is the display that history is never conclusive, and will forever be molded by the means of its practice.

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The Fountainhouse of Archaic Athens

Kara Blakley

During the Archaic period of Greek art (c. 600–480 BCE) vase painting garnered much attention. It was during this period that Exekias painted the famed *Ajax and Achilles playing a game*¹ (c. 540 – 530 BCE), and Euthymides painted *revelers*² (c. 510 BCE). Both of these paintings depict male figures. Given the “canon” of Archaic vase paintings, it appears as though women were seldom subject to depiction. In 1901, Professor of Greek John Homer Huddilston wrote that:

The life of women in ancient Hellas in historic times was decidedly an indoor existence; only on a few occasions were they supposed to appear in public places. This condition of affairs is distinctly noticeable in the vase-paintings, for, barring the mythological scenes and the Bacchic revels, pictures in which women appear are for the most part confined to the domestic circle.³

Indeed, over a hundred years of new evidence and scholarly inquiry have not shed much light on women’s public roles. However, my research suggests that although women’s lives and their roles in the public sphere may have been limited relative to that of men, they were by no means inconsequential to society. A scene depicted on an Archaic hydria dating to about 510 BCE shows one task that moved married women into the public sphere: that of fetching water from the fountainhouse (Figure 1). When examined within a broader context, I suggest that this hydria shows more about the life of women than might be garnered on preliminary inspection. Indeed, I propose that this work is nuanced and may reveal more than the simple task of collecting water.

To understand women’s relationship to the fountainhouse it is first imperative to survey the function of the fountainhouse itself. During the Archaic period, “Greek tyrants,” including Athenians, “seem to have favored large public construction programs, among which temples and hydraulic systems were prominent.”⁴ The fountainhouses were secure alternatives to wells, which ran the risk of drying up, and cisterns, which gathered rainwater from the roof. Neither the well or the cistern was as reliable a source of water as the fountainhouse, which provided “good, clean water for public consumption [which] was piped from springs.”⁵ The fountainhouses were not solely an Archaic phenomenon, either, as the Athenian Agora saw construction of two new fountainhouses between 350 and 325 BCE.⁶ It was in these publically secure markers of state prosperity that women met, engaged, and even shared stories about their inner domestic lives.

The Archaic (c. 510 BCE) *Fountainhouse Scene* on an Attic black-figure hydria (Figure 1) depicts five women who have gone to the fountainhouse to fetch water.

While there is a chariot scene above the fountainhouse scene, this essay will principally concentrate on the latter. The hydria has traces of Geometric design motifs across the very top of the fountainhouse scene, and incorporates the element of animals' mouths as sources of wine and water. The spouts from which water pours feature both lion and donkey designs. A mixing of architectural elements is also seen: the columns at each end are more elaborate, decorative, and intricate, suggesting Ionic inspiration, while the two center columns are more austere, borrowing from Doric ideals.

The women depicted on the vase appear to be in a celebratory mood, although from a contemporary view they have merely stepped beyond the home to collect water. However, despite the seemingly mundane experience of collecting water for the household, fountainhouses "offered the rare opportunity of social intercourse for women and slaves."⁷ This is because while most women's chores were confined to the home, women were responsible for the necessary trip to the fountainhouse, but only if her family was not rich enough to afford a slave to do so.⁸ The fountainhouses, then, allowed the intermingling of women, whether free, slave, upper- or lower-class, for women, "...whatever their station in life, had [no] political rights."⁹ It is noteworthy that all of the women have long hair, which flows freely, is tied in a bun, or is wrapped in various length of cloths. Throughout Greek history, slaves consistently wore short hair, while free, and particularly wealthy, women wore kept long hair and experimented with a range of elaborate hairstyles.¹⁰ It seems likely, then, that the jovial scene on the hydria showing women performing a slave-like task might actually be women basking in their ability to leave the home.

Examining the *Fountainhouse Scene* closely reveals that the women depicted are all barefoot. This suggests that collecting water may have had ritualistic connotations or implications. After all, "[t]he most important role played by women in the public sphere was in religion."¹¹ Married women attended the Thesmophoria, a festival in honor of Demeter, "goddess of the fertility of the earth."¹² Perhaps there was an association between Demeter and the earth's bearing of spring water. Perhaps the "ritual" of gathering spring water from the fountainhouses symbolized a woman receiving fertility from the earth; the connection between spring water and fertility may even be at the root of the reason why women were permitted into the public to perform the task of gathering water. Ritual was one of the most important aspects of Greek life, and women played an important, even critical, role. That women played such a crucial role in ritual is indicative of their social presence.

Additionally, as aforementioned, the women depicted in the *Fountainhouse Scene* carry amphorae. This was not an arbitrary choice on behalf of the painter. Amphorae were, like hydria, reserved for women's use. They also served a ritualistic function: amphorae depicted women's funerary scenes and contained women's mortuary remains. The amphorae may allude to how rituals are evident throughout the human lifecycle: the fountainhouse may be a giver of fertility, while the amphorae, despite being used during life, would also mark the end of life.

Given what is known about women's public roles, it seems plausible that a woman would have had no part in the hydria's creation. However, Marjorie Susan Venit offers evidence in favor of the existence of female artisans. Additionally, she suggests that although "[t]extual sources are slight" what exists "are to be dated to the

fifth century.¹³ This timeframe coincides with the approximate time the *Fountainhouse Scene* may have been created. Venit also references a votive depicting a scene which “has been interpreted as a woman kneading clay.”¹⁴ Another vase, a hydria, that Venit cites shows “the picture [of] a single female figure who also works on the vase.”¹⁵ Although Venit provides evidence that women may have been allowed some role in vase production, she addresses a “curious element” concerning that aforementioned female figure, which is that “the platform on which the female worker sits [has] raise[d] her above the other craftsmen, setting her off from her colleagues.”¹⁶ This only leads to more confusion about women’s working lives. It is not known whether this was done merely to segregate the sexes, or if this woman, being a female, was regarded as “different” or “foreign.” Perhaps she simply did not belong here but she had the influence to dabble in craftsmanship; her status may have allowed such influence, and she was raised above her colleagues accordingly. Indeed, the female worker “gives us the only extant example of a woman at work in a vase studio in Attic art” and other “epigraphic material...give[s] no names of women among Attic vase painters and potters.”¹⁷ So, was the painter of this vase influenced by a rebellious, influential woman who chose to work in a studio? Was this a possible political statement on behalf of women? Or does the image represent a social situation that was more common than the extant male-authored literature suggests? Since this example is one-of-a-kind in the current corpus of Greek art, answers to these questions remain speculative until further evidence is brought to light.

Contrary to Venit’s example of a female studio worker are several depictions of women performing “women’s work.”¹⁸ Women performed work as spinners, weavers, woolworkers, washers, midwives, nurses, vendors, bakers, and cooks.¹⁹ Perhaps, as opposed to the fountainhouse women, these women had an economic purpose in working. The fountainhouse would only be visited by women whose families could not afford slaves, but the fact that the fountainhouse was the only public outlet for the less wealthy women suggests that they were wealthy *enough* to not have to work. Their work remained in the realm of domestic chores, not maintaining a livelihood. The existence of these relatively well-off women would have been documented on stelae and amphorae, for example, because their families, despite not being able to afford a slave, would have been able to afford such luxuries.

Depictions of working women did not coincidentally appear, however. The *Fountainhouse Scene*, like scenes of weavers and bakers, would have been part of “[t]he ripe archaic period” which was “most inventive.”²⁰ During the Archaic period, which has already been discussed, “[t]he...art is above all descriptive, [and] *genre* scenes abound.”²¹ Such *genre* scenes would have been extended to include depictions of women working. That the *Fountainhouse Scene* is painted on a hydria is important not only because hydriai were water-carrying vessels, but because they afforded an outlet for “storytelling.”²² Since these vessels would have been used by women, perhaps it was artistically more appropriate to paint stories and women instead of warfare.

Not only did these stylistic choices emerge during the Archaic period, but the *Fountainhouse Scene* also represents Archaic trends. Despite the fact that the women appear much livelier than their sculptural counterparts, their clothing offers Archaic clues. In particular, the woman second from the viewer’s left is dressed very similarly to *Kore, No. 682*, (Figure 2) dating to 520 BCE. While the *Kore* wears her mantle over

one shoulder, the folds of the drapery and the appearance of the garment itself is very similar to that of the fountainhouse woman.

Contemporary to these Archaic trends in clothing and occupations were women who defied the stereotypical notion of the oppressed housewife. One woman, Elpinice, was born in 510 BCE and "remained very much a visible woman after her marriage" to Callias and lobbied Pericles twice.³³ Having remained politically and intellectually visible signifies that a large enough sector of society would have accepted Elpinice's visibility for her to continue in her actions. Aspasia, Pericles' wife, was another woman who remained politically and intellectually involved and even freely visited with Socrates. Lastheneia studied philosophy not with a private tutor in her home but with Plato at the Academy in Athens. Not only were these women, just a few examples of their kind, allowed to receive an education, but were permitted to do so publicly. Telesilla was a renowned intellectual and poet in her own right, but she "also organized and led a successful defense of her native city, Argos, against an invading army of Spartans. She was honored for both service to the muses and military victory."³⁴ Plangon, born in 404 BCE, also independently sought victory, but of a different kind. Plangon's father had been a general and was dismissed on charges of embezzlement. Upon hearing this, her husband, Mantias, divorced her while she was still pregnant and later refused to acknowledge the child as his own. He remarried, but remained sexually attracted to her. Another son was born, and again, Mantias would not recognize the child. With her two sons denied citizenship because of Mantias' actions, Plangon sought justice. She presented Mantias with a settlement and enlisted an arbiter. After Plangon's pressure, Mantias folded and acknowledged his sons, who became rightful citizens. Independently ensuring her sons' citizenship was possible not only because of Plangon's perseverance, but also because society was not so stringent as to disallow this from happening. These examples of women's mobility may also apply to the fountainhouse scene. The women may not be the oppressed housewives scholars would have us believe, but are perhaps more free than first thought.

Each woman depicted on the hydria (with the exception of two that share a vessel) carries an amphora, a vessel that would have been reserved for women's use. Although the women in this scene carry amphorae, the vessel itself is a hydria, which would have been used for "water transport and storage"³⁵ and therefore would have been carried by women. Notice also the vessel's lack of inscription. While many vessels used by men by this time featured an inscription, this one very clearly is without one. Many wealthier Athenian women would have been literate, so this vessel may not suggest female illiteracy, but female literacy may have been superfluous in the public sphere.³⁶ Even the women whose families could not afford for them not to work would not have *needed* to be able to read and write to perform the tasks which were assigned to them, such as baking and midwifery.

Despite inferred reasons as to *why* women were responsible for visiting the fountainhouses, it is clear that the *Fountainhouse Scene* on the Archaic hydria offers a rare glimpse into the lives, duties, and publicality of women.

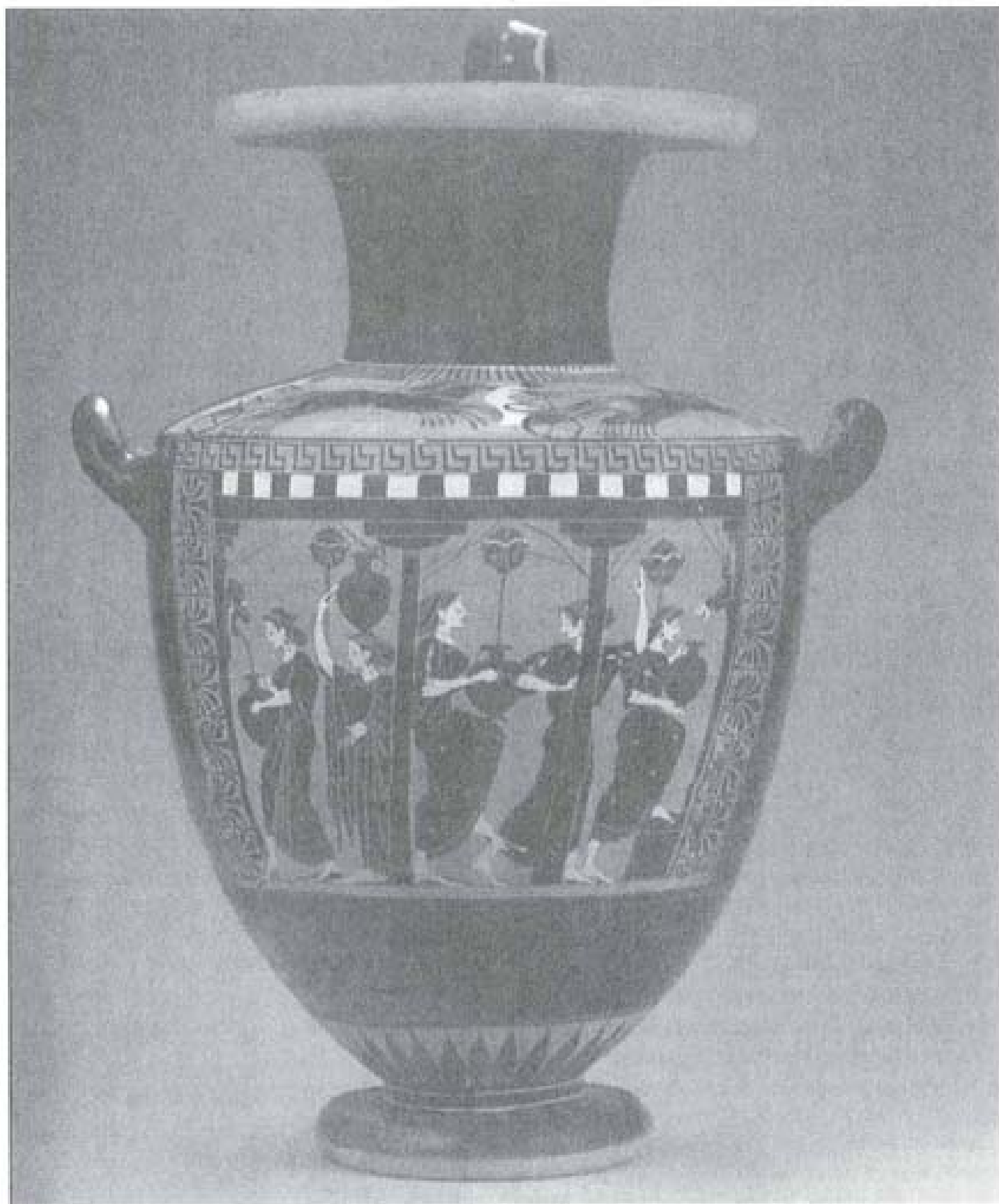


Figure 1: Hydria depicting Fountainhouse Scene. c. 510 BCE²⁷



Figure 2: Kore, No. 682. c. 520 BCE²⁸

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- ² *Ibid.*, 205.
- ³ John Homer Huddilston, *Lessons From Greek Pottery* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1902), 46.
- ⁴ John Griffiths Pedley, *Greek Art and Archaeology* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2007), 174.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 298.
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- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 174.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 214.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 212.
- ¹⁰ David J. Symons, *Costume of Ancient Greece*. (New York: Chelsea House, 1987).
- ¹¹ John Griffiths Pedley, *Greek Art and Archaeology* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2007), 214.
- ¹² *Ibid.*
- ¹³ Marjorie Susan Venit, "The Caputi Hydria and Working Women in Classical Athens," *The Classical World* 81.3 (March-April 1988): 265.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 266.

¹⁵ Ibid., 267.

¹⁶ Ibid., 267.

¹⁷ Ibid., 269.

¹⁸ Ibid., 265.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ T. B. L. Webster, "Attic Vase Painting during the Persian Wars," *Greece & Rome* 1.3 (May 1932): 138.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 139.

²³ Marjorie Lightman and Benjamin Lightman, *Ancient Greek and Roman Women* (New York, New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2000), 92.

²⁴ Ibid., 219.

²⁵ Anthony Snodgrass, "From *The uses of writing on early Greek painted pottery*" in *Word and Image in Ancient Greece*, eds. N. Keith Rutter and Brian A. Sparkes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd., 2000), 29.

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²⁷ John Griffiths Pedley, *Greek Art and Archaeology* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2007), 175.

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Three Perspectives on the Historiography of Medieval Women

Caitlin Hedrick

When looking at the trajectory of women, it is clear that their history reveals a very unsteady one as it has not always been seen as marching forward. For example, taking into account the time from the Middle Ages, to the Renaissance, to now, the views of women of the past were constantly changing, depending very much on what was going on in the world during the time in which history was written. In regard to the role of women during the medieval period, the general attitude toward them is that they were inferior to men, a position held by a prominent medieval scholar from the Annales school, Georges Duby. Duby's position is tempting to take for granted, as general audiences share his same beliefs before digging further down into the lives of women. However, as we look at gender and historiography, we see that many historians are using gender as a lens to look at history in a new way. The general idea that women were submissive and obedient to the men in their lives has been refuted by many scholars, two of them including Kimberly A. LoPrete and Miriam Shadis. Thus, despite the fact that Duby was one of the important figures to set the playing field for the way we view medieval women, taking other sources into account helps to broaden that field, ultimately allowing us to see the women of the Middle Ages in a more accurate light.

Setting the stage for the responses of other scholars, Georges Duby states in the introduction to his book, *Women of the Twelfth Century*, that what he is "trying to show is not the lived reality... [but] reflections, what written texts reflect."¹ As he begins with the texts, as a postmodernist does, Duby discusses the lives of Eleanor of Aquitaine and six others who are deemed to be important during the Middle Ages. Paying close attention to the perception of these texts, Duby attempts to "reconstruct a value system and identify within this system the place assigned to women by male power."² Here, clear in his introduction, Duby informs us, almost like a warning label, that the men writing during the time, men of the church such as monks and clerics, ascribed the positions of the women that he presents in his book. Taking his sources into account, all of which were ecclesiastical documents and literary sources, it is no surprise that Duby would illustrate an image of women who are judged and mistrusted, and whose true reality of the time period is neglected.

With Eleanor of Aquitaine's story, the first to be discussed in the volume, Duby depicts her with the same skewed image as the priests who were writing about her, as a scandalous and objectified woman. He made clear that the reader understand how much Eleanor was talked about, "because her behavior had been a vivid demonstration of the terrifying powers with which nature had endowed women, who were lustful and treacherous... which made it self-evidently essential to keep daughters under the

strict control of their fathers and wives under that of their husbands.⁷³ By presenting this view of Eleanor, Duby indirectly argues that Eleanor contributed to the overall prejudice that men had against women during the time and basically legitimized the reasons why men should have been afraid of women and femininity. At the end of her story, Duby says that he is inclined to pity her for the events that took place in her life.⁷⁴ But in turn, Duby uses Eleanor of Aquitaine as a didactic tool to show us an image of women, thus objectifying her in his own way.

Just as "the hopes and fears of men were projected onto the body of Eleanor,"⁷⁵ the same goes for Mary Magdalene, the most visible of all women in the Gospels. Duby depicts Mary as being a model for men during the time. However, acting as a backwards sort of compliment, Duby states that the female nature is defined in the texts by "weakness and timidity... [making] it possible to present Mary Magdalene as an example to men."⁷⁶ Clearly having a sort of "if a woman can do it then why can't you?" approach, Duby discusses Mary as being a model for men with a slap in the face to women.

Illustrating the life of a rebellious and scandalous woman, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and the saint-like life of another woman, Mary Magdalene, Duby also presents us with that of H el oise. For her story Duby uses a letter written in 1142 AD, presenting us with a female voice. Although he questions its authenticity, he states that it is "the most substantial, and also the most reliable, information we have about this woman."⁷⁷ Duby uses H el oise's story to act as a composite between the other two women. He points out that her passionate side is her weakness, but she is also submissive to her husband and the church, as women should be. Also, he presents us with an example of medieval marriage with H el oise's story, demonstrating that at the beginning a man and a woman may be more on equal footing but once they marry that is no longer true, thus showing that Duby doesn't think that marriage helps, or should help, the status of a woman.

Although Georges Duby is writing from a gendered approach, let it not be confused with a feminist viewpoint. Duby presents powerful women, such as the three discussed here, yet still considers them secondary. He takes feminist heroes of the past and displays them in a subjugated, objectified light. His depiction of women illustrates them in a role where they were expected to be submissive, where it was a man's duty to discipline them. They had no influence over political or economic matters, with no individual power but that of which they acquired through men, such as through marriage, lineage and sex. As a result, Duby's presentation of medieval women ultimately portrays them as being property of men.

Offering a different view of aristocratic women and "yielding a picture of women's roles and lives in noble households substantially different from the one depicted so vividly by Duby,"⁷⁸ is Kimberly A. LoPrete. Looking at sources not taken into account before, LoPrete uses Episcopal letters, ecclesiastical charters, necrologies, narratives by male clerics, and poems as sources for her essay, "Adela of Blois: Familial Alliances and Female Lordship," in Theodore Evergates' collection *Aristocratic Women in Medieval France*. Contrary to Duby, LoPrete's sources, consisting mostly of documents of practice, "reveal that women who embodied the joining of two families through marriage and childbearing were not merely passive pawns in power relations among groups of men; rather, they were active participants whose actions could profoundly

affect the shape of those relations and the course of politically significant events.⁹⁹ She is using these sources to render the real experience of women that these sources reveal, opposed to giving an idealized version of how women *should* be, as Duby does. Thus LoPrete, along with the rest of the authors included in Evergates's book, disputes Duby in every sense of the word.

Challenging Duby, LoPrete discusses the life of Adela of Blois, the youngest daughter of William the Conqueror who married Stephen-Henry, count of Blois, Chartres, Meaux and Troyes.¹⁰ Adela was unique because, despite being the youngest child in her family, she was born after her father had become King of England, which automatically set her above the rest of her siblings. While married to Stephen, she became an active participant in her marriage, involving herself in comital rule¹¹ and participating in decision-making with things such as "judicial affairs and property transfers of comital followers."¹² In addition, it is interesting to see a point of view where a medieval "couple appear to have developed a relationship based at least on trust and mutual respect if not affection,"¹³ where LoPrete is clearly contradicting Duby, who depicts medieval marriage as a mere selling off of a woman from father to husband. The ecclesiastical documents LoPrete uses report "the couple acting publicly together,"¹⁴ involved with the issues that she and her husband had to deal with and being an important asset while doing so. We also see Stephan acting on Adela's advice and, with her consent, which LoPrete argues that her husband valued her. In addition, "the authority-enhancing prestige and literate skills of the high-born and educated countess impressed contemporaries."¹⁵ These are aspects of medieval women that had not been seen before with Duby.

When Stephen was absent from court, having duties in the Holy Land, one would think that Adela's responsibilities would have dwindled without her male counterpart, however we see the opposite. Charters and letters confirm that "Adela exercised full comital authority"¹⁶ while he was away, and "though she was not accorded the title of regent in any surviving source, Adela's ruling powers were acknowledged in the dating clause of two charters issued by others."¹⁷ Even after her husbands' death and when her sons came of age, "charters reveal that Adela still acted with full authority without her son until she retired to a monastery."¹⁸

Clearly, LoPrete is lending an interpretation of medieval aristocratic woman that very much contradicts Duby's arguments and beliefs discussed before. LoPrete does not present Adela of Blois as a secondary character but as a valued wife and partner in her and her husband's court. She did not gain her power through a man, as her "prestige enhanced his own"¹⁹ and "contemporary observers acknowledged that Adela exercised the same authoritative powers as her male peers."²⁰ Adela possessed a kind of power that was both private *and* public, as we see her controlling her son's marriages and other issues of the home and family, as well as executing public power with things such as issuing charters and overseeing judicial affairs. Differing from the image of "passive pawns" that LoPrete gives us when referring to Duby, "Adela's life and political career show how aristocratic women could play authoritative and decisive roles in the politics of their day."²¹ The inclusion of LoPrete's article in Evergates's collection further exemplifies that she is responding to Duby, by looking at sources like documents of practice that reveal women's experience of having power in the public realm, and by giving more insight into the lives of women. In addition, LoPrete

indicates that although "Adela was indeed a woman, she was far from being a mere object of sexual fascination"²² to churchmen and other males around her, an important detail to be noticed when comparing LoPrete and Duby's arguments with one another.

To go along with scholars who strive to better the image of medieval women, Miriam Shadis follows LoPrete in using sources to offer an interesting take on the way women gained and harbored their power. Like LoPrete, Shadis uses documents of practice, such as foundation charters and letters, that present us with a fascinating aspect of the way women cultivated power through patronage in her article, "Piety, Politics and Power: The Patronage of Leonor of England and Her Daughters Berenguela of León and Blanche of Castile." Shadis argues that these aristocratic women "were interested in constructing their own power as well as that of their families,"²³ their goals of patronage were not different from that of men's but the way they went about it was.²⁴ Thus, just as LoPrete discusses Adela of Blois as playing an important role both publicly and privately as a prominent and influential queen, we see Shadis building on this idea of women executing public power as well, but through the means of patronage.

Shadis illustrates that the institution of family was becoming very powerful as "royal women of medieval France and Castile used patronage as a way to cultivate political power and authority."²⁵ The four women discussed in her article are Eleanor of Aquitaine, her daughter Leonor of England and her two granddaughters, Berenguela of León and Blanche of Castile, all of whom "built and maintained necropolises as a way to perpetuate their own personal influence indefinitely, gaining power for themselves as well as for their families."²⁶ Leonor's main act of patronage, the female Cistercian abbey of Las Huelgas, with that of her husband Alfonso VIII, was modeled after Fontevrault, her mother's favorite institution.²⁷ Like Fontevrault's function as a family burial site, "Las Huelgas was founded specifically as a necropolis for the royalty of Castile."²⁸ It is interesting though that Leonor wanted it to be established with the Cistercian order because the Cistercians "actively discouraged the formal association of women in their order."²⁹ But despite this, the abbey, patronized by women who placed female abbesses in power, ended up becoming "the head abbey over all female Cistercian abbeys in Castile and León."³⁰ This attributed an important position for the royal family that patronized the abbey, for the abbesses in charge and for the position of women in general. Given that it was the church that played a large role in the suppression of women during the Middle Ages, finding sources that demonstrate a woman patronizing the church is important and must have really increased women's power during that time.

We see an interesting aspect of the abbesses' role at Las Huelgas evident in Shadis' research of letters, discussing that the abbess was carrying out sacerdotal duties³¹ such as "preaching homilies, hearing confessions, and blessing novices."³² Such behaviors were "particularly unacceptable because the abbesses are women" as one bishop stated that "even though Mary was more perfect and of greater dignity than the apostles, it was to them, and not to her, that the keys to the kingdom of heaven were given."³³ In this instance we see the bishop trying to put the women of Las Huelgas in their place. One historian, Amancio Rodríguez, to whom Shadis responds, attributes such behaviors of the women to their ignorance.³⁴ However, Shadis is quick to refute this argument, stating, "It is difficult to believe that the abbess of such a central, royal

institution would have been ignorant of the privileges of gender within the church.³⁵ With this small yet powerful argument, Shadis is clearly doing two things; first, she is standing up for the position of women and the knowledge they had about their surroundings, politics, and the power patrons had over the status of the abbess, and second, she is making the important point that women were indeed exercising power at this Cistercian abbey.

Establishments by these royal women, like the foundations discussed in Shadis's article, was an effort to "reinforce the continuity of their families' authority and power,"³⁶ ultimately displaying the influence of family (and women) over determining patronage. The fact that "Las Huelgas provided an arena for women to exercise both power and authority, both internally, as abbesses and nuns, and externally, as royal patrons,"³⁷ is an extremely important detail to be noted because it is further evidence of women possessing political power. In addition, Shadis's discussion here parallels nicely with LoPrete's arguments of women participating in and executing their political power.

Differing from Duby's image of women having no real power or influence in society, Shadis states that, "these princesses and queens played an important role in securing certain rights and privileges for the monastery in the 'outside' world, by serving as liaisons between the monastery and the royal court..."³⁸ This, again, refutes Duby and builds on LoPrete's argument of women having political power. In addition, Berenguela and Blanche's own choice to continue the "patronage of this particularly masculine order [of the Cistercians] seems to represent a clear expression of female domination or control in a male arena."³⁹ This is an important factor highlighted by Shadis. One would assume that their efforts to "dominate a male arena" was a purely feminist move in spite of men during the time, however, these women's "special patronage in an order resistant to them does not indicate any feminist sensibilities on their part, but rather an effort to identify themselves with the power of the order, as well as their personal ability to control their endowments."⁴⁰ By "asserting for themselves a certain amount of power and authority,"⁴¹ these women clearly saw themselves and their family as important figures during their time and, as conveyed in her article, Shadis proves just that.

Although prescribed not to, as Duby says, women in reality did hold power, and when comparing his portrait of women with that of LoPrete and Shadis, audiences can see that women were indeed a visible asset to medieval society. Presenting an image of women that were faceless and voiceless during medieval period, Duby's representation proves to be problematic. He uses prescribed sources to talk about how women were supposed to act and the way people wanted them to be during that time, as opposed to LoPrete and Shadis who use documents of practice to offer a very different experience for medieval women. His assessment of women can be attributed to the specific kind sources he used and the lack of citation in his book, as using texts written by clerics would allow Duby to present this skewed image of women. LoPrete and Shadis, on the other hand, were able to dig down deeper because they used sources such as charters as evidence, giving a more accurate portrayal. As LoPrete says, if historians look at the right sources, they "will surely discover that women exercised more acknowledged power than has been assumed and that accounts of medieval politics are incomplete if they ignore the deeds of female lords."⁴²

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¹² *Ibid.*, 17.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

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²³ Miriam Shadis, "Piety, Politics and Power: The Patronage of Leonor of England and Her Daughters Berenguela of León and Blanche of Castile," 210.

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²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 206.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

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³⁵ *Ibid.*, 206-207.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 213.

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³⁸ *Ibid.*

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⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 217.

⁴² Kimberly A. LoPrete, "Adela of Blois: Familial Alliances and Female Lordship," 43.

To Achieve Heaven: Gendered Depictions of Mary Magdalene in the Gospels of Thomas and Mary

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I. A Resurrected Figure

Recently, in the wide complex story that is Christianity, a new figure has come to light. This person is perceived as both a saint and a sinner; a wench of ill repute and a companion to a savior. Some uphold this woman as the wife of Christ, while others throughout history degrade her as a prostitute, demon-possessed, who finally saw the error of her ways and could only be saved through the power of a male. This woman who is capable of embodying so many different variations is Mary Magdalene. Early Christian doctrine holds Mary Magdalene was a follower of Jesus, who witnessed both his death and resurrection. The various legends presented in the Gospels of the New Testament canon have come to be considered absolute truth by many and that they reveal the historical Mary Magdalene.

But what one must first understand is that in the early Christian era there were no attempts at unification for several centuries after the death of the historical Jesus. This is evidenced by the documents found in Nag Hammadi, Egypt in 1945. These texts gave almost radically different versions on a multitude of subjects including, but not limited to, Christ, salvation, God, and Mary Magdalene. These depictions of Mary Magdalene differ from those in the New Testament canon, which may have led some to wonder if a correct and historical likeness can ever be drawn out of any of the texts, canonical or otherwise.

What I want to argue in this paper is that different sects of Christians in the burgeoning Christian world held varying views on Mary Magdalene and her relationship with Jesus and, furthermore, it is possible that we may never know if any singular version is the correct one and, thus, may never know who the historical Mary Magdalene actually was. We can examine these different portrayals by taking a closer look at two texts found at Nag Hammadi. One is the *Gospel of Thomas* in which one might be inclined to read the text and assume that Mary is not considered worthy of life because she is a woman. The other is the *Gospel of Mary* which presents Mary Magdalene as the chosen of the resurrected Christ who singles her out alone to receive his message and lead his church. These polemical texts bring to the surface questions about gender and what it meant to be saved. In order to understand the different Christianities it is important that one first examine the canon and traditions surrounding this one enigmatic figure.

II. Who is Mary Magdalene? A Look at Tradition

The Mary Magdalene of tradition is an amalgamation of pieces of canon text and early Papal exegetical writings. Lucy Winkett claims that "by mysterious conflation of named and anonymous women in the gospel narratives, a completely fictitious character has emerged into Western Christian tradition."¹ What Winkett means to demonstrate is that the name 'Mary' is one of the most common names in the New Testament world, which is evidenced by a whole host of Marys that appear throughout the canon. These Marys are often lacking a surname which has lead tradition to stick the name Magdalene on every Mary it encounters. Mary Magdalene's story then is a mix of the sporadic tales found only in the Gospels and no other texts for "all of these references are confined to the Gospels."² We must turn now to what the Gospels of the New Testament have to say about this enigma of an ancient woman. It is of the utmost importance to begin here with these texts and how they depict Mary Magdalene for they have come to be considered accurate historical characterizations and stories by the Christian community at large. In reality, however, the four Gospels tell us very few details about the life and personage of Mary Magdalene.³

Mary Magdalene's story and role in the Gospels can essentially be broken down into three key scenes: meeting Jesus, the death of Jesus, and the resurrection of Jesus. The first key moment between the savior and his disciple can be summarized via the *Gospel of Luke*: "Accompanying him were the Twelve and some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons⁴ had gone out."⁵ At first possessed and then saved, Mary follows Christ through Judea and ministers to him. But note here that Mary had been held hostage by seven demons. Surely this is a large amount of evil spirits for anyone, male or female, but neither *Luke* nor any of the other Gospels give an explanation for the possession. We can infer that for a woman, or anybody, to have their soul held hostage by seven demons would have to mean that they have committed a very grave crime. Tradition holds that the reason for her possession was because of adultery and prostitution and this earns Mary Magdalene the classification as a woman of sin. In order to understand how this reasoning came into fruition we must examine another Gospel text, this one coming from the *Gospel of John* which states: "And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery."⁶ Notice that this woman who is brought before Jesus for castigations is not named and in fact is never given a name through the rest of the chapter. But by carefully putting pieces together of different texts, this woman has come to be recognized as Mary Magdalene.

This tradition of Mary Magdalene being the woman in *John* owes much to the declarations made by Pope Gregory the Great in 591 AD in which he gave his opinion that Mary had given "her flesh to forbidden acts."⁷ In order to understand this decision we must first be cognizant that the greatest sin a woman of this era could commit was being unchaste, so it is natural that the Early Church Fathers would assume the reason for the possession of seven demons had to be adultery and prostitution. Women in this age were honorbound to be chaste and virtuous for fear of not keeping the bloodlines and paternity pure. If the pope read that Mary Magdalene was possessed by demons, his first instinct would be that her crime or crimes had to be sexual in nature. The

tradition of Mary Magdalene being an adulteress and a prostitute was pronounced null and void by the papacy in 1969, however it has "dominated Western interpretation and tradition."⁸

Jesus' death is the next key scene in which we see Mary Magdalene. All four Gospels attest to her being at the cross, as we can see in the *Gospel of Mark*: "Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene..."⁹ Mary Magdalene has become a loyal follower of Jesus, trailing after him as far as the cross. Despite the dangers of being seen as a sympathizer of a rabble rouser, she stayed by his side, even when the male followers of Jesus had fled, including Peter, whom, as we shall see shortly, serves as her main antagonist in the non-canonical works.

The last scene in which Mary Magdalene plays a role is the resurrection of Jesus. The writer of the *Gospel of Luke* wrote: "but at daybreak, on the first day of the week (the women) took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb; but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus."¹⁰ We should note here that Mary Magdalene and her companions, who are also women, are performing the traditional women's work after the death of a loved one by bringing perfumes to rub and prepare the body in; it is actually not surprising that it is she who receives the good news and revelation that Jesus has risen. But one can argue she is the most deserving as she has proven herself loyal, unlike some of her male counterparts (like Peter) who fled during Jesus' trial and death. She is no longer just a woman who trails after Jesus, a background character in a predominantly male cast, she is responsible for spreading the word of the resurrection, for the *Gospel of Matthew* goes on to give Mary her command to go forth and announce "all these things to the eleven and to all the others."¹¹ This final command to spread the news of the resurrection earns Mary the nickname "apostle to the apostle" which is something that one will see is translated over into the *Gospel of Mary*.

Another idea that is important to set up before exploring the texts that did not make it into the New Testament are the parallels between both Adam and Eve of the Old Testament and Jesus and Mary Magdalene of the New Testament. Winkett argues that Mary Magdalene is "the new Eve,"¹² but instead of being a temptress and disobedient to God, Mary Magdalene obeys the commands of God, particularly the last one of going to spread the word of Jesus rising from the dead. Winkett observes that, "the parallel's of Eve's disobedience in the garden of Eden" have been "redeemed by Mary Magdalene's obedience in the garden by the tomb."¹³ Jesus is considered by Christians today as the second Adam; where Adam sinned, Jesus saved and voided Adam's original indiscretion. Together Jesus and Mary Magdalene make up the new humans that are supposed to inhabit the earth, just as Adam and Eve were the original prototypes for the world. They are the models to follow in order to obtain and achieve heaven. This interesting notion leads us into the discussion of the *Gospel of Thomas* in which Mary is to serve as a model for women everywhere who wish to enter the kingdom of God.

III. To Become a Spirit: The *Gospel of Thomas*

In 1945 a poor farmer named Muhammad Ali who lived in Egypt, near the town of Nag Hammadi, unearthed several clay pots. These clay pots held what is arguably

the greatest Biblical find of all time: twelve books of texts written by those groups that were labeled as heretics by the Early Christian Fathers and were “ultimately eradicated from Christendom.”¹⁴ These texts were written in Coptic (an Egyptian language written with the Greek alphabet) and contained Gospels and tractates never read or even heard of before.

What I want to argue in this section on the *Gospel of Thomas* is that in spite of the way certain portions of the text may read, the writer of *Thomas* is not claiming that Mary Magdalene, or women as a whole, will not achieve heaven, but that she and her sex must take steps in order to do so. The *Gospel of Thomas* has become quite popular among Christians today because it does not give the typical narrative of Jesus’ life and deeds, but is a collection of 114 sayings (or *logion*) supposedly spoken by the historical Jesus. Many of these axioms are familiar and appear in the canon, but most were brand new. One of the major themes in *Thomas* is recognizing oneself to obtain salvation which can only be “obtained in stripping off everything that is of this world.”¹⁵ For men this means they simply need to give up their worldly goods and follow Jesus and learn from him. For women, however, this means following a few extra steps. *Logion* 114 states:

Simon Peter said to them, “Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy or life.” Jesus said “I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.”¹⁶

In this *logion* Peter wishes Mary to leave the company of Jesus for he does not believe she can ever hope to obtain salvation because she is of the female sex, but Jesus will not send Mary away. This ill will between Peter and Mary is nothing new. Buckley writes that “Peter’s misogyny—specifically directed at Mary Magdalene—is well attested from other early Christian Gnostic sources.”¹⁷ If one examines such texts as the *Pistis Sophia* and, as we will, the *Gospel of Mary*, one comes to the conclusion that Peter and Mary are at loggerheads through most of the texts. But what we can see here is that while Peter exhibits misogynist tendencies,¹⁸ Jesus does not. Jesus wishes Mary Magdalene to achieve heaven and will help her take the necessary steps in order to do so.

In order to understand the steps Mary must undergo, it is necessary to set up how gender is viewed in the *Gospel of Thomas*. In this text, gender, which I define not as biological sex, but as certain attributes, characteristics, and placement in society, is not fixed, but rather exists along a spectrum and, most importantly, one has the ability to move up and down this hierarchy. In this hierarchy there exists three ‘classes:’ female, male, and living spirit.¹⁹ This means that every female must first become a man, which as we will see shortly, does not entail changing their sex, and then every ‘man’ must become ‘a living spirit.’²⁰ While this might seem anti-feminine it is actually not, but rather simply a construct of this time period. In this society, we must understand, males dominated females; men were the rulers and priests and heads of households and were the authority in charge of keeping their womenfolk chaste, virtuous, and out of trouble. One can understand the world as essentially being bipolar in “which female is understood as earthly, sensual, imperfect, and passive,

and the male is understood as transcendent, chaste, perfect and active.²¹ Males then are automatically higher on the spectrum of gender because they are closer to perfection and God, but women need not fear for they can slide up that spectrum, meaning "that every woman taking the step into maleness will 'enter the Kingdom of Heaven' [which] implies an automatic salvation if the correct procedures are followed."²² This procedure follows *Genesis 2* with the story of Adam and Eve, but with the steps in reverse. In the *Gospel of Thomas'* case we see "from the female's rib into the male Adam, back into the 'living spirit' created by dust and God's breath" is creation going backwards in which the woman come first, and to perfect themselves the woman must become 'male' and from there she will take the next step where she will be rendered genderless as a living spirit. We can also understand, then, that this means that the males following Jesus have already reached the point in their life where they are ready to take the next step, becoming a living spirit. This means that if they understand his theology, teachings, and knowledge they are already 'male' in that they have integrated into one gender. This male that Mary and her sex are to become, however, does not mean to become sexually male, but more to become what Adam (or, the first human creature) was before he was split into two halves; male and female.²³ We can find this illustrated in *Logion 75* in which Jesus says: "many are standing at the door, but it is the solitary one who will enter the bridal chamber."²⁴

Two automatic questions arise when one reads this *Logion*: who is the solitary one and what is the bridal chamber? Buckley argues that the 'solitary one' of *Logion 75* is a "prototype of Adam...and may already be incorporating the two genders in himself and now requires the last step."²⁵ A prototype of Adam, in this instance, is sexually male, but is not gendered one way or the other. He is like Adam in the Garden of Eden at the start of creation, he is a human creature and does not belong to any gender. This creature has both male and female within him, much like his *Genesis* namesake. This is the solitary one in *Thomas*, and thus only when a human becomes the solitary one, that is to have both male and female gender within, can the creature enter the bridal chamber.

The bridal chamber is not of this world, but rather a process or ritual one undergoes to get back to God.²⁶ This chamber itself is genderless because it is part of the divine realm, and by entering it the solitary one has already combined the female and the male parts together into a singular person. This genderless person, which is what Jesus wants not only for his male followers but for Mary, is now ready to transcend up the spectrum of gender once more to the living spirit and achieve heaven. This is how God intended his human creation to be, and this is what Jesus ultimately wants for Mary. Jesus in the *Gospel of Thomas* does not display misogynistic rhetoric but simply believes that Mary is further down the spectrum of gender than the rest of his followers. But he is not about to abandon her; with his teachings he will help her to take the next few steps, like becoming the solitary one so that she may obtain salvation. She will transform from female into male which "is a movement from the earthly and physical to the heavenly and spiritual."²⁷ Mary Magdalene must undergo the bridal chamber ritual in order to achieve salvation and heaven, and Jesus is willing to help in this endeavor for he believes that she is, despite what Peter thinks, worthy of life. We can now turn to the *Gospel of Mary* which presents Mary as a figure who is actually further along in this process than several of Jesus' other followers.

IV. He Loved Her More Than Us: *The Gospel of Mary*

Unlike the *Gospel of Thomas* where Mary needs to move up the spectrum of gender before achieving heaven, the *Gospel of Mary* presents Mary Magdalene as the disciple loved most by Christ and to whom he gives his secret knowledge. It is unfortunate that we are missing the first six pages of the document but we must set the scene very briefly. The resurrected Jesus has appeared before his disciples and Mary Magdalene, and performs a question and answer session. His answers are designed to help them go out into the world and spread the knowledge Jesus has shared with them. Jesus departs shortly and it is upon his exit that Peter voices some concern over having missed the true meaning of the message. Confused, Peter turns to Mary Magdalene and says "Sister, we know that the Savior loved you more than the rest of women" and then beseeches her to explain the secret salvation passed on to her alone.²⁹ The secret salvation is not important for our purposes here, only that it is Mary who receives it and, perhaps more importantly, is Peter's reaction to the idea that Mary obtained this knowledge. Peter says "did he (Jesus) really speak with a woman without our knowledge and not openly? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did he prefer her to us?"³⁰ Peter's argument, much like in *Thomas*, is laced with misogynistic overtones as he believes that because Mary is sexually a woman, Jesus would never have passed along secret information to her alone.

If we use the same gender construction I set up in *Thomas*, that gender exists along a spectrum, than one can infer two things from the above lines of text: first that Mary has already reached the "middle man" placement of the spectrum, and second that she is further along than Peter and some of the other disciples who oppose her knowledge. She is then, one step closer to the bridal chamber than are the males in the room.

One can see that Mary has already reached the middle of the spectrum because she knows the secret knowledge; Jesus himself revealed it to her. These private revelations came to Mary in a dream and not whilst with the other followers, indicating that Mary alone received this knowledge. Jesus does not share his knowledge with the others because they have not reached the middle stage yet. Yes, they are men, but only sexually. Mary has integrated herself and is, what is termed in the discussion on *Thomas*, the prototype Adam. It is clear that because Jesus has given Mary, specifically *only her*, the knowledge of heaven. She has become integrated and is ready to move forward into the bridal chamber as the solitary one, as mentioned in *Thomas*.

Second, it is also clear that "Peter's hostility" comes about because Mary's "gnosis is superior to his."³⁰ Peter is somewhat aghast that Mary can reveal what the Savior knew. It is interesting to note that Peter asked Mary to share her knowledge, but then becomes enraged and stymied when it becomes clear that Mary knows more than he. Both *Thomas* and *Mary* "show evidence of Peter's difficulty in acknowledging the rightful place of women."³¹ For Peter, women must be submissive to men; so despite the fact that Peter acknowledges that Jesus loved Mary Magdalene more than all the others in the beginning of the text, he finds it difficult to accept that she would know something he does not. This illustrates that Peter has not reached the same stage as Mary Magdalene. We can comprehend this for several reasons. First, Jesus did not

give his knowledge, the revelations of the cosmos and heaven, to Peter. Recall that the world is bipolar and that when one becomes a 'man', as declared in *Thomas*, they move from the earthly to the heavenly. It makes sense that the knowledge Jesus shares and gives is, not only one of heavenly concern, but only for those that have reached this stage; in other words, only those who have 'become a man.' Peter, having not received the knowledge, has not reached this stage. He is not a prototype Adam, but still stuck in a 'female' like place in which he is unable to comprehend the heavenly. Mary, then, is further along on the spectrum of gender. This is the key difference in the two Nag Hammadi texts discussed.

The *Gospel of Mary* ends with the following advice from Levi, a disciple who did not oppose Mary and her wisdom: "rather let us be ashamed and put on the perfect man and acquire him for ourselves as he commanded us, and preach the gospel...and they began to go forth to proclaim and to preach."³² We can notice several key points here that highlight the gender construction laid out previously. Levi beseeches Peter to stop being so "hot tempered"³³ and to listen to Mary Magdalene because she has "put on the perfect man." She is integrated in her gender, one step above all of them on the gender scale and they should feel shame that they have not taken steps to insure that they too will become like her. In order to become like Mary, to become a 'man', they must follow the teaching of Jesus, revealed by Mary Magdalene, and then spread the good news.

An oddity here in the end is the mention that 'they' began to go out and preach. The problem is that we do not know who they are: is it just Mary and Levi? Is Peter included? It is my opinion that Peter is not a part of this group who go forth and tell the revelations of Jesus. To understand this one must reflect on traditions and the history of Christianity. As I stated in my thesis, Christianity was not unified for several centuries after the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. After the death of Jesus we know that the historical Peter continued to live in Jerusalem and preach to the masses there. He became, for the orthodox Church, the rock upon which Christ built his church.³⁴ The Early Church Fathers claimed inheritance for the message and leadership of Christ's church through Peter. Also recall that these Early Church Fathers were the ones who so vehemently opposed those they deemed 'heretics,'³⁵ including the authors of the Gospels of *Thomas* and *Mary*. The 'heretics' and the Orthodox Church engaged in a battle of papyrus in which they tried to lay out their doctrine and degrade the other side. With these facts in mind, it should become clear that Peter would not have been included in the ministry to the peoples in the *Gospel of Mary*, for he represents the Orthodox with his confusion about the true nature of salvation and Jesus. Mary Magdalene here stands for the unorthodox writers and sects of Christianity who are trying to bring converts to their side but running into the problem of the Orthodox Church and its leaders.

The *Gospel of Mary* also brings to light another key question: what was the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene? Several non-canonical texts, including the *Gospel of Mary*, indicate that "Mary Magdalene was known to have a special relationship with Jesus."³⁶ If one recalls back to the start of this paper, I proposed to see similarities between Jesus/Adam and Mary/Eve. The parallels between the two groups hold here in the *Gospel of Mary* as well. Jesus as the perfect teacher who spreads the good news is symbolic of what the first human creature

was supposed to be: made by God, non-gendered and heavenly. Mary Magdalene represents not only what all women, but indeed humanity, are supposed to become: integrated in gender and taking steps to become a spirit. As Adam and Eve were models of perfection before the fall, so Jesus and Mary have taken up the cup as the archetype after. As another parallel to the Old Testament figures, we have in the *Gospel of Mary*, and more prominently in the *Gospel of Philip*, the notion of Mary being a companion to Jesus.³⁷ While some scholars, like Buckley, acknowledge that 'the Coptic term can mean 'spouse' or 'wife,'³⁸ others argue that Mary is a spiritual consort, which would imply that Jesus and Mary are on the same 'level' spiritually. It also reflects back to my thesis of different Christianities viewing Mary Magdalene in polemical ways. One could hypothesize that Mary is actually a symbol of the 'heretic' writers 'church,' much like Peter who serves as a symbol for those Christians who would go on to form the Orthodox church. By placing Mary as a close companion of Jesus, the author is attempting to illustrate that their 'church' and set of beliefs are not only superior, but closer to Jesus' true message than the message and texts of Peter's church.

V. Conclusion

In sum, *The Gospel of Mary* presents a different depiction of Mary Magdalene than the *Gospel of Thomas*, though I believe they employ the same gender construction. In *Thomas*, Mary has not yet left her earthly female spot on the gender spectrum. She needs Jesus' teachings and help in order to move forward to the next place, the more heavenly 'male' prototype, Adam, before she can hope to achieve heaven as a solitary one. In the *Gospel of Mary*, Mary has reached the second stage as the more perfect male as it is clear that she not only received the knowledge of Jesus but can retell it to her male counterparts, even if not all of them are open to understanding it.

As Thimmes states: "If the biblical texts provide a constant portrait of Mary Magdalene as disciple, apostle and witness to the resurrected Jesus, the Gnostic texts portray her in such diverse ways that is impossible to easily categorize the presentations."³⁹ Both the *Gospels of Thomas* and *Mary* differ from the canon traditions of *Mark*, *Matthew*, *Luke* and *John*. In both *Thomas* and *Mary* we find no mention of the seven demons, the exorcism, nor any mention of any crimes that would lead one to believe Mary was an adulteress and prostitute. The only thing the canon and non-canonical texts seem to agree on is that she was a follower of Jesus. This begs the question, is there a historical Mary Magdalene? While the answer to this question may forever remain unknown to us, it is important to remember that these different depictions are there not because the canon and non-canonical writers were lying for their own sport, but because the authors existed in different Christianities that held radically polemical traditions. These varying Christianities fought with each other over almost everything, including the role and history of Mary Magdalene. We may never fully know who Mary was. Modern view of this woman has come to us "from conflated and erroneous biblical interpretations, popular legends, and Christian art"⁴⁰ but it is unfair to dismiss the canon altogether. After all, they do share many similarities; but so do the Nag Hammadi texts, so it is equally unfair to dismiss them. Historical memory is a dangerous thing to take as absolute historical truth and it is perhaps time that scholars had fresh eyes to Mary Magdalene's story, wide and unwieldy as it is. Scholars and students alike need to consider all the sources that tell

the tale of Mary Magdalene, whether that story is one that presents her as a former demon possessed prostitute, or as a perfected human who is on her way to achieving heaven.

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Endnotes

- ¹ Lucy Winkett, "Go Tell! Thinking about Mary Magdalene," *Feminist Theology* 29 (2002), 19.
- ² Pamela Thimmes, "Memory and Re-Vision: Mary Magdalene Research Since 1975," *Biblical Studies* 6 (1996), 196.
- ³ I am not trying to claim that the four Gospels of *Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John* are not in some way rooted in some historical fact, but the fact is that these Gospels were written at minimum 50 years and at maximum 70 years after the life and death of the historical Jesus. They reflect the authors own views on Jesus and their 'good news' is a projection of the time in which they lived and the message they themselves are personally trying to convey. This goes to Mary Magdalene as well, she is part of the grand story each author is trying to tell. If there was a historical Mary Magdalene, and some scholars doubt there was she may or may not have lived the life that the canon (and non canonical texts) claims. See Stephen J Shoemaker, "Rethinking the 'Gnostic Mary': Mary of Nazareth and Mary of Magdala in Early Christian Tradition," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 9 (2001), 555-595.
- ⁴ Seven is also, of course, a powerful number in the ancient world, meant to symbolize great power and magic. Jesus being able to cast out seven demons is indicative of his own prowess.
- ⁵ *Luke* 8:2.
- ⁶ *John* 8:3.
- ⁷ Winkett, "Go Tell!" 19.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁹ *Mark* 15:40. See also: *Matthew* 27:56, *Luke* 23:49, and *John* 19:25.
- ¹⁰ *Luke* 24:1
- ¹¹ *Matthew* 28:5
- ¹² Winkett, "Go Tell!" 19.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ James Robinson, ed, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1978), 5.
- ¹⁵ Helmut Koester, "The Gospel of Thomas" in *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, James Robinson, ed., (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1978), 126.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 138.
- ¹⁷ Jorunn Jacobson Buckley, "An Interpretation of Logion 114 in 'The Gospel of Thomas'" *Novum Testamentum* 27 (July, 1985), 246.
- ¹⁸ I want to make it clear here that I say he exhibits misogynistic tendencies, not that Peter is a misogynist, but rather what Peter says sounds very akin to what modernity would deem as misogyny.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ Pamela Thimmes, "Memory and Re-Vision," 207.
- ²² Jorunn Jacobson Buckley, "An Interpretation of Logion 114," 246.
- ²³ It is interesting to note that the Gospel of Thomas is not alone on this. The Gospel of Philip states: "When Eve was still in Adam, death did not exist. When she was separated from him death came into being. If he enters again and attains his former self, death will be no more." From Wesley W. Isenberg, "The Gospel of Philip," in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, James Robinson, ed, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1978), 150.
- ²⁴ Helmut Koester, "Gospel of Thomas", 143.
- ²⁵ Jorunn Jacobson Buckley, "An Interpretation of Logion 114," 265.
- ²⁶ The actual process is very veiled in cryptic language and never fully explained in the Gospel of Thomas.
- ²⁷ Pamela Thimmes, "Memory and Re-Vision", 207.
- ²⁸ George W. MacRae and R. McL. Wilson, translators, "The Gospel of Mary," in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, James Robinson, ed, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1978), 525.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 526.
- ³⁰ Pamela Thimmes, "Memory and Re-Vision," 209.
- ³¹ Jean-Yves Leloup, *The Gospel of Thomas*, translated by Joseph Rowe (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 1986), 224.
- ³² George W. MacRae and R. McL. Wilson, "The Gospel of Mary," 527.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 526.
- ³⁴ See *Matthew* 16:18 which states, "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."
- ³⁵ I am using the word heretic here not as a theological term but rather to draw the differences between the two groups. These groups are heretics only in the eyes of those that oppose them.
- ³⁶ Pamela Thimmes, "Memory and Re-Vision," 209.
- ³⁷ The Gospel of Philip says: "There were three who always with the Lord: Mary his mother and her sister and Magdalene, the one who was called his companion....and the companion of the Savior was Mary Magdalene and he loved her more than all the disciples and use to kiss her often on her mouth." From Pamela Thimmes, "Memory and Revision," 213.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 205.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 194.