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Advisor's Note

Dear Reader,

Thanks to the contributions of the student authors as well as the dedicated efforts of the editorial team, 2022–2023 is the first academic year in which two issues of *Crescat Scientia* have appeared. Bethany Pineda and Keira Swift deserve special mention. Without their perseverance and faith in this student journal it would not have been nearly so successful. (And they have now done this three times in a row!) Together, the editors have done an admirable job in selecting and formatting papers that represent an expansive range of historical study, from the motivations for medieval pilgrimage to the enduring legacy of cholera.

To be sure, UVU faculty have done their part to encourage all these efforts, but any judgment must credit the students themselves for the ongoing quality of this journal. Wrestling with the meaning of the past can be a daunting task. The contributors to the Spring 2023 *Crescat* have shown that they are up to that challenge.

Congratulations to Bethany, Keira, Addison, Smith, and to all the authors.

May knowledge grow!

Keith Snedegar
Faculty Advisor

Editor's Note

When Bethany and I originally joined the staff of *Crescat Scientia* in Spring of 2022, Bethany as partially responsible for the Journal's resurrection in a post-Covid world, myself joining as an editor with too much time on my hands, we did not expect our academic careers to be much altered. However, through the process of publishing three editions, our college experiences have been greatly enriched by the collaboration we have undertaken with our fellow budding scholars. We have had the privilege to work with amazing students who have greatly aided our publishing process, and have learnt fascinating stories of the past from our contributing authors. With the help of Professor Snedegar every step of the way, we are both relieved and excited to share our final edition as Editors-in-Chief.

Whilst it is not necessary for an edition of *Crescat* to have an overarching theme, I would like to propose that this 20th anniversary edition is a celebration of learning. Our papers cover a wide range of topics, from the Sephardic Diaspora to one Doctor working in Choleric stricken London. All of these papers are a testament to the skill of the writers, and the passion for cultivation of knowledge that they all possess.

I could not have completed this third edition without the help of Bethany, nor without our amazing editing team. We hope that this edition helps inspire readers to seek out to understand the past wherever they are able, as we all strive together for a better and brighter future.

Happy learning!

Keira Swift,
Co-Editor-in-Chief
Crescat Scientia

Motivations for Medieval Religious Pilgrimage

Sienna Galvez

Many records from prominent historians in medieval times describe a special kind of journey that seemed to be common for many in the Middle Ages: the religious pilgrimage. Though historical records from writers such as Bede and Mandeville often described in detail the significance of these journeys in terms of their sacred destinations and other sacred sites along the way, we are often not told explicitly the motivations that inspired such pilgrimages in the first place. The reasons that compelled these faithful pilgrims to embark on journeys, whether long or short, is the purpose of this analysis. Based on historical research and analysis of various scholars who have studied pilgrimages in the medieval West, I posit that religious pilgrimages were significant for people of the Middle Ages because they were motivated by a need to connect tangibly with the spiritual, they connected individuals to spiritually enriching and even life-changing experiences such as miraculous healings and conversions, and they served as a way to escape from the drudgery and difficulties of everyday life through social interaction. One, two, or perhaps all of these motivations were what inspired pilgrims across religions and social classes to embark on their journeys. Whether those journeys took weeks and

months to arrive in a completely different land, or whether it was a regular intentional visit to a local relic or shrine, my research has led me to the conclusion that these pilgrimages were a primary way for believers of both Christian and Muslim faiths to have fulfilling experiences with the sacred and the divine.

The religions of Christianity and Islam heavily influenced almost every aspect of everyday life in the Middle Ages. To understand why pilgrimages were so significant in those times it is essential to recognize this fact and understand its implications. Politically and socially the world moved around and with religion in the Middle Ages. Life could be difficult and dreary for the average person; it seems that religion was a lifeline of other-worldly help and hope that many people relied on. Both spiritual experiences during one's mortal life and the promise of spiritual exaltation in the next may have offered a sense of fulfilment that was hard to come by elsewhere. Another important aspect of religious worship in the Middle Ages is that of physical place. As evidenced by many historical accounts, religion in the Middle Ages was very based on the tangible—manifestations of God's power in people's lives that could be seen, heard, and felt. Miracle stories often focus on fantastical healings of ailments, the visual appearance of some token of the divine, or simply the opportunity to witness the presence of a Saint, in life or in death. Religious pilgrimages offered the opportunity to participate in more of these experiences while also gaining religious merit and escaping from the drudgeries of everyday life. Travel in the Middle Ages was often difficult and not possible for everyone, so in the cases in which significant travel was undertaken, the destination had to be worth the trouble in some way or another. The quest made to visit a holy site or to see and touch a holy relic was of utmost importance to those who ascribed to these faiths that centered on these anchoring physical spaces.

What exactly made a place holy and what was it about these pilgrimage sites that attracted believers from near and far? The introductory remarks in John Mandeville's account give a clear

picture of the reverence that was given to places like Jerusalem:

> Since it is so that the land beyond the sea—that is, the Holy Land, which is called the Promised Land—is beyond all other lands the most excellent and the most worthy and lady and sovereign of all other lands, and was blessed and sanctified and consecrated by the precious body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.[1]

A firm belief that Christ had lived and died in Jerusalem was enough to attract many to what was revered as the Holy City. Even if it required sacrifice, travel was deemed necessary for having the true experience of having been able to step foot in the historical site of the Lord's life. In those days there literally was no replacement for personally visiting these sites. Word-of-mouth accounts from others who had visited holy sites couldn't compare. If anything, the dispersion of both written and oral accounts about holy sites encouraged and promoted others' pilgrimages. The opportunity to be on such hallowed ground might have even been considered the highlight of a person's short life. Knowing that there were many who wished to travel to Jerusalem and other sites that would be spiritually significant, Mandeville wrote that the purpose of his account was to help others who might choose to make the journey themselves by "[describing] for them what way they might take" because he had taken such ways himself.[2] Accounts such as Mandeville's are useful historical evidence of how prevalent religion was in geography; throughout his travel writings he often centralizes his stories and explanations around places where significant Biblical events or relics were located or where churches were to be found. Even medieval maps clue us in to the centrality of religion and the reverence placed on holy places—for example, most Christian maps of the time put Jerusalem at the very center. Without these grounding physical places that were of such spiritual significance, the world as they knew it literally did not exist.

1. John Mandeville, *The Book of John Mandeville*, ed. Iain Macleod Higgins (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2011), 3.
2. Mandeville, *The Book of John Mandeville*, 5.

In his article on "Pilgrimage in Medieval Asia Minor," Clive Foss describes the primary motivations that would have compelled so many to go to Jerusalem, to see a relic, or to visit the grave of a saint. "To experience the presence or see the manifestation of the divine was the essential reason for pilgrimage," he notes, explaining that many sought the opportunity to confirm or perhaps strengthen their faith in the explanations or promises of divine power.[3] "A kind of pious tourism brought long-distance travelers to many sites."[4] As much as the opportunity to travel away from one's home could be an adventurous change from the normal, so also was it a form of "tourism" pursued with inherently religious intentions, in most cases. The promise of a greater life, in one way or another, was often the motivation for pilgrimage. Being in the presence of a holy saint, standing on the holy ground of an important Biblical event, or even touching a holy relic had the power to produce miracles of healing at best, the strengthened conviction of one's faith at the least. There was nothing to replace the personal significance and the potential spiritual benefits one could gain from these pilgrimages. Hearing about a spiritual event, thing, or person was nothing compared to the opportunity to witness one. Even simply the opportunity to pray at a sacred site or to be prayed over by a certain saint could be a strong motivation for undertaking a pilgrimage to a holy site.

> Whether pilgrims came to see sacred sites, witness miracles, or seek cures, they all prayed. Long-distance pilgrims, about whom something is known, traveled in order to pray at sacred sites, but the subject of the prayers of the mass of anonymous pilgrims is rarely attested. Help and protection were certainly important desires, as the numerous graffiti at the tomb of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesos attest. Protection on a grander scale was also a desire in many periods: saints could defend individuals and whole cities against attacks.[5]

3. Clive Foss, "Pilgrimage in Medieval Asia Minor," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56, (2002), 138.
4. Foss, "Pilgrimage," 138.
5. Foss, "Pilgrimage," 144.

Regardless of the desired outcome of such pilgrimages and the prayers that accompanied them, clearly there was a strong belief that physical presence in a holy site was a vital factor to having such yearnings fulfilled. You had to be there to experience it. Foss notes that "visible, tangible proof of a saint's power was a prime attraction for pilgrims."[6] The key word here is "tangible." In a world in which there was often such tangible and visible suffering (wars, plagues, hard physical labor of the average serf), tangible and visible evidence of divine presence was vital to counteract it. In her article "The Gazophylacium: An Argument for European Medieval Religious Sites as the First Museums in the West," Smiraglia makes this observation on the vital quality of the tangibility of popular pilgrim sites:

> Relics' associations with a particular individual and his/her own story and with considerations related to viewers' health or spiritual wellbeing were interrelated and were what drew pilgrims to sites. One of the most popular reasons for making a pilgrimage was to interact with the objects or location in some way, through viewing, contemplation, veneration, or touch. Relics were imbued by Christians of the period with various attractive properties that drew pilgrims: 'power to heal, power to grant requests, power to transfer its healing attributes to objects which had touched it.'[7]

Some sort of physical interaction with a holy object or even just a location that was considered holy was a strong motivator for pilgrimages. Objects and even just pieces of objects that were considered holy, from items as well-known as the alleged cross on which Christ was hung, as is mentioned in detail in Mandeville's account, down to the most ambiguous of acclaimed relics like "footprints in stone, marks on the ground from the Virgin's milk, regular marvellous appearances of water

6. Foss, "Pilgrimage," 141.

7. Christina Smiraglia, "The Gazophylacium: An Argument for European Medieval Religious Sites as the First Museums in the West," *Museum History Journal* 6, no. 2 (2013): 245.

and a folk miracle that had left no physical trace."[8] Though the description of such objects and miracles may seem incredibly far-fetched through our modern lens, faith was very different in the Middle Ages. Perhaps a mere coincidence that could be explained in scientific terms today would have been considered a manifestation of the divine by most at the time. The nature of pilgrimage may have had the "placebo" effect—people placed such high value and faith in seeing or experiencing a miracle on their pilgrimage that they convinced themselves a miracle had occurred, such as attributing a sudden improvement in health to God's healing hand. Regardless of the truth behind these incidents, one thing is certain: people needed a confirmation that God existed, that there was truly a heaven awaiting the righteous to someday relieve them of their present suffering. Pilgrimages led to places and circumstances that fulfilled that need.

The nature of the accounts we have that describe miracles involving saints were often very fantastical. The opportunity to witness such an event was presumably life-changing for all who were present, even the reason that many became converted to Christianity. It is logical to conclude that the spread of such stories would have motivated more people to embark on pilgrimages to seek out these saints with the hopes of being eyewitnesses themselves to something just as amazing. Take the stories of saints in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, for example. In each incident and miracle he relates regarding holy peoples in England, he usually describes the geographic locations of his stories in enough detail to orient the reader to a specific physical place. In his historical record, as Diana Webb notes in her book *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, Bede gives us "the foundations for our knowledge of early English pilgrimage."[9] In establishing that England indeed was the site of many significant Christian miracles, evidence of God's hand upon the land, he could legitimize England's standing as a Christian country that deserved

8. Mandeville, *The Book of John Mandeville*, 8–12; Mary Boyle, "Blood, Stones, and Holy Bones," *History Today* (2014).

9. Diana Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, (London: Hambledon and London, 2000), 10.

a place in the wider religious landscape of Western Europe. As valid as was the desire to travel long and far for spiritual experiences, Bede was localizing spirituality to where he was, cluing us in to another important aspect of the pilgrimage—that the importance of the journey was not necessarily in the distance, but in the true and faithful desire of the pilgrim to engage in a spiritually invigorating experience. As Diana Webb notes:

> A journey, however short, had to be involved, but it was perhaps just as important to the definition of a pilgrimage that it was for the participants an occasion in their lives, whether it was triggered by the need to seek a cure or by some other personal crisis, or whether it marked a seasonal feast or merely a day out, not something to be undervalued in the medieval period given the monotony and drudgery of most people's daily round.[10]

It has been documented that people of many ages and social statuses participated in pilgrimages to holy sites, but the term "pilgrimage" often comes with the idea of a journey that would have taken several weeks, months or even years and might have crossed wide geographical spaces. Considering the lack of financial resources available to the lower-class population of the Middle Ages, it is unrealistic to posit that all pilgrims could have afforded such a long and strenuous journey. Those who were educated enough to be able to write accounts of their journeys were often those who would have been members of an upper-class, such as clergymen. While their experiences are more well-documented, their writing perhaps did not reflect the experience of all pilgrims who came from all backgrounds. Foss helps us understand a more all- encompassing view of the kinds of people that might have participated in pilgrimages:

> Whether in great crowds or as individuals, locals and foreigners made their way as pilgrims to the great and lesser shrines. For the most part, their identity is unknown; only a few prominent individuals and foreigners stand out, but it is clear that masses of people

10. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, *xv–xvi*.

> were involved in pilgrimage in all periods. The greatest numbers frequented the most famous shrines, but even the humble and local attracted people. Most of them, at all times and in all shrines, were certainly local people, overwhelmingly peasants. In this respect, Asia Minor, with its large number of shrines of local interest, differed from the Holy Land where pilgrims were primarily monks. Travel there, of course, involved vast distances and amounts of time not normally available.[11]

Here Foss's analysis helps us understand that pilgrimages were not unique to the wealthy or clergymen, but that it was likely that pilgrimages involving long-distance travel were probably not commonly taken on by the poor. Clergymen who had more resources, like the monks mentioned in the above passage, would have been more likely to visit the more prominent sites like Jerusalem, even if the Holy Land was not in close proximity to them. Locals of religious shrines, relics, and smaller holy sites, as Foss notes, were "overwhelmingly peasants." Without the resources to travel to prominent sites like the Holy Land, they sought blessing, spiritual enrichment and healing in visiting places that were more accessible to them. It was likely understood within the religious community that what was most valued by God was the individual's inner conviction in their motivation to visit these sites, not whether they had the economic means to go as far as Jerusalem or not. In her analysis comparing pilgrimage sites to modern museums, Christina Smiraglia comments on the ways in which pilgrim attractions had the ability to bring together people from all walks of life:

> Like modern museums, these sites had a mandate to cater to anyone, rather than simply the elite. Pilgrims came from all walks of life, social stations, and geographical locations. Pilgrimage sites thus served as places of social integration and had the effect of bonding together—however transiently—at a certain level of social life, large numbers of men and women who, because of feudal localization and rural decentralization of socioeconomic relationships, would otherwise

11. Foss, "Pilgrimage," 146.

> never have come into contact. Even the iconography of some sites welcomed a broad audience; stained glass and sculptures represented professions from peasants to tradesmen to royalty, allowing a visitor of any station to see him/herself reflected.[12]

In a time in which the division of social classes was often very polarized, it is interesting to imagine the ways in which pilgrimages brought people of all statuses together. One of the few universal parts of life that united almost everyone in the Middle Ages was the prevalence of religion. Perhaps a unique social interaction with groups that people otherwise would rarely encounter was another strong motivation behind pilgrimages. Smiraglia also notes that while it would appear the primary motivations for pilgrimages were based in spiritual conviction, we can't assume that these were the only reasons for the journey. Other researchers mention social pros that could have been gained through pilgrimages, even the opportunity for courtship.[13] Both the social interaction that occurred at the destination site of a pilgrimage as well as the social opportunities involved in the journey should be taken into consideration. Travel nearly always happened in groups, as is evidenced by many pilgrim writers including accounts of their travel companions. Groups of faithful believers may have joined together to create travel bands and accompany one another on the trip to pilgrim sites. The opportunity to go on a pilgrim journey and the eventual reward of arriving at a holy site was considered a great spiritual achievement and an occasion for celebration, warranting group participation in festivities along the way and at the destination. Webb writes, "there were also clearly elements of fellowship and festivity involved when parties of neighbors banded together to make long or short journeys to a shrine."[14] Even if the length of a journey was not extensive, the element of fellowship and companionship in participating in the pilgrim experience was likely common. In this way pilgrimages not only

12. Smiraglia, "The Gazophylacium," 240.
13. Smiraglia, "The Gazophylacium," 247.
14. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, *xvi*.

offered great spiritual reward but perhaps also included enjoyable or advantageous elements of social interaction that were not available in many other ways.

Through the limited writings we have of individuals who participated in religious pilgrimage in the Middle Ages we can conclude that for many religious people the opportunity to participate in some form of pilgrimage was placed in high regard. For both rich and poor a pilgrimage offered the opportunity to have an exciting experience that varied from everyday life and offered social interaction. Pilgrimages were the gateway to having more dramatic and tangible spiritual experiences that could perhaps be some of the highlights of an individual's life. In many ways, for the average man who sought daily evidence of God's presence in a difficult and dark world, a pilgrimage may have been one of the primary ways to stretch out a faithful hand to the divine and reach for something greater. Whether the spiritual desires of every pilgrim were satisfied is unknown, but clearly, enough people had remarkable experiences on their pilgrimages to keep many sites of holy relics, holy saints, and holy lands very popular as travel destinations for many years.

Religious Fluidity and the Sephardic Diaspora of the Mediterranean

Nic Jensen

The Mediterranean during the early modern period is often associated with being a place of strict religious identities: Jewish, Christian, or Muslim.[1] However, as historians continue to study the lives of the people within this region, it is becoming clearer that a sense of fluidity existed around one's identity. As individuals and families could be seen converting to other faiths to varying degrees, what stands out is their reasoning for doing so. From genuine piety to conversions for political and economic gain, the reasons behind such conversions are as numerous as there are conversion stories. One group in particular stands out among the rest in this regard: the Sephardim.[2] Navigating legal and social codes that barred them from certain occupations and even entire cities in Europe, the Jewish population of the Mediterranean utilized the fluidity of their religious identity to not only operate within a system designed against them, but to flourish, becoming well established merchants, artisans, and artists. Though this fluidity of identity was used by many throughout the Mediterranean during this time

1. For our purposes, the Mediterranean will be defined as outlined by Fernand Braudel.
2. A note on spelling conventions used in this paper: the term "Sephardic" is the adjective form of the noun "Sephardi," the plural of which is "Sephardim." The terms Ashkenazi, Ashkenazim, and Ashkenazic also follow this convention.

period, the Jewish people of this region, especially those of the Sephardic diaspora, implemented their fluid religious identity to not only circumvent law codes written against them, but also to create a social and cultural network between the many Jewish populations spanning the many empires of the Mediterranean.

As the Spanish monarchy attempted to consolidate their power after the *Reconquista* of the Iberian peninsula, one aspect of their newly reformed kingdom would not go unnoticed. The perceived issue of a non-Christian population was increasingly considered a threat to peace in the region, despite the fact that in post-conquest Spain violence was generally carried out against this non-Christian minority rather than by it. Though a portion of the Jewish population did convert due to this pressure, the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition was another step to further regulate the new Christian population. In their book on the history of the Mediterranean, Monique O'Connell and Eric Dursteler discuss the evolving tactics used by the Spanish monarchy to deal with this Jewish question: "conversos were singled out because of their perceived nonconformity and suspicion that they were continuing to practice Judaism secretly, though there is good evidence that by the time the inquisition was established many conversos had embraced their new faith."[3] As demonstrated here, the suspicion held against the *converso* population was in part due to the mistrust of genuine conversions. While this mistrust may have been generally unfounded during this time, the Spanish chose to escalate their measures against their Jewish subjects in 1492, outright expelling any who denied conversion to the Catholic faith.

With pogroms, the inquisition, and the expulsion edict all targeting the Jewish population of Spain to varying degrees, the resulting Sephardic diaspora left an undeniable mark on Mediterranean life and culture. While many Jews converted to Christianity during this time, motivations for doing so varied from case to case. Though historians can never know for certain the

3. Monique O'Connell and Eric R. Dursteler, *The Mediterranean World: From the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Napoleon* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016), 221.

primary reasons for conversion, one aspect is often overlooked. Linguist and historian David Wacks argues that too often the focus is on the Jewishness of the diaspora, and that "Sepharadim/conversos [*sic*] formed an important and mostly overlooked (in Hispanic studies) group of Hispanophones whose use of the Spanish language . . . fell outside the sphere of Spanish imperial power, and whose identity as Hispanophones did not respond to official discourses and practices of hispanidad."[4] In other words, arguing from a linguistic perspective, Wacks points to the fact that not only did the Sephardic Jews take their Jewish culture with them as they spread across the Mediterranean, but their Spanish heritage as well. In the primary sources this can be seen when some Sephardic *conversos* would attempt to reenter Spanish society as new Christians.

After the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, there came a period in which Christian and Jewish relations across Europe dramatically changed. As the Sephardim spread across the Mediterranean, their dual identities as both Spanish and Jewish marked them as outsiders across their travels as they were often "too Jewish" for Christian communities, and "too Spanish" for Jewish communities. Professor Jonathan Ray states that the "European reactions to the Jews of the early modern Mediterranean all share a sense of (re)discovery of the once-familiar Jew."[5] Framing the diaspora as a rediscovery or reentry of the Sephardim into Christian and Muslim spaces, Ray contrasts this new Jewish culture to that of the Jews already present in such communities. Jews of German descent (also known as the Ashkenazim or Tedeschi), due to their more or less accepted role within the societies they resided, tended to be more solid in their religious identity. While still being receptive of the Sephardim into their communities, Ashkenazic Jews did not typically fulfill the role of the global tradesman that their Spanish brethren took on. In actuality, the pockets of Ashke-

4. David Wacks, "Sepharadim/Conversos and Premodern Global Hispanism," *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 20, no. 1/2 (2019): 169–70.

5. Jonathan Ray, "Christian (Re)Encounters with Jews in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean." *Jewish History* 30, no. 3–4 (2016): 205.

nazim communities in Italy, Germany, and Flanders helped in establishing the cross-cultural network that the Sephardic traders would utilize in their travels.

Luis de la Ysla, a new Christian put on trial on May 15, 1514 by the Spanish Inquisition, is an example of the fluid religious identity the diaspora and Sephardic trade routes could create in the sixteenth century.[6] Born as Abraham Abzaradiel in 1484, Ysla was a part of the initial diaspora of Sephardic Jews to be expelled from Spain. Soon after his flight from Spain, Ysla was baptized in Italy, though his religious identity would seemingly fluctuate as he traveled across the Mediterranean from Italy and the Balkans to Turkey and Egypt. Ysla claimed during his trial that he had remained a devout Christian throughout his life and, now aging and blind, he was seeking asylum and retirement in Spain as a new Christian.[7] While Ysla's testimony to the inquisitorial council provides a wealth of insight into the life of the Sephardic *converso*, to take everything he states at face value would be to ignore the context of the situation. As a self-described wanderer throughout the Mediterranean, it would have been advantageous of Ysla to employ his fluid religious identity as he entered and exited Christian and Muslim states. In order to freely travel and trade within the Ottoman Empire itself, Ysla most likely claimed to be and portrayed himself as a Jew. Likewise, his attempt to return to Spain after the onset of his blindness can be understood as him trying to reenter into his native lands as a former Spaniard or possibly to rely on the alms of the church as an ailing individual. Nevertheless, an important factor in Ysla's life was his fluid religious identity, though this was not the case for every diasporic Jew during this era.

One characteristic of Jewish culture during the early modern period that adapted rapidly due to the diaspora is seen in rabbinic texts of the time. In her article "Rabbis on Refugees," Rebecca

6. An account of Ysla's life and trial can be found in "Renegade Jew: Luis de la Ysla" in *Inquisitorial Inquiries: Brief Lives of Secret Jews & Other Heretics*, ed. and trans. Richard L. Kagan and Abigail Dyer (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011): 21–35.

7. "Renegade Jew: Luis de la Ysla," 27.

Wartell examines such texts to better understand the lives of Jewish immigrants from Italy. Though she focuses on the community of Jews in Candia, she asserts that the rabbinic texts "offer new insights into the subject of *converso* migration in the mid-sixteenth century."[8] These texts were often rabbis ruling in on social and religious disputes within various Jewish communities. One such case is found in a Sephardic community in Aleppo, in a dispute between a Jewish woman and a man whom she claimed she taught her metallurgy trade to who then went back on a previous agreement and started his own business. Wanting to keep her trade within her purview, her case was brought before the Jewish religious authority.[9] The case itself is not particularly noteworthy, but the details of those involved shed light into the work life of the Sephardim within Ottoman lands. What is observed here is not only a woman owning, operating, and teaching a trade, which in of itself stands out as unique, but the degree of agency and freedom that she and the man whom she accuses are able to wield in what is essentially a foreign country. Where in Christian Europe the *converso* population was under constant surveillance and suspicion, Jews who immigrated to Ottoman lands were able to abandon their ambiguous religious identity under the law and practiced their faith openly and relatively unfettered.

While Jews in the Ottoman Empire enjoyed a degree of religious freedom that was not seen in Christian Europe, instances of conversions still occurred. J. A. Rodrigues da Silva Tavim in his studies of Sephardic communities in the Ottoman Empire posits that individuals that renounced their religious identity would often need to sever ties with the Jewish community as well. Those closely tied to their Sephardic roots would be seen as flippant in their conversions and dealt with harshly or at the

8. Rebecca Wartell, "Rabbis on Refugees: Theological Responses to the Treatment of Converso Migrants in Sixteenth-Century Candia," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 34, no. 2 (December 2019): 174.

9. "The Woman With the Steel Welding Monopoly" in *Jewish Questions: Responsa on Sephardic Life in the Early Modern Period*, ed. and trans. Matt Goldish (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008); 26–28.

very least deemed untrustworthy.[10] However, this pressure to adhere to one's traditional faith or to convert for various benefits was not unique to Jews in the Ottoman Empire. To make the decision to proclaim a new faith was to potentially sever all ties with one's cultural community. That being so, the cases that are described here ought to be understood as life altering social decisions that not only affected the individual but their families and their communities.

For example, in a 1620 dispute between a Jewish woman and her apostate husband, the wife sought divorce and custody of their child.[11] Occurring on the isle of Zante within the Venetian Ionian islands, the case describes a man who converted from Judaism to Islam and was considering conversion to Christianity in order to become a mercenary of Venice to combat Uskok raiders. While the man is described as "a debauched individual" who "debased himself with forbidden intercourse and prohibited foods," the fact remains that, irreligious as he seems, this man utilized the fluidity of his religious identity to mesh with both Muslims and Christians.[12] While many during this time viewed conversions performed under duress or in response to religious persecution as an acceptable practice to avoid punishment, the Sephardic community of Zante considered this man an outcast from the Jewish community and condemned his actions. In many cases, the fluidity of religious identity was seen as a way to escape persecution, slavery, or even execution, but for the apostate soldier of fortune, it was a means to an end of his own whims and goals that ultimately resulted in the loss of his wife, his child, and his community. Though this man is an example of religious fluidity used methodically and purposefully, his story also shows how, for many, the fluidness of their identity

10. José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, "Portuguese New Christians in the Turkish 'Carrefour' Between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean in the Sixteenth Century: Decentralization and Conversion." *Journal of Early Modern History* 17, no. 5/6 (November 2013): 562.

11. "An Apostate Soldier of Fortune" in *Jewish Questions: Responsa on Sephardic Life in the Early Modern Period*, ed. and trans. Matt Goldish (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008): 61–63.

12. "An Apostate Soldier of Fortune," 62.

could result in them being deemed a heretic and put on trial.

Sarra Copia Sulam was a Venetian Jewess known for her poetry and writing during the mid-seventeenth century.[13] In her correspondence with Baldassare Bonifaccio, a Venetian cleric, she was accused of not believing in the immortality of the soul, a belief punishable for Christians as heresy.[14] Though Bonifaccio's accusation would have been viable to any who professed Christianity, because Copia was a Jew it was not possible to have her tried for heresy. Therefore, it can be understood here that he is not seeking to condemn her, but rather to urge her towards conversion to Christianity. Bonifaccio saw her situation as an opportunity to debate her beliefs and pressure her to leave her traditional faith. Copia, on the other hand, would not yield. Standing her ground while defending herself, she wrote a manifesto in response.[15]

What stands out here among the exchange between Sarra Copia and Baldassare Bonifaccio is the pressure to convert from the cleric. Copia was renowned both within her community and from outside. As a fairly well off Jewess living in the relatively free city of Venice, she was able to retain her religious identity and her social status. However, when she came under suspicion of heresy—particularly for a belief that, although not common, was not totally unheard of in Judaism—her friends and counterparts seemingly left her to fend for herself.[16] Copia's defense of her beliefs and her refusal to convert to Christianity demonstrate

13. In this essay, I will be referring to her as Sarra Copia, or simply Copia, as her surname Sulam would come later in her life after her marriage to Jacob Sulam.

14. Baldassare Bonifaccio, "Letter from Baldassare Bonifaccio to Sarra Copia (End of 1619)" in *Jewish Poet and Intellectual in Seventeenth-Century Venice: The Works of Sarra Copia Sulam in Verse and Prose Along with Writings of Her Contemporaries in Her Praise, Condemnation, or Defense*, ed. and trans. Don Harran (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 269–73. See Also "Sarra Copia's Letter in Response (10 January 1620)," 273–78 in the same volume.

15. Sarra Copia Sulam, "Sarra Copia's Letter in Response (10 January 1620)," in *Jewish Poet and Intellectual in Seventeenth-Century Venice: The Works of Sarra Copia Sulam in Verse and Prose Along with Writings of Her Contemporaries in Her Praise, Condemnation, or Defense*, ed. and trans. Don Harran (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 273–78.

16. Emily Taitz, Sondra Henry, and Cheryl Tallan. *The JPS Guide to Jewish Women: 600 B.C.E.to 1900 C.E.* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2003), 116.

how religious identity, though fluid for many during the early modern period, was not treated lightly by anyone. Sarra Copia's story presumably goes against the idea of fluid religious identity, however the fact that Bonifaccio urges her to convert in the first place points to the very real potential for conversion. Though it may not have been fairly prevalent in their lives, it was not unheard of for people to adopt new religious identities during this time.

A defining event of the early modern period was the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. Due to this decision by the Spanish monarchy, a new diaspora was created as Sephardic Jews spread across the Mediterranean. Though this decision was made in conjunction with already existing pogroms and the foundation of the inquisition to combat the perceived problem of disingenuous conversions among the Jewish population, it ultimately created a group of people that could fluidly adapt their religious identity as they traveled between Christian and Islamic nations. As demonstrated above, this tactic was considered and employed by various Jewish people in a variety of situations. Whether it was for seeking asylum in their native lands, or for economic or social gain, instances of Sephardic Jews putting on religious identities contrary to their upbringing was not an uncommon occurrence. Yet, as seen in the case of the apostate soldier, the process of conversion, or multiple conversions at that, was not a decision that came without consequences. Even in the case of Sarra Copia, the fact that conversion was a possibility led to her writing in defense of her decision to remain a Jew and adhere to her beliefs. Scholars often discuss the fluidity of identity during a time where simply changing one's clothes and mannerisms could change how one was perceived. While this fluidity was not unique to the diasporic Jews of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Jewish people of the Mediterranean were able to adapt their religious identity to the ever changing legal landscape to suit their needs while still possessing an intricate social and trade network bridging Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

The Dahomey and the Atlantic Slave Trade: Economic Gain, Warfare, Gender Norms, and Moral Greys

John Tyler Laycock

John Thornton opens his article, "African Political Ethics and the Slave Trade" by saying, "one of the great paradoxes of African history, indeed of world history, is the response of African leaders and decision makers to the slave trade."[1] He goes onto say that it is "obvious that the slave trade could not have proceeded very far had African decision makers, both political and commercial, not cooperated with the European merchants who sought to buy laborers on the African coast."[2] It is accurate to say that African people engaged in trading members of neighboring nations or groups for items and currency of value. This practice cemented an African reliance on European powers as consumers of African goods and services, and to some degree was a part of future European imperialism in the region. Many of the prominent African kingdoms of the time were fully engaged in the slave trade and gained in multiple ways, whether that be in political power or economic prowess. These kingdoms were able to derive a portion of their power from their relationship to the slave trade and the processes that

1. John Thornton, "African Political Ethics and the Slave Trade," in *Abolition and Imperialism in Britain, Africa, and the Atlantic*, ed. Derek R. Peterson. (Athens: Ohio), 38.
2. Thornton, "African Political Ethics," 38.

made the slave trade possible, mainly consistent warfare. The Africans leaders involved in the Atlantic slave trade profited and gained political power through the trade of human chattel, however as time went on, it became clear that Europeans saw these countries as reprehensible based on their relationship or lack of relationship to the slave trade. These are best expressed through a case study of the Dahomey people.

As David Northrup says in his book, *Africa's Discovery of Europe*, "popular accounts of the Atlantic slave trade most commonly present Africans as victims—and little else. Even African slave traders are usually cast in the role of victims, not eager participants."[3] Northrup is correct in his analysis, as the truth of the situation is much more nuanced. Northrup goes onto say "most modern historians who have examined the mechanics of Africa's Atlantic exchanges agree that African traders and rulers expected to benefit from these transactions and worked hard to ensure they did."[4] Both Africans and Europeans were victims in certain aspects of the trade. Northup used an example of Benin and Kongo and their similarities and differences. Both kingdoms encouraged trade with Europeans and actively sought to control it. Benin, according to Northrup, "established special markets for overseas visitors. . . . At first most of Benin's exports consisted of pepper, ivory, cloth and beads, but Portuguese demand for slaves . . . led the oba in 1516 to create separate markets for male and for female slaves."[5] Benin was able to maintain a monopoly over trade in the area, However, as Northrup mentions, Kongo was not able to do so, as its trade had less variety of desirable goods, outside of slaves. At first the King of Kongo disliked the slave trade's destructive impact, however, his viewpoint changed for a few reasons, those being a steady supply of slaves through war and the trade passing through his country providing jobs and increased circulation

3. David Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe,* (New York: Oxford University Press USA), 55.
4. Northrup, *Africa's Discovery,* 55.
5. Northrup, *Africa's Discovery,* 57.

of their currency.

Many African nations were involved in forms of slavery on their own before and during Atlantic slavery, however it looked quite different than Atlantic chattel slavery. According to Jean Godot, a French sailor who found himself in the Ivory Coast area, slavery was used as a punishment for theft.[6] According to Godot, "The culprits were severely tortured . . . and later they are brought to Sauco in order to be made slaves for six years. This is the way they make justice when the offender did not deserve death."[7] Married women were considered to be "slaves of their men."[8] Godot also says, "In this country adultery is punished with a fine or with slavery."[9] African slavery then, can seemingly be interpreted as a form of social debt, where the slave is expected to pay back to their master in some sense.

The Kingdom of Dahomey

Robin Law in the introduction of *Consul John Beecroft's Journal of his Mission to Dahomey, 1850* said, "The kingdom of Dahomey was located in what is nowadays the southern part of the Republic of Bénin . . . its capital being the town of Abomey, about 100 km inland from the coast."[10] According to Beecroft's accounts, Dahomey was only on its ninth king in 1850, meaning that the Kingdom was probably founded during the first half of the seventeenth century.[11] According to Law, "it had developed into a major military power, which dominated the surrounding region during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."[12]

According to Edna Bay in her book, *Wives of the Leopard: Gender, Politics, and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey*,

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6. Pierluigi Valsecchi, "African Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Manuscript of Jean Godot," in *African Voices on Slavery and the Slave Trade: Volume 1, The Sources*, ed. Alice Bellagamba, Sandra E. Greene, and Martin A. Klein, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 257.
7. Valsecchi," African Slavery and the Slave trade,"258.
8. Valsecchi," African Slavery and the Slave trade," 258.
9. Valsecchi," African Slavery and the Slave trade,"259.
10. Robin Law, "Introduction," in *Consul John Beecroft's Journal of His Mission to Dahomey, 1850,* ed. Robin Law, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), *xvii.*
11. Law, "Introduction" in *Consul John Beecroft's Journal, xviii.*
12. Beecroft, *Consul John Beecroft's Journal, xviii.*

> many scholars and writers . . . have tried to counteract the negative stereotypes of the kingdom. . . . Yet no one today disputes the essential veracity upon which the stereotypes of savagery were based. Dahomey was a central player in the overseas slave trade from West Africa.[13]

There are many myths surrounding the Dahomey people, mainly those making extravagant claims of cannibalism, mutilation, and lakes of blood.[14] In regards to Dahomey practices, Bay states that "those cultural characteristics that appear to us as oddities—and that were once seen as the bizarre customs of an uncivilized nation—were logical developments of cultural traits found elsewhere in West Africa."[15]

The Dahomey, like the Kongo, which example was stated previously, are a good example of an African society that built their economic structure around the slave trade. Northrup says regarding the slave trade,

> in contrast to the increasing competitiveness among Europeans, the most notable change on the African side was growing centralization of the trade. . . . Powerful new kingdoms of Asante behind the Gold Coast and of Dahomey on the western Slave Coast effectively manipulated the operation and the terms of the trade.[16]

Before this shift, the Dahomey saw themselves as an inland nation. Unlike other inland nations, who could stay "militarily aloof" because of the wooded nature of their shoreline, the Dahomey did not have that luxury, and were exposed on their shoreline.[17] According to Karl Polanyi, in his book, *Dahomey and the Slave Trade: An Analysis of an Archaic Economy*, "the rationale of Dahomey's policy was stringent. In her precarious military

13. Edna G. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard: Gender, Politics, and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey*, (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 2.
14. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 2.
15. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 3–4.
16. Northrup, *Africa's Discovery,* 61.
17. Karl Polanyi, *Dahomey and the Slave Trade: An Analysis of an Archaic Economy,* (Seattle and London: The University of Washington Press, 1966), 22.

position, defense and slave trading were inseparable. Admittedly, the slave trade was also a source of very considerable revenue to the king."[18] Dahomey was surrounded at the time by militarily powerful nations, including Oyo, making small scale raids to take slaves an impossibility. The Kingdom of Dahomey instead focused their efforts on "large-scale slave wars and preventative action against over-powerful neighbors."[19] According to Polanyi, "slave trading by the state, which, apart from Ardra, Dahomey alone practiced in that region, grew into a convolute of incessant wars which raised the heat of the country's devotion to the warrior's way of life beyond all normal standards."[20] War was a major part of Dahomey's strategy, and "firearms soon penetrated further inland, reaching the growing kingdom of Dahomey which was intent on dominating the coast and its lucrative trade."[21]

It is known that women were part of the military within Dahomey. Culturally, Dahomey was an extremely hierarchical society, where no two people were seen as the same in ranking. This hierarchical nature promoted a respect for authority.[22] According to Bay, "a class system based on achieved status existed across kinship lines. The belief that an individual could rise in social status through merit applied to women not only as members of the lineage of their birth but also as wives in their husbands' households."[23] Different women in the society had different roles. Married women were expected to help their husband, as well as earn their own income to use for themselves. Higher class "palace" women worked for themselves and the king in positions such as farmers, traders, ritual specialists, artisans, and healers. Other non-married women, called *ahosi*, worked as "guards, soldiers, messengers, spies, prostitutes, performers, political advisors, ministers of state, governmental record keepers,

18. Polanyi, *Dahomey and the Slave Trade,* 22.
19. Polanyi, *Dahomey and the Slave Trade,* 22–23.
20. Polanyi, *Dahomey and the Slave Trade,* 23.
21. Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, 101.
22. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 13.
23. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 15.

and makers of state policy."[24] Women were also incorporated into Dahomey's military forces, an action that firmly went against European middle class social norms. According to Bay, "women soldiers march in great detail across the pages of their accounts, followed at a distance by women prostitutes, porters, and traders."[25] However, she also notes that

> two accounts are the only evidence found yet in European records of Dahomean women being used for offensive warfare outside the palace in the eighteenth century. European documents assert that women within the palace organization were armed and trained for fighting and that their organization and leadership paralleled that of the male military. Whether or not they were a regular part of the armed forces on campaign, however, is not clear.[26]

Even despite this fact, it is proven that women were part of the military force in the Kingdom.

Regarding the slave trade, by 1850, slaves were still the primary export for Dahomey, although palm oil was a major factor in the economy as well.[27] In 1850, John Beecroft was assigned as British Consul to persuade Gezo, the King of Dahomey, to suppress the slave trade within his kingdom.[28] According to Robin Law, Beecroft "was a man of extensive African experience—over, as he himself noted, no less than 21 years—though none hitherto specifically in Dahomey."[29] The 1850 mission of Beecroft was seen as a failure, and blame was placed on Beecroft's "arrogant and aggressive attitude" towards Gezo.[30] Beecroft's journal shows a few important ideas about Dahomean society, mainly their reliance on slavery, resistance to British diplomacy, the views of Beecroft on the people of Dahomey.

Although Law saw no direct proof of Beecroft's unpleasant

24. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 15.
25. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 27.
26. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 138.
27. Law, "Introduction" in *Consul John Beecroft's Journal, xix–xx.*
28. Law, "Introduction" in *Consul John Beecroft's Journal, xiii.*
29. Law, "Introduction" in *Consul John Beecroft's Journal, xv.*
30. Law, "Introduction" in *Consul John Beecroft's Journal, xxiv.*

disposition, Beecroft had negative feelings towards the political elites of Dahomey. In his journal, he says, "I have not any opinion of their Political Kindness it is merely a cloak [*sic*], it is too well known to myself that they dare not open their mouths personally to us."[31] As someone opposed to the institution of slavery, it makes sense that Beecroft would feel that he couldn't trust those individuals who were engaged in the slave trade. However, Beecroft contradicts this sentiment in the same paragraph, talking about a Portuguese slave trader and merchant as a "most gentlemanly intelligent man."[32] Beecroft further criticized the people of Dahomey, saying, "after dinner I took a walk accompanied by Capt. Forbes and Mr. Roberts, round the Fort, on our way we came upon the Fetish peoples performances their superstitious fooleries and rogueries."[33] From these excerpts, one can call Beecroft judgmental of Dahomey's culture, and sees his own culture superior, that of European, or British more specifically. It seems as if the meetings between Beecroft and Gezo played out in two parts, the first where Gezo requests subsidies to consider abolishing the slave trade, the second where certain subsidies are offered, but Gezo rejects them because they were not enough. According to Beecroft,

> we were obliged to refer back to the Letter the sentence of the Treaty for the suppression of the Foreign Slave Trade and to explain fully to him that we were invested with the full power from Queen of England, to make that book, that he was not requested to give up a large revenue without a subsidy.[34]

On July 4th, Beecroft met with Gezo and laid out $15,000 worth of subsidies, paid out in muskets, powder, rum, and other goods.[35] However, Beecroft claimed "that [Gezo] could not leave of the awful traffic in slaves," musing after the meeting, "I am quite

31. John Beecroft, *Consul John Beecroft's Journal of His Mission to Dahomey, 1850,* ed. Robin Law, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 5.
32. Beecroft, *Consul John Beecroft's Journal,* 5.
33. Beecroft, *Consul John Beecroft's Journal,* 8.
34. Beecroft, *Consul John Beecroft's Journal,* 28.
35. Beecroft, *Consul John Beecroft's Journal,* 148.

satisfied that it is too obvious he has not the most distant idea, of leaving of the abominable Traffic."[36] A day later, he made his final account of the mission that ultimately failed. He ended his account by saying, "I should certainly recommend that not any more Presents should be sent to the King of Dahomey under the present circumstances of the case."[37] Diplomacy took a back seat to more militaristic actions, such as naval blockades, "under pressure of which Gezo did finally accept a treaty to abolish the slave trade, on 13 January 1852. This however proved ineffective in practice and slave exports from Dahomey continued into the 1860s."[38] The slave trade in Dahomey eventually came to an end due to the end of American demand, not because of its illegality.[39] At the end of it all, Dahomey ended up like other West African nations: colonized.

According to Bay, "virtually all accounts of Dahomey written up until the end of the eighteenth century were provided by persons associated in some way with the overseas slave trade."[40] She continues by saying, "the best known and most useful slave-traders' records published in English are by Bulfinch Lamb, William Snelgrave, Robert Norris, and Archibald Dalzel."[41] According to I.A. Akinjogbin in his biography, *Archibald Dalzel: Slave Trader and Historian of Dahomey*, "Archibald Dalzel, by training a surgeon, spent most of his life in the slave trade."[42] Dalzel was unsuccessful as a surgeon. Akinjogbin quotes Dalzel, "I am conscious, Andrew, that I shall never make a good M.D. Perhaps I never discovered to you that I never was fond of my business. Sure, I am, I shall never make a procicent [*sic*] in that way."[43] After Dalzel was discharged from the Navy, he became

36. Beecroft, *Consul John Beecroft's Journal,* 150.
37. Beecroft, *Consul John Beecroft's Journal,* 154.
38. Law, "Introduction" in *Consul John Beecroft's Journal, xxvi.*
39. Law, "Introduction" in *Consul John Beecroft's Journal, xxvi.*
40. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 29.
41. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 29.
42. I. A. Akinjogbin, "Archibald Dalzel: Slave Trader and Historian of Dahomey." *The Journal of African History* 7, no. 1 (1966): 67.
43. Akinjogbin, "Archibald Dalzel," 67.

a slave trader.[44] According to Bay,

> Snelgrave, Norris, and Dalzel take pains to defend the slave trade, arguing that the savagery of Dahomey, ruled by an arbitrary and absolutist monarch who presided over unparalleled human sacrifice, made enslavement and sale in the Western Hemisphere a better alternative for Africans than life in Africa. All assume that Dahomey conquered its way from the Abomey plateau to the port of Whydah in the 1720s in order to be more deeply involved in the slave trade.[45]

With that in mind, Dalzel's accounts of the Dahomey people paints a strange and violent picture of the Dahomey people and culture.[46] In Dalzel's preface of his book, *The History of Dahomy* he says, "the subject of the Slave-Trade has purposely been avoided. Not only because it has been a topic of public discussion, but even of controversy; which may well render anything that might have been said about it here unnecessary."[47] He mentions later in the paragraph that the sacrifices and their treatment of captives "demonstrate, beyond the power of contradiction, the propensity of mankind to war and cruelty."[48]

The most telling part of Dalzel's account is a speech the king, Adahoonzou, gave. According to Dalzel,

> Govenor Abson having taken an opportunity of communicating to Adahoonzou some of the particulars respecting the Slave-trade . . . and having carried with him some of the pamphlets for and against the abolition of that traffic which he read to him.[49]

Dalzel claims that after the reading was finished, Adahoonzou

44. Akinjogbin, "Archibald Dalzel," 77.

45. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard,* 29–30.

46. When quoting directly from Dalzel's work I will not be using the arcahic distinction between hard and soft s, but will use a modern s to represent both. Where possible, orignal punctuation has been preserved.

47. Archibald Dalzel, *The History of Dahomy: An Inland Kingdom of Africa; Compiled from Authentic Memoirs; with an Introduction and Notes. By Archibald Dalzel, Esq. Governor at Cape-Coast Castle,* (United Kingdom: 1793), *xxiv*.

48. Dalzel, *The History of Dahomy, xxiv*.

49. Dalzel, *The History of Dahomy,* 216–17.

gave a speech, saying:

> I admire the reasoning of the white men; but with all their sense, it does not appear that they have thoroughly studied the nature of the blacks, whose disposition differs as much from that of the whites, as their colour. . . . Your countrymen, therefore, who alledge [*sic*] that we go to war for the purpose of supplying your ships with slaves are grossly mistaken. . . . In the name of my ancestors and myself I aver, that no Dahoman man ever embarked in war merely for the sake of procuring wherewithal to purchase your commodities.[50]

Beecroft and Dalzel were two men in very different situations. They both had differing viewpoints on the people of Dahomey, however, both saw the kingdom in a negative light. Beecroft seemed to view the Dahomeans as a group of stubborn people, unwilling to separate themselves from a morally apprehensible practice. Dalzel, on the other hand, appeared to see Dahomey as a place where the people were brutal and savage, where war consumed everything, as well as a place where slavery would soon be gone from, due to radical ideologies of the king. However different these two interpretations, it seems as if most Europeans saw Dahomey as a morally bankrupt country, based on their connections to the Atlantic Slave Trade.

Overall, it seems that countries like Dahomey are natural outcomes of the international environment created by the Atlantic Slave Trade. War became not just a necessity for protection, but an economic necessity as well. Kingdoms with a focus on warfare were able to thrive under the Atlantic slave trade, however over time, moral judgement was passed by Europeans on them based on unverified rumors of horrific methods used in warfare and their relationship to the slave trade. Abolitionists criticize their reluctance to dismiss their connection to the slave trade. Supporters of the trade criticize them for claims of their radical viewpoints involving the slave trade and their possible movement away from the trade. This is applicable to many different African nations that revolved around the slave trade.

50. Dalzel, *The History of Dahomy,* 217–18.

Dr. John Snow:
Cholera Connections and a Lasting Legacy

Zadie Obray

Known today as the father of epidemiology, Dr. John Snow was the oldest son of a poor laborer from York whose work would only begin to be fully appreciated and recognized following his death in 1858.[1] A man from simple beginnings he was one of London's only well-educated doctors who willingly spent his time among the poor even if it would not merit him anything financially. This way of life probably stemmed from his views as a Christian but also as a way of not neglecting his roots, as someone who came from a destitute background. It was his willingness to be in such circumstances, rubbing shoulders with the masses despite his position, that likely put him into the direct path of England's first three cholera epidemics. The first occurred in 1831–1832 when Snow was a nineteen-year-old apprentice in Killingworth.[2] The second epidemic occurred some sixteen years later at which time Dr. Snow would have succeeded in passing his surgeon and physician exams from Westminster and now resided in the urban metropolis of London. But, the most well-known of the "blue death" epi-

1. Sandra Hempel, *The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump: John Snow and the Mystery of Cholera* (Berkeley: California Press, 2007), 70.
2. Hempel, *The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump,* 67–83.

demics occurred in 1854 just a block from Snow's door in Soho, London which put him into the position to become instrumental in discovering the main source of cholera's breeding ability. During these epidemics Snow distanced himself from the popular opinions of his contemporary peers believing that cholera had to be caused by something that went beyond basic human contagion or the belief that such diseases were merely airborne. His work became unique not only for his disregard of the leading ideas of the day but rather for his distinct use of deduction, interviewing, mapping, and causational thinking that would become the staple methods in the establishment of epidemiology. What should be made clear is that Snow did not discover the bacteria vibrio cholerae that causes the disease rather through statistical data collection he was able to isolate the course by which cholera is spread allowing cities, leaders, and the population to place themselves in situations that would put them less at risk. This essay will analyze the logical reasoning used by Dr. Snow in the 1831, 1848, and 1854 cholera epidemics as well as further devolve into pioneering efforts in the study of mass diseases, which methods in some ways are still employed today.

The year 1831 was not the first time that cholera had struck the world, in fact it had originated in India twenty years previous along the Ganges River; however, it would be the first time that the disease would break free on British soil.[3] As the disease crawled across India into Russia and Western Europe, the Board of Health established by the Crown and made up of prominent members from the Royal College of Physicians in London advocated for a strict quarantine of ports as the first measure to attempt to halt the rapid movement of the cholera morbus. The announcement also stated that trade could resume by the end of the summer as it was likely the weather that was causing the disease to peak.[4] However, not a month after the announcement had been made cholera had struck the coast-

3. Hempel, *The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump*, 1, 27–29.
4. Edward I. Seymour, "Board of Health Announcement," *Royal College of Physicians of London*, August 12, 1831, *v–vi*.

line in popular shipping villages, including Snow's hometown of York. Many of the elite saw this as a direct consequence of neglecting the order to quarantine but, despite being only in his teens, Snow disagreed with this sentiment. The way that he saw it, quarantines hindered the social and commercial interests of the people and in his eyes a people could either die a quick death from cholera or a slow death from starvation as their livelihoods were stripped from them.[5] Snow was never one to go with popular notions. For example, in his personal life he was a vegetarian, an unusual diet for an era in which meat was seen as a primary source of strength and nourishment; he was also a teetotaler which, at a time when alcohol was the predominant prescription, was extremely bizarre for a man of medicine.[6] This ability to go against the world's paradigms would be crucial in forming Snow's ability to accept empirical evidence that went against what was previously known and accepted by others. While Snow conducted no real experiments or groundbreaking work during the 1831 cholera pandemic, his character was being built in a manner that would assist him in speaking out in future epidemics. The 1831 epidemic would also be instrumental in putting cholera on Snow's radar of study, which up to this time had been primarily focused on anesthetics, in the attempt to find a way to make surgery and medical procedures less painful.

By the 1848 epidemic, Snow was well on his way to a successful medical career having passed his exams from the Royal College of Surgeons and the Society of Apothecaries he had carried on his work with studying anesthetics.[7] In 1847 he published his work claiming that both the chemicals ether and chloroform, both of which were administered in the form of a gas, could be used to mitigate pain during a procedure but simultaneously keep the patient conscious allowing their vitals to be maintained. When the second cholera epidemic arrived a

5. Peter Vinten-Johansen, et al., *Cholera, Chloroform, and the Science of Medicine: A Life of John Snow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 212.
6. Hempel, *The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump*, 68.
7. Hempel, *The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump*, 90.

year later it was his knowledge as an anesthesiologist that put Snow against the common miasmic theory. Having studied the effects of airborne poisons, such as arsenic, Snow had come to understand that such floating particles almost always struck the respiratory system first yet, cholera had no connection to the lungs.[8] The other common theory at the time was that of contagion, meaning that the disease was passed from person to person. While this seemed the most probable, since the disease had struck port towns in the 1831 epidemic, this was not the case for how cholera entered Britain during the second epidemic. This epidemic began with a sailor named John Harold who died while staying in a hotel in Horselydown on September 22; the next day a man stayed in the same room and also died from the blue death. The two men never met but the disease spread anyway, calling into question the theory of contagion. What added even more to the evidence against the contagion theory was that the same doctor administered to both men yet he never contracted the illness.[9] This case piqued Snow's interest and he desired to know how cholera was being passed; it clearly wasn't from the air, but was there another driving force besides people that could relay the disease? It was this search that led Snow to investigate another interesting case that occurred in Albion Terrace.

Albion Terrace was a single street located in the wealthy merchant class of East London that randomly had ten of the seventeen houses on the street acquire cholera; however, none of the surrounding streets, despite maintaining contact with their neighbors, succumbed to the disease.[10] Not only did this unique case discredit the contagion theory but, as this street was located among the affluent class, it also challenged the miasmic theory claiming that the dreadful smelling refuse of the masses was the source of the illness. Working alongside the gardener

8. Vinten-Johansen, et. al., *Cholera, Chloroform, and the Science of Medicine*, 114.
9. Steven Johnson, *The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic- and How it Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2006), 70–71.
10. Hempel, *The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump*, 130–131.

and local plumber for the terrace apartments, Snow found that the privy pipes had been poorly sealed and had subsequently leaked into the main water supply, causing the homes that drew from the supply to catch cholera. In light of these events, Snow published *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera* in 1849 stating that, though his evidence was limited, he had gained a grip on some qualities of the illusive disease that was ravaging cities worldwide. In his pamphlet Snow concluded that cholera is a "poison" of sorts that enters the body through the mouth and grows in an inflicted person's intestine, making it a disease of the digestive system and not of the blood.[11] He also stated that this "poison" could infect considerable portions of people when it entered a population's water supplies thereby contaminating the whole.[12] One solution to this dilemma was to simply boil water before use.[13] These findings were revolutionary at the time, not only for the complete creation of another theory of communicability, but in creating another possible solution to prevent cholera from thriving in the body. Previous to this publication many contemporary doctors had viewed cholera as a blood disorder, mostly because a symptom of cholera victims is that their blood will turn sluggish blocking the arteries ability to pump blood to the heart causing death to occur, and leading doctors to provide the solution of bleeding patients to help remove the excess sludge and hopefully allow the heart the ability to resume its regular rhythm.[14] This publication, though correct and clearly in progression towards helping in the formulation of the germ theory, was perhaps too radical for its time and was largely dismissed by physicians; besides, by the time the publication was in print the epidemic had largely died away and was beginning to be placed on the backburner of societies priorities. But those priorities would shift once more in only six

11. John Snow, *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera* (London: John Churchill, 1849), 8–9.

12. Snow, *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera*, 11.

13. Snow, *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera*, 30.

14. Vinten-Johansen, et al., *Cholera, Chloroform, and the Science of Medicine: A Life of John Snow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 187.

years' time as the third cholera epidemic would again make its way through London.

Over the twenty years that cholera afflicted Great Britain, doctors had developed a slew of different remedies from a wide range of medical practitioners. Such antidotes ranged from a snuff of opium to an inhalation of camphor to block the smells that might be causing the spread of cholera morbus.[15] Opinions were so varied among medical professionals that one newspaper satirically commented, "One medical man's 'infallible medicine' is another man's 'deadly poison.' We have much more of the 'foul and offensive matter' circulating in the newspapers than we do under our noses every day."[16] Having presented his findings at the tail end of the previous epidemic John Snow planned to pick up where he had left off by constructing a natural experiment. In 1852 parliament had passed the Metropolis Water Act requiring all public water suppliers to relocate further up the Thames River to ensure that the water that was being pumped into the city was not being convoluted with the sewage that was being pumped out.[17] In 1854 when the epidemic occurred East London had two dominant water suppliers; the Lambeth Water Company and the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company. The Lambeth Company had already relocated upriver to Long Ditton but the Southwark and Vauxhall Company remained in the process of moving to their new location in Hampton and were thus still pulling their water from the Great Ford Reservoir in the lower Thames where the city's sewage was being deposited.[18] Since these areas serviced the same part of London, Snow's experiment was to tally which homes were receiving water from each company and then analyze which of those homes were contracting cholera. Snow performed the experiment by going door to door, interviewing residents, map-

15. J.E. Gessler and S. L. Kolar, *A Worldwide History: Cholera* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company, 2004), 202.

16. "Who Shall Decide When Doctors Disagree?," *Punch*, September 2, 1854, 27.

17. Vinten-Johansen, et. al., *Cholera, Chloroform, and the Science of Medicine*, 256.

18. Tessa Cicak and Nicola Tynan, "Mapping London's Water Companies and Cholera Deaths," *The London Journal* 40, no. 1 (2015): 27.

ping out his findings, and receiving statistical updates on neighborhood death tolls from the Board of Health data collector, William Farr.[19] In what would come to be known as the "Grand Experiment" Snow found that of the twelve Southwark and Vauxhall Water districts he had studied there was a total of 192 deaths from cholera in 1853 alone, which would put the death toll per district at about sixteen deaths per year. When compared to the Lambeth Water Company which only purely serviced three districts there was not a single death from cholera in any of the districts. In sub-districts where both companies shared jurisdiction the death toll per district was about eleven persons annually which further demonstrated that the Lambeth Water Company's water was of a purer quality than that of the Southwark and Vauxhall Company.[20] As Snow prepared to publish his results from his geospatial data collection in August of 1854 the largest cholera spike to ever hit Great Britain struck a block from the doctor's home in Soho.

From August 31 to September 8, a span of only ten days, over five hundred people died from cholera in the geographical concentration of only a single block. Snow followed the same pattern that he had used during the Grand Experiment by employing logical deduction and mapping techniques. In mapping the cholera cases the highest concentration of cases were located all along Broad Street, most of these case marks piled up near apartment number 40. However, assuming that something on Broad Street was causing the problem had its flaws because the Lion's Brewery, located on the same street, had not seen a single case. Upon interviewing laborers in the brewery, Snow found that part of the staff's income included a stipend of alcohol causing the workers to rarely, if ever, drink water. Having gained enough evidence in previous epidemics to consider cholera a waterborn disease, Snow began to test the pump water from the surrounding areas but the Broad Street pump,

19. P. Bingham, N. O. Verlander, and M. J. Cheal, "John Snow, William Farr and the 1849 Outbreak of Cholera That Affected London: A Reworking of the Data Highlights the Importance of the Water Supply." *Public Health* 118, (2004): 388.
20. Snow, *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera*, 73.

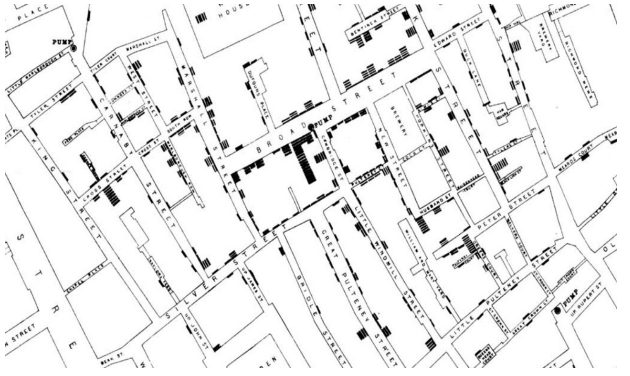

Figure 1. John Snow, *Map 1*, 1854, electronic, UCLA Department of Epidemiology. https://www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow/snowmap1_1854_lge.htm

which remained the closest water source to the associated death toll, was the clearest of them all. Many of the locals explained to Snow that the Broad Street pump was the deepest in the area, over twenty-five feet, which resulted in the water being cold and odorless. As this was common knowledge in the area many of the residents would walk the extra half block past their nearest pumps to obtain water at the Broad Street pump. While this accounted for the outliers within the map, the evidence that cemented the culprit as the Broad Street pump in Snow's mind was the story of Susannah Eley. Susannah lived in the wealthiest part of West London, serviced by the New River Water Company but having grown up on Broad Street she preferred the pump water. Near the end of August her sons, who now owned and operated the workhouse on Broad Street, sent their mother a flask filled with the pump water as a thoughtful gift. Within two days both Susannah and her maid would be dead from cholera, the only cases during that epidemic to occur in that area.[21]

With these personal narratives, combined with his empirical mapping, Snow went to the St. James Parish Board of Guardians on September 7, 1854, to request that the pump handle be removed from the Broad Street pump to begin curtailing the epidemic in the Golden Square.[22] Within a day the handle was off

21. Johnson, *The Ghost Map*, 30, 76–89.
22. Hempel, *The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump*, 218.

but there is still debate as to whether or not this course of action really quelled the epidemic as it had already been declining naturally. Yet, there is no debate in the fact that this deed did bar other cholera spikes from coming into being. By mid-December the second edition of *The Mode of Communication of Cholera* would be in print including Snow's research with the Lambeth Company and the Southwark and Vauxhall Company as well as the unique case of the Broad Street pump. Along with the additional knowledge that the symptoms associated with cholera, such as the thickening of the bloodstream and the blue hued complexion, came as a result of dehydration. Though Snow believed these assumptions needed additional evidence he surmised that a person could overcome cholera by drinking purified liquids that would then flush the "cholera poison" out of the digestive system.[23] Finding it to be his duty to publish his findings to assist in educating the general public Snow paid £200 to print the second edition of *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera*, a publication that would earn him less than 200 shillings in sales revenue.[24] Of a truth Snow's work would largely be disregarded in favor of devout miasmist, William Farr, the same man who had provided Snow the statistical data he needed to produce his Grand Experiment. Farr would produce his findings before parliament in map form stating that the districts closest to the Thames were more susceptible to cholera and that risk of contracting the disease had everything to do with proximity to the noxious river as opposed to what was in the water.[25]

Four years later Snow died from a stroke at the age of forty-five and was only recognized in his brief eulogy for his progressive work in the field of anesthesiology. Nevertheless, Snow would rise to fame posthumously as the fourth and final major cholera epidemic arrived in Great Britain in 1866. William Farr, who had once again been designated as Parliament's chosen epidemiologist, found that though cholera cases were

23. John Snow, *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera, 2nd Edition*, 136.
24. Hempel, *The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump*, 230.
25. Bingham, Verlander, and Cheal, "1849 Outbreak of Cholera." 391–392.

still concentrated along the Thames River the epicenter for diseases had shifted to the West, making the epicenter no longer on the lowest point of elevation. Reworking the data from his 1853 map to overlay the various water companies Farr found that the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Companies was the only company that had pieces of the epicenter during both epidemics.[26] Upon investigation it was brought to light that despite the Metropolis Water Act of 1852 the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company was still engaged in illegally pumping unfiltered water from their reservoir at Great Ford in the lower part of the Thames River which had been the cause of the cholera epidemic. Upon presenting his findings to the General Assembly, Farr gave the credit to Snow whose work had been shown to him by a Soho priest named Henry Whitehead. Thus, almost a decade after his death Snow finally received the recognition he was due.

Today, Dr. John Snow is known as one of the founding figures in the study of the rapid spread of disease. His mapping techniques, use of personal accounts in accordance with his case work, and the implementation of deductive reasoning into the field of medicine were used as recently as the COVID-19 pandemic. Over twenty years and three epidemics, Snow was able to contribute to the world's understanding of how diseases can swiftly advance through urban populations. Though it was not the most popular opinion, he went against the common communicable theories of the day expanding the range by which medical practitioners would consider contagions. He aided in sowing the seeds of good hygienic practices, such as hand washing and water purification that would become a fundamental practice in public sanitation. Today Snow is mostly remembered for his discovery of cholera's transmission through water, when in reality his findings go far beyond this. Dr. John Snow has left a legacy that will only grow as the world becomes increasingly interconnected in times of illness, when his foundational methods will be employed again and again through the ages.

26. Cicak and Tynan, "Mapping London's Water Companies and Cholera Deaths," 27–28.

Utah Leaders:
The Early Mormon Church and its Influential Rhetoric

Heidi Shomaker

Utah's history is laden with sexism, racism, and murder. Utah's settlement by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints ("LDS" or "Mormon") has had lasting influence on the area. Early Utah religious and civil leaders' violent and oppressive rhetoric influenced the culture of early Utah which continues to bleed into its society today. Brigham Young and other Mormon church leaders during the second half of the nineteenth century normalized racism, exclusion, gender inequality, and introduced salvation by murder, also known as the Blood Atonement, for their Utah followers. These teachings have affected Utah's communities for over a century.

Racism, Supremacy, and Exclusion

The Utah Territory has a violent history that can be credited to the racist and exclusionist tones of the early Mormon Saints. The Early Mormon prophet and head of Utah government, Brigham Young, said concerning the people of the Timpanogos tribe who called what is now Utah County home, "if you would have dominion over them, for their good which is the duty of the Elders, you must not treet [*sic*] them as your equals, you cannot exalt them by this process. If they are your equals,

you cannot raise them up to you."[1] This statement, given to the settlers of Provo, encouraged Young's followers to practice exclusionary behavior with the local Indigenous people. It also implied they were superior, and it would have been beneath them to treat the Indigenous as their equals.

The previous statement regarding not treating the Native population as equals was given a few months after a tragic murder occurred south of Salt Lake. An Indigenous man, who went by the name of "Old Bishop," was brutally murdered and had his corpse desecrated by three white settlers of Provo. After an argument with the Old Bishop the settlers killed, then they disemboweled him, filled his corpse with rocks, and threw him into the river. The words from Young can be seen influencing the attitudes of the settlers through the actions of those who murdered Old Bishop. The settlers refused to turn over the murderers to be held accountable to the Native Tribe that demanded retribution. The mentality of superiority over the Indigenous, which Young expressed to his followers, can be seen in this example.[2]

The leaders were conflicting in their teachings about the inclusion or rejection of the Indigenous people. Early Mormon Saints believed the Native people to be direct descendants of the House of Israel from Jerusalem and that it was their duty to share the gospel with them.[3] However, as Brigham stated above, it was important for the Saints to remember their superiority and not succumb to the level they considered the Indigenous to be on. Brigham, in a sermon on the right way to treat Indians, said, "I have fed fifty Indians almost day by day for months together. I always give them something, but I never forget to treat them like Indians; and they are always mannerly and kind and look upon

1. Jared Farmer, *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 69.

2. Farmer, *On Zion's Mount*, 67–68.

3. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, "Lamanite Identity," *Church History Topics*, accessed February 2, 2023, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/lamanite-identity?lang=eng.

me as their superior. Never let them come into your houses."[4]

Old Bishop was not the only violent episode between Mormon settlers and the Indigenous. When it came time to expand southward in the territory and the indigenous were not making communication with settlers possible, the ideals of service and conversion turned quickly to extermination. Leading up to the massacres at Rock Canyon and Table Rock, Brigham gave the all-clear for war: "I say go, and kill them." He came to this conclusion shortly after one of the Apostles under him, Williard Richards, said "my voice is for War and exterminate them."[5]

The Mormon teachings were also prejudiced against anyone who was not a baptized church member. Those not baptized were referred to as Gentiles since they had not been adopted into the House of Israel through baptism. Heber C. Kimball, the first counselor under Brigham Young said in a sermon, "the Gentiles are our enemies; they are damned forever."[6] This mentality made it difficult for outsiders to settle in the territory comfortably.

Those "gentiles" who came through Utah could feel this animosity from the Mormons. As gold miners crossed the territory on their way to California, they would meet Mormons for trade. During such one interaction, a 49er, Arthur Shear, recorded his experiences, "they call us Gentiles and regard themselves as entitled to superior privilege."[7] Exclusion from those within the community was also clear. In Nels Anderson's "Desert Saints" is an example of a "Gentile Fiddler" who was hired to play at a local dance by a member of the church. This action was prohibited by the Mormon leaders and the gentile musician, as well as gentile music and dances, were banned from the event.[8] The community of Mormons showed exclusive behavior and their actions were upheld by the words of the lead-

4. Brigham Young, "Proper Treatment of the Indians," *Journal of Discourses* 6 (April 1854), https://journalofdiscourses.com/6/59.

5. Farmer, *On Zion's Mount,* 70–71.

6. Nels Anderson, *Desert Saints; the Mormon Frontier in Utah* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1942), 421.

7. Farmer, *On Zion's Mount,* 69.

8. Anderson, *Desert Saints,* 424.

ers. Those passing through or hoping to settle without officially converting to the LDS church often did so without the friendliness of the Mormon settlers.

Mormonism additionally includes a history of excluding Black people from the religion. Brigham Young taught specifically that interracial relationships between white and Black people were forbidden by God: "If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of [the African race], the penalty, under the law of God, is death on the spot. This will always be so."[9] Teachings such as this directed followers to continue seeing their whiteness as superior to others. Seed mixing, as Young says, was prohibited because of the belief that Black people were cursed and therefore inferior. This notion led to pro-slavery ideologies: "this colored race have been subjected to severe curses . . . and until the curse is removed by [God] who placed it upon them, they must suffer under its consequences; I am not authorized to remove it. I am a firm believer in slavery."[10] Young made that statement at a Utah Territory Legislation in 1852 where he showed his support for making slavery legal in the territory. This demonstrates the racist attitude the Governor of Utah and President of the LDS church had towards those of African descent.

Gender Inequality and the Neglect of Women

Rhetoric of the Utah Mormon leadership caused a lot of harm for women through inequality and neglect. A study of the negative treatment of women by and within the Mormon church and culture can be associated with the Mormon practice of polygamy and the Mormon patriarchal structure.

Mormon theology taught that a woman's value lay in her connections to men. A woman would only make it to heaven if she were married to a man and obeyed him. Jedediah Grant, an apostle for the early Mormon Church, said in a sermon, "when

9. Brigham Young, "The Persecutions of the Saints, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses* 10 (March 1863), https://journalofdiscourses.com/10/25.
10. Brigham Young, *The Complete Discourses of Brigham Young*, ed., Richard S. Van Wagoner (Salt Lake City: Smith-Petite Foundation, 2009), 473.

[women] have a good husband . . . he is president over them, and they have made covenants to abide the law of that husband . . . A woman that wants to climb up to Jesus Christ and pass by the authorities between her and him is a stink in my nostrils."[11] This teaching shows that Mormon women had no autonomy over their own lives. They were subject to obeying the law of their husbands. Even a relationship with a Mormon woman's deity depended on the relationship with their husband. She could not approach God except through the men she is subordinate to.

Brigham Young discussed in another sermon that women were tied down, abused, misused, not given the liberties they should have, and living with mental distress. His only response about these cases was that these women need to "either round up their shoulders to endure the afflictions of this world and live their religion, or they may leave, for I will not have them about me."[12] Excusing the abused women from the situation as Brigham was offering was not a kindness to them, it was damnation. The people had been taught by the Mormon church that they needed the gospel of the Mormon church to gain salvation. And as previously said by Jedediah Grant, women would need to obey their husbands to have a relationship with their god. Young and Grant reaffirm a patriarchal structure in Mormon homes with these statements. Men are to control their wives and wives are to be quiet about it. In situations such as these, one can see how the mental and physical health of women could be affected through this oppressive rhetoric.

Polygamy, in the context of religious expectations and under the threat of damnation, may be a less pleasing situation than for those happily and freely choosing it outside of cultural and religious pressures. Portraying polygamous families in early Utah history often falls under unhappy polygamous situations. However, the Mormon church taught that polygamy was necessary for a woman to be saved with her family:

11. Jedediah Grant, "Those Who are in Darkness, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses* 4 (October 1856), https://journalofdiscourses.com/4/27.
12. Brigham Young, "The People of God Disciplined by Trials, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses* 4 (September 1856), https://journalofdiscourses.com/4/10.

> If the woman is determined not to enter into a plural-marriage, that woman when she comes forth will have the privilege of living in single blessedness through all eternity. I tell you this so that you can get the idea. If in the resurrection [a woman] really want[s] to be single and alone, and live so forever and ever, and be made servants, while others receive the highest order of intelligence and are bringing worlds into existence, [she] can have the privilege. They who will be exalted cannot perform all the labor, they must have servants and [she] can be servants to them.[13]

With this rhetoric being often preached, there is an assumption that women entering polygamy were doing so under the threat of losing their family in the life here after. This is the kind of environment that leads to abuse and neglect. With the language of the sermon shared above, a man could take upon him the duty of pressuring women into plural marriages when they would not have otherwise accepted the arrangement.

In "You Nasty Apostates," author Polly Aird shared first-hand accounts of men who had left the church in part because of the abuse and conflict which polygamy proved to establish in the homes of those who practiced it. John Hyde Jr. converted to the Mormon faith in England when he was taught by Mormon missionaries. When he mentioned his concerns regarding polygamy, the missionaries which he calls Elders and Apostles, denied that polygamy was being practiced at all. After arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, he discovered that the Elders and Apostles had lied to him concerning the practice of polygamy. He recorded that polygamy was not making men or women "happy nor elevated" but was degrading and depriving them, causing women to be wretched and homes to be destroyed. Children who were brought up in polygamous households were wicked and rebellious.[14] Polygamy as a ticket for salvation was an unstable foundation for happy households and healthy women.

13. Brigham Young, "The Gospel Incorporates all Truth, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses* 16 (August 1873), https://journalofdiscourses.com/16/22.

14. Polly Aird, "'You Nasty Apostates, Clear Out': Reasons for Disaffection in the Late 1850s," *Journal of Mormon History* 30, no. 2 (2004): 158.

Preaching of the Blood Atonement

Blood Atonement as taught by Brigham Young and Jedidah Grant in the 1850s included the shedding of the blood of neighbors who without such an act could not be eternally saved. The concept of the Blood Atonement comes from the idea that the blood of Jesus Christ cannot atone for all sins; some sins are just too much for Jesus' blood to atone. Young said, "it is true that the blood of the Son of God was shed for sins through the fall and those committed by men, yet men can commit sins which it can never remit . . . but they must be atoned for by the blood of the man." In the same speech, Young expressed to his followers that they should be willing to have their own blood shed to be saved, even to be willing to "beg of their brethren to shed their blood."[15] The violence behind this concept was taught for over two years to the Mormon community in Utah.

There are many accounts of early Mormon leaders teaching this doctrine. However, in one instance, a respected member of the church, Oliver Cowdry, did not agree with the doctrine of blood atonement: "We do not believe that any religious society has authority to try men on the right of property or life; to take from them this world's goods or put them in jeopardy either in life or limb; neither to inflict any physical punishment upon them."[16] Jedidiah Grant, who was second counselor of the Mormon church just five years after Cowdery died, argued that Cowdery was wrong and indeed the killing of a person for the sake of their salvation was the doctrine of Christ. In his sermon given March 12, 1854, just a few weeks before becoming an apostle, he used words from the biblical missionary Paul to back up his claim of the blood atonement doctrine. He said Paul claimed covenant breakers are worthy of death. Grant then preached that those people do not just deserve death for breaking such covenants, but faithful followers of the prophet would be willing to kill the sinners as Jesus would have them do. Further, he preached that it would be breaking another com-

15. Young, "The People of God."
16. Doctrine and Covenants 134:10

mandment if a faithful member were to kill a covenant breaker and then feel pity for whom they killed.[17]

The words preached by Grant were an equation for faithful members to internalize. First, they must identify those covenant breakers. This would be done by scrupulous observation and judgement of neighbors. Secondly, the equation would have them murder their sinful neighbors. This must be done in a way that the person's blood is physically shed from their body, with no guilt or sadness felt for the death of the person. These are not just suggestions given by a high leader in the church, but commandments for faithful members, "putting to death transgressors would exhibit the law of God, no difference by whom it is done" says Grant.[18]

The author of *Mormon Thunder*, Gene A. Sessions, argues that no one seriously believed that "Brother Jeddy" had murderous intention, "no one scrambled to protect himself from the seventy's murderous intention, because he had none," and while the discussion may have shaken the community, it "probably killed no one." Sessions wrote that the preaching was just Grant's efforts to get the saints to be the best people in the world and that it was common language found in the Old Testament.[19] Apologists of Mormon history may say that this teaching was not to incite violence but to put fear into the hearts of the followers. Maybe the idea was that these sinners would be put to death by a legal firing squad put in place by Mormon theocracy. Perhaps leaders were just commanding the shedding of neighbors' blood with no intention of it happening at all. However, leaders have a degree of responsibility for the words they preach.

When leaders have such influence over their followers, they cannot know what will or will not be internalized, which can be seen with the modern example of supporters of former Presi-

17. Jedediah Grant, "Discourse," *Deseret News*, July 27, 1854, https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s6gt6gnq/2580566.
18. Grant, "Discourse."
19. Gene A. Sessions, *Mormon Thunder: A Documentary History of Jedediah Morgan Grant* (Draper: Greg KoffordBooks, 2008), 130.

dent Donald Trump storming the US capital building on January 6, 2021. These followers heard bold words from the former President of rigged elections and the need to fight to save democracy.[20] These words inspired incendiary violence, and with the intention of kidnapping and possibly murdering members of Congress and the Vice President, followers of the former President raged through the US Capital. Just like those insurrectionists, it is possible that Mormons heard their leaders' words and went about fulfilling them. In this way, leaders who preach such things should be held accountable to some degree by the acts of their followers, at the very least have their words credited for atrocious acts. Such carelessness in preaching things to people, who may or may not take the direction from as thought literally from God, is at least in part in the hands of the preacher.

In "You Nasty Apostates," Aird details the experiences of seven men who left the Mormon church during the reformation era. Summing up some of the main reasons these different men had to apostatize, Aird says, "for this group of seven, fear wore vivid colors . . . Once they lost their faith and felt estranged from their Mormon brethren, they were afraid to speak their thoughts. Each felt a risk, sometimes to the point of fearing for their lives."[21] The following quote from Brigham Young shows why these men may have feared for their lives after leaving the church "I have known a great many men who have left this church for whom there is no chance whatever for exaltation; but if their blood had been spilled, it would have been better for them." From this same sermon he also asks his followers, "will you love your brothers and sisters likewise, so when they have committed a sin that cannot be atoned for without the shedding of their blood? Will you love that man or woman enough to shed their blood?"[22] From the preaching of leaders,

20. Dan Barry, Mike Mcintire, and Matthew Rosenberg, "'Our President Wants Us Here': The Mob that Stormed the Capitol," *New York Times*, January 9, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html

21. Aird, "You Nasty Apostates," 165–166.

22. Brigham Young, "To Know God is Eternal Life, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses* 4 (February 1857), https://journalofdiscourses.com/4/42.

members of the church believed apostates were only able to be saved by the shedding of their blood and that they should do it. The seven men discussed by Aird had evidential reason to fear.

Murder was successful in the case of William Parrish and his son. Parrish became disaffected with the church after living for a time in Springville, Utah. He made plans to leave with his sons and have his wife follow later when it would be safer. Alvira, William's wife, recounted after the murder of her husband, "there had been public preaching . . . to the effect that no apostates would be allowed to leave, if they did, hog holes in the fences would be stopped up with them."[23] She also mentions this type of rhetoric in sermons was not uncommon among many different leaders in the area. The sermon given by Brigham Young, which I have previously mentioned, about spilling blood of apostates was given only five weeks prior to the murder of William Parrish.

Polly Aird's article gives accounts of three men who describe meetings they had with local ecclesiastical leaders relating to the apostacy and possible fleeing of William Parrish. The accounts offer more insight into the violent culture allowed to persist due to the Blood Atonement doctrine. Joseph Bartholomew recounted secret meetings held to discuss apostates and thieves, stating that in one of the meetings regarding Parrish, "Bishop Johnson made a remark that some of us would yet, 'see the red stuff run.'" Another man, John M. Stewart, who attended the same meetings recorded that a man named Potter requested to kill Parrish, "wherever he could find 'the damned curse'" to which the bishop running the meeting said to not shed any blood in Springville. John understood that to mean blood would be shed, just not in Springville.[24] Following these meetings, Parrish and his son were murdered as they attempted to flee Utah. Alvira clearly believed, as mentioned above, the reason for their murders to be their apostacy.

The statement made by Sessions that the discussions did

23. Aird, "You Nasty Apostates," 175–76.
24. Aird, "You Nasty Apostates," 179–80.

not kill anymore, may be debated that it did indeed kill someone. However, the fact these things were taught was bad enough to affect the community's culture. American historian Michael Quinn wrote concerning the Blood Atonement:

> LDS leaders publicly and privately encouraged Mormons to consider it their religious right to kill antagonist outsiders, common criminals, LDS apostates, and even faithful Mormons who committed sins 'worthy of death' . . . Mormon theocracy created such a unique context for Utah violence that it will always be impossible to determine how many violent deaths occurred for theocratic reasons and how many merely reflected the American West's pattern of violence.[25]

The fear people had due to the Blood Atonement creed was real. The violence that occurred was real. The words were spoken, the meetings were held. There was a tangible atmosphere of violence due to the teachings of the Mormon church.

Influences Seen in Modern Day

With only a few examples of the pain, violence, and conflict had by Mormon families and individuals who encountered the Early Mormon Saints, it is evident the leadership fostered the tense environment. The ideals of blood atonement, superiority, patriarchy, polygamy, and racism inundated the culture of the territory and the church with abuse, hatred, and violence. These teachings, now not directly taught as doctrine, still influence the culture of the region and church in the state of Utah.

In the summer of 2021, LDS leader Jeffrey R. Holland taught Brigham Young University faculty the need to protect their idea of a godly family. Holland's violent rhetoric included a quote from another LDS leader urging members to use "musket fire" in "defending marriage as the union between a man and a woman."[26] This comment is insensitive and violent towards

25. Aird, "You Nasty Apostates," 167.

26. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, "Elder Jeffrey R. Holland Urges BYU to Embrace its Uniqueness, Stay True to the Savior," *Newsroom*, accessed February 3, 2023. https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/elder-jeffrey-r-holland-2021-byu-university-conference.

members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Another LDS leader, Brad Wilcox, showed insensitivity toward members of color during a 2022 fireside for church youth. After being asked a question concerning why Black members of the church had to wait for 140 years after the church was founded to participate in salvatory practices, he unironically compared it to the difficulties of "the whites" in the church having to wait 1800 years since Jesus died to participate in those same practices.[27] The dangerous rhetoric of violence and superiority still thrives and influences the followers of the Mormon church and Utah culture today, which affects the larger community. In 2021, Davis School District was investigated by the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice due to many racial discriminatory complaints. The DOJ discovered years of racial epithets, physical harassment, and unfair treatment towards Black and students of color by students and teachers. The DOJ found these complaints had not been appropriately addressed and that staff and administrators throughout the district were deliberately indifferent towards the abuse.[28]

In matters of gender equality, Utah still lags prodigiously. For the past five years, Utah has been named the worst state for female equality. Based on the rankings of income gap, educational attainment gap, and workplace achievement gap, WalletHub has put Utah at 50th. Women make less than men at larger gaps in Utah than any other state. Women in Utah hold less degrees compared to men than in any other state. These findings can be correlated with the high pressure on women to remain at home and "abide by the law of [her] husband" as demonstrated by LDS teachings previously mentioned from the foundation of

27. Peggy Fletcher Stack and Tamarra Kemsley, "LDS leader Brad Wilcox apologizes for remarks about Black members; BYU 'deeply concerned,'" *The Salt Lake Tribune,* February 8, 2022. https://www.sltrib.com/religion/2022/02/08/lds-leader-brad-wilcox/.

28. U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, *Notice of Findings of Race Discrimination in Davis School District*, Andrea T. Martinez and Shaheena A. Simons. DJ 169-77-26 SS:WP:AV:JJ, Washington, D.C.: DOJ, 2021. https://www.justice.gov/opa/press-release/file/1443856/download?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery (Accessed February 2023).

their settlement in Utah.[29]

The doctrine of the Blood Atonement and the church's violent history also has bled into modern times. In 1985, Mormon brothers Dan and Ron Laferty committed a heinous crime of brutally murdering their sister-in-law, Brenda, and their baby niece, Erica. These actions were done due to Brenda's refusal to participate in a polygamous marriage and her advocacy for the rights of the Laferty brothers' wives. The brothers deemed their violent actions appropriate by quoting teachings of the Blood Atonement and the importance of polygamy by early Mormon prophets.[30]

Conclusion

Having a past full of racism, hatred, and oppression does not imply permanent fixture in the future. However, for Utah to become more inclusive, progressive in gendered rights and treatment, and a safer place for Black, Indigenous and people of color, the Mormon church must address these issues head on. Because of the large population of LDS members in the state and a majority LDS population in all levels of state government, the church needs to change its rhetoric towards one of love and peace. There needs to be more than not actively teaching violence and oppression, there needs to be aggressive teachings of the opposite to change the strongly held traditions of the past. Acknowledgements and apologies from current Utah and Mormon leaders for past and current racist, sexist, and violent rhetoric would be an additional place to start making bigger changes.

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29. Natalie Issa, "Utah is the worst state for women's equality, ranked last fifth year in a row," *Deseret News,* August 23, 2022. https://www.deseret.com/utah/2022/8/23/23318877/utah-womens-equality-ranking.

30. Stuart Johnson, "1984 Lafferty Case Still Haunts," *Deseret News*, July 27, 2004. https://www.deseret.com/2004/7/27/19841799/1984-lafferty-case-still-haunts#ron-lafferty-left-and-attorney-ron-yengich-review-documents-naming-yengich-as-laffertys-attorney-on-sept-25-2002-in-4th-district-court-in-provo.

Contributors

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