

# AUM

## Historical Review

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## Letter from the Editor

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Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the tenth issue of the *AUM Historical Review*! This milestone would not be possible without the steadfast support of the Auburn University at Montgomery History Department, the hard work and dedication of previous student editors, and the student authors whose papers make this publication a reality. Over the last decade, the *Review* has published a broad array of articles, covering events worldwide while also taking note of Alabama history. Our topics have ranged from the Civil War to Civil Rights, the role of women in modern wars to how Social Darwinism affected American history, the horrors of the Holocaust to the end of apartheid, and more global events that shaped history. Meanwhile, we have not forgotten the varied peoples of Alabama, with articles depicting the struggles of the Creek Indians as the state of Alabama was settled, the awe-inspiring efforts of African American heroes like the Tuskegee Airmen who pushed for martial victory abroad and racial victory at home during World War II, and the contributions of Alabamians to the Space Race at Huntsville's Redstone Arsenal. Additionally, our journal has also published many interviews, such as the first interview with the physical therapist who treated Governor George Wallace after he was shot in 1972. Readers can find our previous issues in a digital format on the History Department's website.

This edition of the *Review* is as wide-ranging as our past issues, spanning ancient history to modern Africa. From a look at the reign of the Roman Emperor Tiberius to a study of the legacy of Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev, we cover a wide array of topics. We are also pleased to present a special feature which compiles interviews with some of the former editors of the *Review*, discussing their time at AUM, their experiences shaping the early issues of the *Review*, and a little about their lives after AUM. Also in this issue we discuss the 1840 Presidential campaign, showing that the carnival-like aspects of modern politics have old roots, as well as articles showing the overlooked contributions of Mexico during World War II, how the state of Alabama used education to fight Communism at home during the Cold War, and how unique but sadly endangered Southern African languages are being preserved by dedicated individuals and organizations.

I must extend my warmest regards and gratitude to my associate editors Meghan Bush, Kimberlee Fernandez, Todesia Flavors, Sonja Hadder, and David Rains, and my assistant editors Brennan DePace and Garrett Miller. I greatly appreciate all their efforts in helping to shape this edition of the *Review* and enjoyed working with them. Many thanks and much praise must also go to Dr. Steven Gish, whose support has long been the backbone of this publication and who has personally guided my own journey both as an editor and a student. Likewise, this issue would not be possible without the help of Professor Breuna Baine of the Fine Arts department, who has long been a supporter of this publication, as well as Nicholas Yeend

and Alexandria Beeman, our wonderful graphic designers. As stated earlier, this publication would not be possible without our wonderful student authors, so I would like to extend thanks Robert Ashurst, Kimberlee Fernandez, Elizabeth Meads, Skylar Bass, and Russ Stovall. Likewise, I would like to especially thank Todesia Flavors and Kimberlee Fernandez, who conducted the interviews of former editors. And it goes without saying that I thank each of our interviewees for participating in this milestone special edition of the *Review*. But most of all, I would like to thank you, the readers. Without your support, all our efforts would be in vain!

I am sure I speak not only for myself, but also for my fellow editors, when I say that I am incredibly pleased with this issue. I hope that you will find the articles herein as interesting as my staff and I did. So, with my best wishes and warmest regards, I present to you the tenth edition of the *AUM Historical Review*...

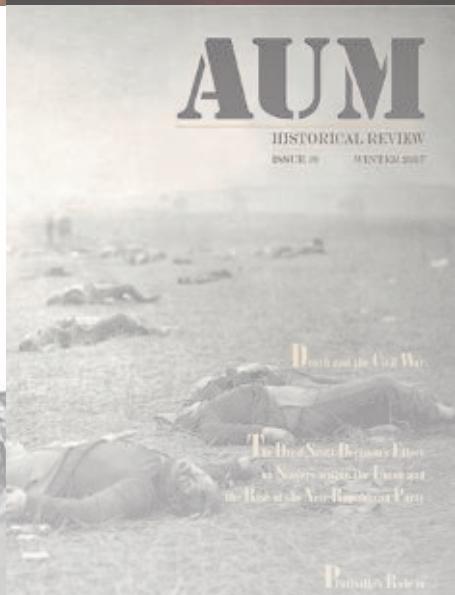
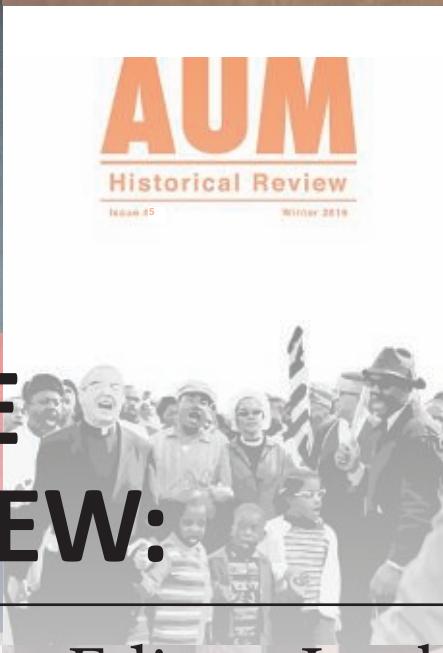
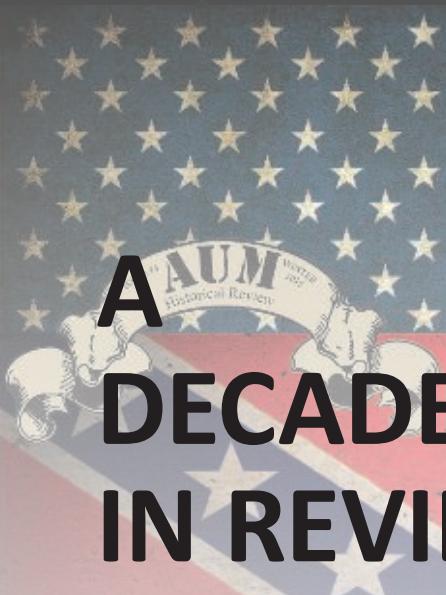
Lee Rives  
Editor

THE SPACE  
RACE BEGINS

Being an  
Anti-Castro Activist

Brown v. Board  
of Education

Review: Freedom Riders  
How Worthwhile?



## Eight Former Editors Look Back at their Time at the *AUM Historical Review*

For the tenth issue of the *AUM Historical Review*, current editorial board members Todesia Flavors and Kimberlee Fernandez interviewed eight former editors and editorial board members about their time at Auburn University at Montgomery, their work on the *Review*, how their lives continue to be affected by their experiences at AUM, and more. We hope you enjoy these interviews, which trace the history of the *Review* from its earliest days to more recent times.

## Graydon Rust

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Graydon Rust was the founding editor of the *Historical Review* and worked on the journal's first two issues. While attending AUM, Graydon pursued a degree in history after being inspired by Dr. Michael Fitzsimmons. Graydon also worked closely with Dr. Ben Severance, who would go on to advise him on his thesis. Graydon's experiences as a history major at AUM and working on the *Historical Review* were positive and changed his outlook on life. Both contributed to his knowledge and experience and have helped him in his post-college career. Graydon remembers his experiences on the *Historical Review* particularly fondly, recalling the excitement of the publication process and support from Dr. Gish, the faculty mentor for the journal.

Graydon's work on the *Historical Review* helped him develop skills in critical analysis, historical research, and writing beyond the classroom.

When asked about any advice he would give to AUM's current students who are history majors or thinking about majoring in history, Graydon stated, "There's a lot you can do with a history degree, but the job market is tough. If you're going to study history, it's important to know what you want to accomplish and have a plan. But my advice is to keep your options open and be willing to jump at unexpected opportunities. I never planned to be where I am today, but I'm glad I kept an open mind to end up here (at the Alabama Humanities Foundation in Birmingham). Also, if you plan to go on to graduate school, I highly recommend taking a gap year or two to explore a different passion if you're able to."

## Tracy Wilson

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Tracy Wilson considers his experience as one of the founding editors of the *Historical Review*, as well as his time at AUM overall, to have been very empowering. Tracy was a non-traditional student, pursuing an undergraduate degree while working full time, having dropped out of high school more than a decade before. As a member of the *Historical Review*'s first editorial board, Tracy was able to contribute his thoughts and ideas to the shaping of the first issue. He did research on race and poverty during his time as an editor, which would later lead him to pursue a career in social services. His interest in telling the stories of people of African descent, and African Americans more specifically, was fostered first by his English professors and bolstered by his experience as a

student of Dr. Keith Krawcynski of the history department. Through researching and writing as a history major, Tracy was able to "validate [his] cultural experience and celebrate those who made it possible."

Tracy stated, "Being a part of the *Review* provided an opportunity to expose the indignities and injustices that coexist with racism and poverty. My work on the *Review*, and more importantly, my degree in history, equipped me to better advocate for social justice, fairness, and well-being for all people." In addition, he expressed that his time on the editorial board helped prepare him for obtaining his master's in social work. He did face challenges while working on the journal, such as managing his time and being a non-traditional student. Regardless, he remained motivated due to support from AUM faculty and personal determination. In the end, his hard work paid off and he was happy to be the author of one of the first articles published in the *Historical Review*, "contributing to meaningful research from a unique perspective."

## Ryan Blocker

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Ryan Blocker also attended AUM as a non-traditional student. "As a non-traditional student (finishing my degree in my thirties), I was a little intimidated at first about going back to college," she recalled. "My first class at AUM put all my fears aside. My professors were top-notch and made my transition back to college thoroughly enjoyable." Regarding the history department, Ryan felt that she became better at using her critical and analytical thinking skills while completing her undergraduate degree, due to being pushed by her history professors to develop her skills and improve her writing. She also attributed her improved writing to their help with revising her papers. Her experience working on *Historical Review* helped her "to approach research from multiple

angles... [which] is especially beneficial" in her current position as the Museum Collections Coordinator for the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

While Ryan was attending AUM, she was already working in the field of history, and in fact it was her supervisor who encouraged her to finish her bachelor's degree. Today, when researching the history of an object, she uses the research skills she learned while working on the *Historical Review*. Ryan encourages anyone that is interesting in being a member of the *Review* board to join, both for its practical benefits and its enjoyability. Ryan's most memorable experience while working on the *Review* was when, "in my second year as photo editor, we had a student provide an image that was exceedingly hard to track down. After weeks of searching, I finally found the artist in Germany. He was both delighted and little bit surprised that a university in Alabama wanted permission to use his image. There were some difficulties because of a language barrier, but with a little help, we were able to get everything worked out."

## Kelhi DePace

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Kelhi DePace was an editor of the *Historical Review* and graduated from AUM in 2015. She obtained dual degrees in history and English. Kelhi has fond memories of her time at AUM, especially as a member of the University Honors Program. She enjoyed the small classes and both the English and history departments. As a history major, she received valuable support and assistance from Dr. Severance, Dr. Lee Farrow, and Dr. Jan Bulman, as well as Dr. John Havard of the English department. Of her experience as a staff member of the *Review*, she stated, “Serving as an editor added something to my experience as a student which I could not get in class. It was an opportunity for me to hone not just my writing skills as an editor, but also my skills as a leader, communicator, and

a team-member.” Being a part of the *Review* has impacted Kelhi’s life in other ways as well, including her career path.

Since her time at AUM, she has been committed to becoming an educator. Kelhi has taught history, literature, and Bible classes at Cornerstone Classical Christian Academy in Montgomery and she currently works as a TA for English classes and for international students at the Center for Theological Writing at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. “My experience working with the *Historical Review* helped cement in my mind that I want to work in a position where I’m helping others with their writing,” she said. Her most memorable moments as an editor were the connections she made with her fellow history majors and classmates, especially Beth Wesley. Beth was the author of “Senza Armadura: Filippo Brunelleschi’s Inspiration for the Duomo of Santa Maria del Fiore,” which was published in the fifth issue of the *Review*, and it was a discussion of this paper which resulted in a friendship between the pair.

## Katie Kidd

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Katie Kidd graduated from AUM in 2018 with a degree in history. Her collegiate career took longer than most since her path to graduation including starting and raising a family of three children, and two changes of major before setting her sights on history. Katie found history while taking her core history courses and, with the encouragement of Dr. Bulman of the history department, discovered she loved the intellectual challenge of piecing together historical events into interpretative narratives. The process of history and writing fascinates Katie, and she often finds herself questioning contemporary events through the frame of historical analysis with questions of sources, veracity, and meaning.

The *Historical Review* is perhaps one of the most memorable events in her collegiate career as she juggled her own history and writing assignments with editing those historical works submitted for consideration to the *Historical Review*. She believes her work on the *Review* helped solidify AUM's status as a serious history program as well as providing a venue for student scholars to publish their research. After graduating in 2018, she has kept her toe in the waters of history, reading historical articles as she contemplates returning to AUM for a graduate degree. Her assessment of her educational and employment potential is boosted by her belief that the Warhawk experience and the solid, professional education received through the Department of History will have lifelong benefits for herself as well as the worldview and curiosity she is able to impart to her children – in many ways passing the torch to future generations. As she so beautifully stated, AUM is “teaching history as an art form, not a list of facts.”

## LaKendrick Richardson

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LaKendrick Richardson graduated in 2016, returned to earn a master's degree in education, and is now pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts. LaKendrick credits his undergraduate experiences as a student worker for the history department as building a solid foundation in research. His later experiences as an intern with the Archives and Special Collections/Teaching and Instruction Librarian Samantha McNeilly built his research skills further and provided valuable experience in building the Digital Archives Collections for the AUM library. These experiences allowed him to serve as editor of the *Historical Review* and increased his abilities as line editor as well as substantially improved his oral and written communications skills.

After his initial graduation, he worked for the Alabama Department of Archives and History while pursuing a degree in education and becoming a classroom teacher. The critical analysis, writing, and oral communication skills he learned at AUM greatly eased his transition to graduate education and enabled him to become a more effective teacher. Of the skills he gained working on the *Review*, LaKendrick says, "I consider myself a teacher scholar; I am constantly sharpening my instruction using the research methods and writing that I honed on the *Historical Review*. I have published a few articles relating to my research on environmental racism and its impact on student attainment in the Alabama Black Belt." LaKendrick encourages others that may be interested in history to pursue the degree, as it necessarily involves interdisciplinary research and analysis and the opportunity to broaden individual horizons. LaKendrick fondly recalls the mentorship of several instructors from the history department – such as Dr. Tim Henderson, Dr. Michael Simmons, and Dr. Severance in class, and Dr. Gish in his role as an advisor to the *Review* – who greatly assisted his development as a scholar and an individual.

## **Madison Clark**

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Madison Clark graduated from AUM in 2016 with a degree in history. She holds a dual master's degree in history and applied women's studies and is currently a doctoral candidate in African American and African diaspora studies at Indiana University. She spent her time as a Warhawk working multiple jobs and pursuing her studies with a passion originating from a discussion she had with Dr. Farrow upon her arrival. The love of history has led her to pursue a career of imparting the lessons of history to others. She feels that as a historian she is "responsible for asking new questions on very old subjects...that help bring into focus details and points of view that traditional history may often overlook."

Her time at the *Historical Review* taught her many valuable skills in research, critical analysis and writing, but also taught her the value of soft social skills such as networking that improved the chances of the *Review* being supported by the community. Madison's time at AUM was transformative in both her personal life and her professional life. Not only did she identify her life's vocation, she learned the skills necessary to earn the various degrees she possesses and to give back in a critical way as an instructor in her own right. Personally, she credits AUM with providing her the opportunity to take part in the fiftieth anniversary remembrance of the March on Selma with President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama. Since leaving AUM, Madison has taught at California State University, Fullerton, in their gender studies department. Her advice to current history student is to not "allow people to tell you history is a wasted career. History is ever expanding and allows you to know the past in order to understand the future."

## Victoria Kenyon

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Victoria Kenyon, a 2018 graduate of AUM, has been putting the skills she learned as a history major and art history minor to work. As a student, Victoria worked as an editor for the *Historical Review* and sharpened her research and writing skills. She also gained the intangible skills necessary to earn a curatorial internship in American art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Those same skills and the experience gained at both the *Review* and her internship, helped her attain a position as a program assistant at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. In August 2020, she began graduate studies in art history at Penn State and became a teaching assistant there. For Victoria, the most remarkable aspects of studying history involve the expansion of

her worldview and the exposure to different points of view. The ability to use reason and logic, as well as critically considering sources and accuracy, are immensely important skills that studying history helped her develop and ones she uses daily in both her work and in her evaluation of current events.

Victoria enthusiastically encourages current students to consider history as a field of study since it imparts reasoning skills and the ability to evaluate written material. Additionally, as a field of study, history is flexible and allows the student to pursue many interests and employment opportunities in many fields. She also encourages students to pursue extracurricular activities and available internships – including those that seem to be beyond reach. Among extracurricular activities, she believes the *Review* to be of exceptional value because of the practical experience as well as the opportunity to become a published historian as an undergraduate. Of her overall experience at AUM and its faculty, she says “I feel like each professor from whom I learned helped me to grow as both a scholar and person.”

# GOVERNMENT'S GRIP ON THE SCHOOLHOUSE:

## Education in Alabama During the Cold War

by  
Elizabeth Meads

In 1958, during the first full decade of the Cold War, the United States government implemented the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) and forever changed the way government was involved in education. Placing emphasis on subjects such as science, math, and modern foreign languages, the NDEA was a direct response to the Soviet Union's launch of the first space satellite, *Sputnik*.<sup>1</sup> The act also impacted civics education and completely shifted the curriculum across the country. Civics teachers in Alabama were now required to contrast the American democratic government with Soviet communism when teaching civics and government classes. Alabama students, parents, and teachers were all impacted by the growing role of state

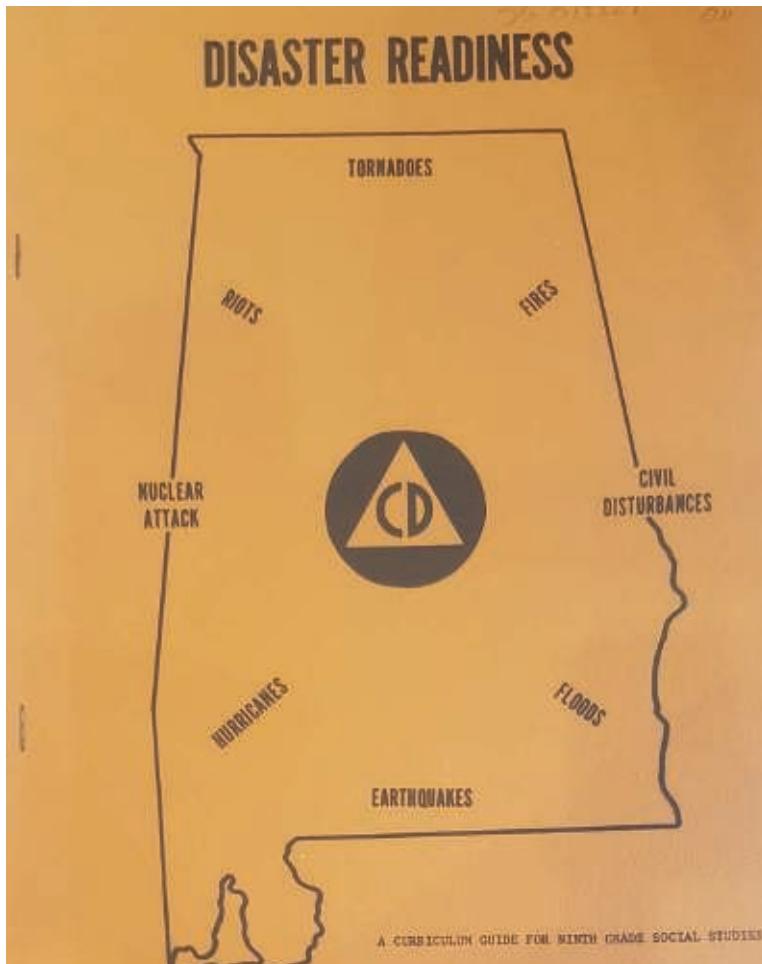
government in Alabama's education system. From the late 1950s to the late 1960s, education was used as a political tool to instill anti-communist rhetoric and promote Americanism in Alabama high school students using classroom materials, teacher moral and ethics codes, and student emergency disaster plans.

The Cold War was an ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union beginning at the end of World War II and lasting until the fall of the USSR. One area in which the United States and the USSR competed was the development of technology and military science, and the launching of the Soviet satellite *Sputnik* in 1957 exacerbated this competition. The intentions of the NDEA were to improve the education system to be more competitive with the technological prowess the USSR had displayed with its venture into space.<sup>2</sup> The United States government needed a scapegoat on which to blame this embarrassment of Soviet success and thus the NDEA was born.

One of the key proponents of the NDEA was Lister Hill. A democratic Senator from Alabama, Hill served on, as well as chaired, the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Before the launch of *Sputnik*, Hill had warned that the Soviets were "reaping the harvest of years of neglecting [the United States'] education system."<sup>3</sup> Hill pushed for the increase of highly-trained teachers, and an

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Elizabeth Meads was a history major who graduated in August 2020. She was involved in several student organizations during her time at AUM, including the University Honors Program and the Southern Regional Honors Council, serving as an officer in both organizations. She is continuing her studies at the University of Alabama in the Master of Library and Information Studies program with a specialization in archival studies. Her article won the 2020 Don Dodd History Prize.



A booklet co-written by the Alabama Department of Education and the Alabama State Department of Civil Defense Personnel. This plan had been created for the citizens of the Soviet Union and was copied into this booklet issued by the Alabama Department of Education so that students would understand the level of preparedness the Soviets had attained. (Alabama Department of Archives and History)

increase in salary for those teachers. He argued that if teachers were well-paid, they might have more incentive to stay working in the school system and have a better standard of living to become more involved in the community.<sup>4</sup>

Across the country there were conversations about how the American education system fared compared to others. A journalist from the *New York Times* contrasted the education system of the United States with that of Russia. He emphasized that one of the greatest advantages of the teachers in the Soviet

Union was that they were never sure if they were being watched or not by government authorities so they always had to teach as if they were being spied on or watched at all times. The United States Office of Education had conducted a two-year study that had showed the Soviet Union making every attempt possible to surpass the American education system in every aspect imaginable. According to the study, science and technical subjects had been the primary concern of Soviet education, and the study showed that as much as 70 percent

of the degrees issued from Soviet institutions of higher learning were in fields of science or related studies. The study also stated that high school students in the Soviet Union were devoting more than half of their time in class to math and science, with the humanities being of little to no importance in instruction. Many people believed that American schools were inferior to those in the Soviet Union, especially in science, math, and technology. Glenn Varner, a specialist in secondary education, was adamant in her belief that education should be highly focused, in order to shape the political ideologies of future politicians. Varner was extremely concerned that, with the federal government taking center stage in education requirements and curriculum, the progress that had been made in the last two decades regarding educational science would be lost.<sup>5</sup>

From 1958 to 1965, the NDEA endorsed the appropriation of \$1 billion, making it the first example of extensive federal education legislation, and indicating the expansion of both the federal and state government in the public education of the population. Its goal was to “[insure] trained manpower of sufficient quality and quantity to meet the national defense needs of the United States.”<sup>6</sup> Prior to this period, education had been regulated and mostly funded by states individually, with little to no help from the federal government. In fact, the Federal Department of Education was not operative until 1980, more than 20 years after the NDEA was enacted. However, after the NDEA was enacted, more national education legislation

was passed, such as the Higher Education Act in 1965.

Alabama was no exception to the far-reaching effects of the NDEA. Merely a month after the NDEA was implemented, Alabama leaders were already making plans with the money they were going to receive from the bill. On Thursday, October 16, 1958, educators and educational leaders from around the state held a meeting to discuss the appropriation of funds from the NDEA, the goal being to improve science, mathematics, and modern language courses. At the same meeting, a federal program on “defense impacted areas” was also discussed. These areas included large metropolitan areas like Montgomery, Mobile, and Huntsville, as well as smaller communities such as Ozark, and the aim was to create secure defense installations, most likely with the intentions to provide an area of safety in the event of a nuclear attack from the Soviet Union.<sup>7</sup>

Public opinion on the NDEA appeared optimistic, according to the views expressed in a Montgomery, Alabama newspaper. The *Montgomery Advertiser* stated, “Schools over the entire state will benefit from the National Defense Education Act.”<sup>8</sup> The National Congress of Parents and Teachers approved the NDEA as well, being one of the first supporters of the federal aid program. Hundreds of teachers, parents, and administrators called and wrote letters to their senators, urging them to vote in favor of the bill. The Alabama Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) was also in support of the NDEA, according to their

information bulletin from October 1958. Alabama PTA President G. C. O'Kelley was extremely enthusiastic about the NDEA and active in ensuring action on behalf of Alabama schools. According to the editor's note in the October 1958 monthly bulletin, "Mrs. G. C. O'Kelley . . . [was] "on the ball" in this needed action."<sup>9</sup> Implementation of the NDEA in Alabama took several years, as committees on textbook selection and course of study manuals were sluggishly brought up to speed with the national requirements. Teacher hiring practices also had to be gradually changed as well to meet the standards set forth by the NDEA.

There was a fear of communists infiltrating the Alabama education system, even before the Soviet satellite, *Sputnik*, took to the skies. In the summer of 1947, long before the NDEA was written and before *Sputnik* was launched, a bill was proposed in the Alabama senate by C. J. Owens, a senator from Marshall County. This bill required public school teachers to take "an oath disavowing Communist party membership and the advocacy of overthrowing the governments of the United States and Alabama." This loyalty oath requirement applied not only to primary and secondary schools, but to public colleges and universities as well. Once Owens introduced the bill, he made an amendment that any teacher found to have affiliation with the Communists or Communist party would result in a misdemeanor. The bill was passed by both the Alabama house and senate but was vetoed by Governor "Big Jim" Folsom. Folsom vetoed the bill because did not agree

with its wording. Nearly half of the United States had already passed legislation of the same caliber, although the attitudes towards the loyalty oaths varied across the nation. In 1949, at the National Education Association convention, a unanimous action was passed by the eight hundred delegates present to oppose the loyalty oath legislation. The resolution explicitly states that the required loyalty oaths would strengthen the practice of enacting discriminatory legislation and would in turn single out teachers.<sup>10</sup>

A few years after Governor Folsom had vetoed the loyalty oath bill, the same legislation was reintroduced to the Alabama legislature. Reece White, the Director of the State Department of Education in 1953, strongly urged the Alabama legislature to adopt the mandatory loyalty oath to prevent communists from permeating into the schools. White had served in the Alabama legislature during Jim Folsom's governorship and had voted in favor of the loyalty oath legislation when it was first presented in 1947, only for it to be vetoed by Governor Folsom. Originally, White expressed that the bill was a good idea but did not see a need for it. White stated, "There is no doubt in my mind [that] the purest American blood that ever flowed, flows through the veins of Alabamians. Communists, as far as I know, are extinct in our school system."<sup>11</sup>

In opposition to this view, an article from the *Birmingham News* argued that, while there was not a communist presence in the schools at the time, lawmakers should not wait around until there was one. W. J. Terry, the

Superintendent of Education in 1953, told the *Birmingham News* that he would not urge an oath of loyalty but that he would not oppose it either. Terry's main concern was that the loyalty oath would not be very effective and that it might do more harm than good. Loyalty oaths could act as a shield if a communist falsely signed it and would then have an open avenue to teach their doctrine in the classrooms.

The article argues that loyalty oaths were a form of suppression and that, traditionally, suppression has never killed an idea and that in the "ideological war" against communism, the best way to fight it was to make democracy more appealing and more successful than communism.<sup>12</sup>

Several newspapers expressed divided opinions on the requirement of teacher loyalty oaths. As the *Atmore Advance* wrote, left-wing liberals were concerned that loyalty oaths were an infringement upon academic freedom. The *Albertville Herald* also agreed with liberals and expressed a negative attitude toward the teacher loyalty oaths. It was commonly believed, as stated in the *Atmore Advance*, that the loyalty oath was an infringement upon academic freedom. The other expressed attitude from liberals was that by firing a teacher due to association with a group – in this case, communists – it was considered guilt by association. They argued that this was not American and discriminated against those teachers.<sup>13</sup>

In 1963, the Council of Chief State School Officers met in Miami, Florida and adopted a resolution regarding the teaching of

totalitarian ideologies, such as communism. The resolution stated that it was imperative to strengthen the teaching of American ideologies and make students across the nation aware of the dangers of totalitarian regimes such as communism.<sup>14</sup> One major city that was in favor of teaching anti-communist material was Boston, Massachusetts. Catholic Archbishop Richard Cushing compared communism to cancer, saying that, "we should teach [communism] for what it is – an intrinsic evil – like a medical student being taught about cancer and the nature of cancer."<sup>15</sup> Alabama had passionate opinions on the topic and put education at the forefront of its legislation for more than a decade after the NDEA was passed.

Alabama would not codify legislation regarding anti-communism education in its classrooms until the spring of 1963, and it did not reach the classroom until the 1963-64 school year. In March 1963, Jefferson County representative Quinton Bowers sponsored a bill that proposed that a course comparing Americanism with communism be taught in Alabama schools. Bowers argued that "the only way to defeat Communism is with knowledge . . . [T]hat is our only weapon."<sup>16</sup> The bill faced no opposition in the legislature, passing unanimously, and was supported by several prominent leaders in Alabama, such as State Superintendent of Education Dr. Austin Meadows, James Gates, the state adjunct for the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and John Hawkins and Hugh Locke, who were both influential leaders of the American Legion. Gates, Hawkins, and Locke were all members

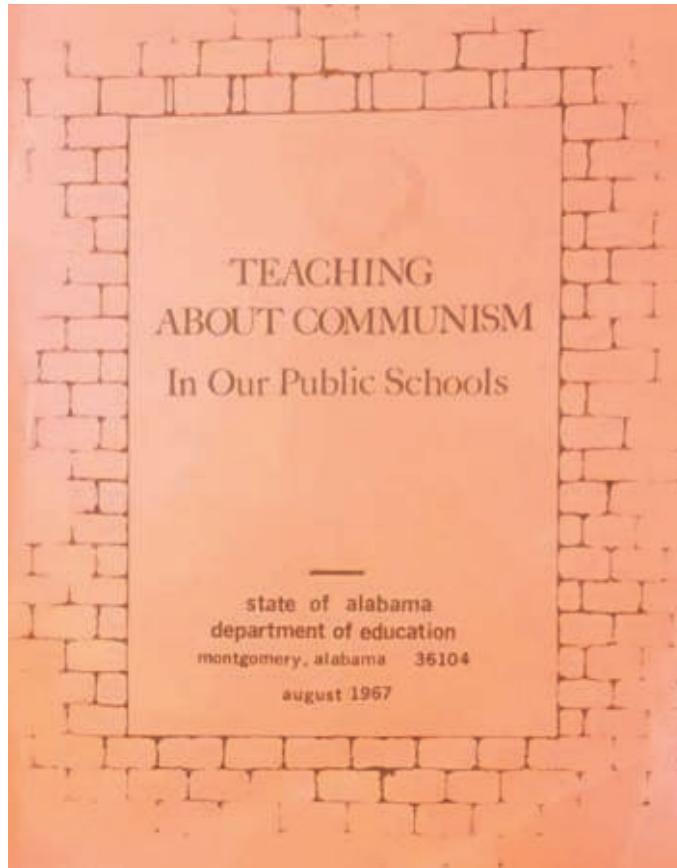
of the Alabama legislature, in addition to their leadership positions in their community.<sup>17</sup>

Not everyone agreed on the legislation, however. One state representative, Excell Baker of DeKalb, was concerned about what would happen to teachers if they taught both good and bad features of communism. Baker was an educator at the time and feared that if teachers covered both positive and negative aspects, their positions would be in jeopardy. Several members of the legislature assured Baker that his position as an educator would not be compromised on the grounds of teaching both good and bad features of communism. However, lawmakers expressed strongly that educators could not, in any way, portray communism as being the more favorable option when compared with the American system of representative government.<sup>18</sup>

The Alabama legislature approved the act in the second special session of 1963. The legislature wrote into the act that the best way to combat the “evils, dangers and fallacies of Communism” was to ensure the adolescents of the state had adequate education and a comprehensive understanding of the communist movement, including but not limited to its history, doctrine, teachings, and objectives. The goal of the legislation was to make students more appreciative of the democratic process in the United States with all the freedoms that came with it. The act was very specific in its instructions to teachers. Section 3 required teachers to contrast the American government with the Soviet government and to “emphasize the free-

enterprise-competitive economy of the United States of America as the one which produces higher wages, higher standards of living, greater personal freedom and liberty than any other system of economics on earth.”<sup>19</sup> Section 5 of the act mirrored the language of Section 3, in that teachers were explicitly prohibited from portraying communism as preferable to the American system of government.<sup>20</sup>

The *1964 Alabama Course of Study Manual* reflected the changes mandated by federal and state legislation in high school education. In March 1964, the state education committee recommended to the state Board of Education that a course explaining communism be taught in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The course was then added to the course of study teaching manual for the 1964-65 school year. Dr. Austin Meadows, state superintendent of education at the time, claimed before the course had been approved that textbooks for the course had already been added. In 12<sup>th</sup> grade government classes, the class was titled “American Government vs Communism” and had explicit instructions on how teachers would present the material to students. Several school systems across the country had developed AVC, or Americanism vs Communism courses in the place of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade civics course on government and economics. Some of the objectives listed include: “to show that the theoretical foundations of democracy and communism are different... to analyze the characteristics of the economic systems of each... to show students the areas in which the free world may effectively respond to the



A manual issued to teachers who taught AVC, or “Americanism” versus Communism. The lesson plans did not allow for much deviation and educators were prohibited from teaching that Communism had any positive qualities. (Alabama Department of Archives and History)

challenge [of communism]... to make clear to the students the nature and purpose of communism.”<sup>21</sup>

The course of study manual also listed concise examples of what the teachers would be permitted to use as example comparisons in the two forms of government. For instance, the law-making bodies of the United States are the House of Representatives and the Senate and their Soviet counterparts were the Council of the Soviet Union and the Council of Nationalities. The same 12<sup>th</sup> grade course also required teachers to contrast democratic citizenship with communism. This strategy of comparison and contrast was designed to

steer students towards the American way of life and to squash any inkling of support for the communist Soviets.<sup>22</sup>

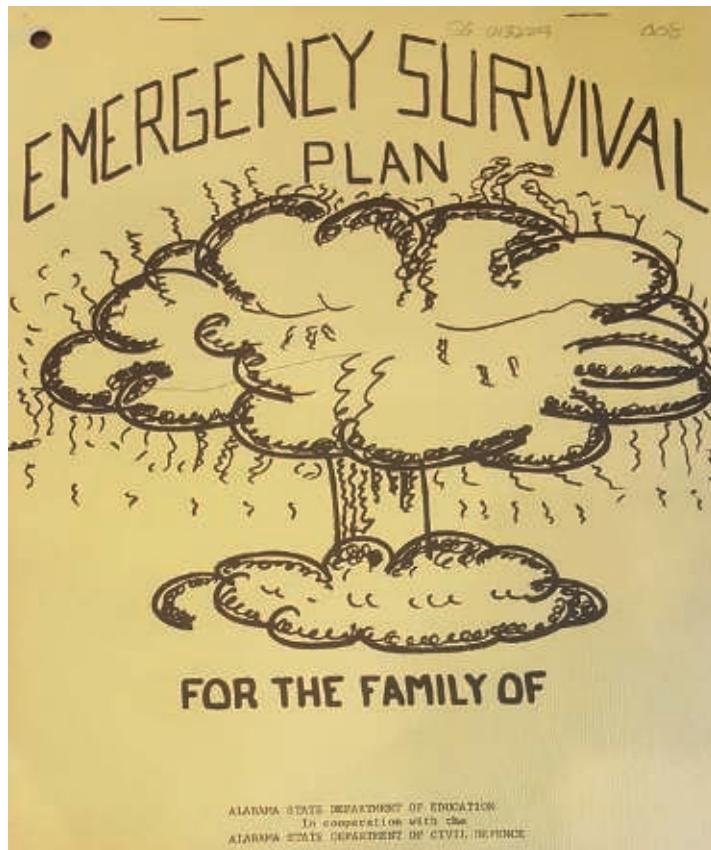
Classroom materials, such as booklets, pamphlets, and textbooks, were also used to further underscore the anti-communist rhetoric that was being dispersed from the Alabama legislature into Alabama classrooms. Students in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade were each issued a booklet entitled “Disaster Readiness,” a guide for dealing with riots, nuclear attacks, civil disturbances, or natural disasters. This plan had actually been created for the citizens of the Soviet Union and was copied into this booklet issued by the Alabama Department of

Education so that students would understand the level of preparedness the Soviets had attained. Clearly, the hope was to spur American preparedness for the same events. There are some objectives listed in the very front of the booklet of what 9<sup>th</sup> grade students were to learn, both from the course and from the booklet. Students were expected to learn to participate “in making plans for home and community shelter living.” The pamphlet discussed substances that citizens might encounter in the event of a nuclear fallout, such as radioactive dust, poisonous chemicals, and infectious bacteria. It also contained treatment methods for injuries that might be sustained from a nuclear attack, such as the setting of broken bones, treatment of burns, and treatment of radiation sickness. Also included are instructions for creating makeshift artificial respiratory devices in the event of an emergency to ensure survivors had clean, safe air to breathe and how to administer CPR as well.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to general advice, schools helped students create a personalized emergency survival plan. Each student received a blank pamphlet in which they were to indicate personal details about plans for themselves and their families in the event of an emergency. This booklet also made families and students aware of their local leaders and who to consult in the event of certain emergencies. Students were required to list the location in their home that offered the greatest amount of protection from fallout should a nuclear event happen. Subsequent sections required students

to list the closest fallout shelter to their home, as well as the best way to reach that shelter. The booklet also included entries to input the location of a second shelter nearby if the first one listed was unavailable for some reason, and had room for informational entries such as the dial setting for the local emergency broadcast system, the names and contact information of various community leaders such as the civil defense director, the county health department, and the home economics teacher at their school. Another section of the book had entries to list the full names of family members and what they would be responsible to bring to the shelter or to keep in an emergency stash of certain supplies. For example, some supplies that had to be consistently kept at home were first aid and sanitation supplies, extra batteries for the radio, safely stored family records, and fire safety materials.<sup>24</sup>

Textbooks were also used to further push the anti-communist agenda in the classroom. With the help of federal funding from the NDEA, Alabama was able to purchase school textbooks for all public schools beginning in 1965. Act no. 140 also laid out special instructions regarding the textbooks required for the anti-communist courses. In Section 4, the Alabama legislature required that the State Textbook Committee use the official reports from the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee as guides when selecting books for the communism education courses.<sup>25</sup>



A manual issued to 9th graders across Alabama that could be customized to each family's needs. The manual is blank so that a student could fill out information, such as who their parents were and where they worked, where the two closest bomb shelters were, and the dial setting for the radio in the event of a nuclear attack. (Alabama Department of Archives and History)

Every year in the spring, a list was made of textbook recommendations for the subsequent school year. Included in the 1969 list were textbooks specifically titled “anti-communism textbooks” and they were only mandatory for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.<sup>26</sup> The only book listed for the “anti-communist” course for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students was *The Meaning of Communism*. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade classes had several more “anti-communist” textbooks, such as *Democracy and Communism: Theory and Action*, *Communism in Perspective*, and *A Study of the USSR and Communism: A Historical Approach*.<sup>27</sup>

Teaching about communism particularly at this moment in time was a tall order and not everyone felt eager or prepared to do so. In order to prepare teachers, in August 1967, every Alabama public high school civics and government teacher was issued a handbook regarding how to teach communism in their classroom in a manner that would promote American ideology and critique Soviet communism, or at least portray it as highly unfavorable in comparison with the United States. The first few pages of the book are dedicated to explaining why Alabama lawmakers were taking an initiative to combat

communism by teaching the youths of Alabama the evils, fallacies, and dangers of communism. Included in that explanation is the exact wordage from Act no. 140:

The direction of study shall be one of orientation in contrasting the government of the United States of America with the Soviet government and shall emphasize the free-enterprise-competitive economy of the United States of America as the one which produces higher wages, higher standards of living, greater personal freedom and liberty than any other system of economics on earth. It shall lay particular emphasis on 1. the dangers of Communism, 2. the ways to fight communism, 3. the evils of Communism, 4. the fallacies of Communism, and the false doctrines of communism.<sup>28</sup>

The beginning of the manual outlines the objectives that the communist studies course aimed to achieve. One of the objectives in the extensive list was “to show that the Russian Communistic system is the most totalitarian system in existence today.”<sup>29</sup> By making such a broad, sweeping statement, the authors of this manual clearly intended to place anti-communist rhetoric at the forefront of civics education. Another objective on the list was “to show how Communism has denied the freedoms and rights [we] take for granted and which [we] must ever be on the alert to defend and protect.”<sup>30</sup> This objective essentially gave educators responsibility of insuring that

their students did not become infatuated with communist ideology or practices and encouraged civic involvement in the American system. One of the objectives pointed directly to the space race and acknowledged the success the Soviet Union had in making it to space before the Americans; instructors needed “to show that the Soviet achievement in space has been made by ignoring other needs of the Soviet people.”<sup>31</sup> The wordage used indicates clear disdain towards the Soviet Union and framed its success in a negative light. The most interesting objective on this list urged teachers to teach their students that the Soviets were not trustworthy, which made it impossible “for the free world to place any reliance upon a paper agreement with them. This can be accomplished by tracing the history of the Russian-broken treaties and promises.”<sup>32</sup>

The handbook goes into exhaustive detail about Soviet Russia and communist governance. The Soviet Union was contrasted with the United States on a multitude of fronts, including religion, economic systems, democratic processes, geography, religion, and several other culture-defining features.<sup>33</sup> One section of the handbook regarding the morals of communism even goes so far as to portray communists as being terrorists, or at the very least violent extremists. “Communism morally stands for force and violence to achieve its goals”<sup>34</sup> sounds extremely pointed and paints an extremely aggressive picture of Soviet communists. Similarly, the manual stated, “The [Communist] Party Commissars believe that the ends of communism justify any means

including war, violence, slavery, cruelty, lies and deceit.”<sup>35</sup>

A notable aspect of the manual is the wordage used in comparing the United States and the USSR. Almost always the United States is mentioned first, with positive language and always having some type of better statistic than the USSR. For example, take the comparison of cotton production: “[The] USSR produced about one-half as much cotton as the U.S. ... and is the second largest producer in the world.”<sup>36</sup> In analyzing this text, the writers of this handbook deliberately marked the USSR as being second-best to the United States. Another example is a section that lists the weaknesses of the Soviet Union in areas such as population, agriculture, transportation, and the economy. The Soviet Union’s economy was contrasted with America’s capitalist economy, in that the Soviets only produced a set number of a given item for the year. Additionally, the manual compared the Chinese and Latin American systems of communism with the United States.

Teachers also received specialized training under the NDEA. In 1963, the fourth annual Aero-Space Workshop was held at the University of Alabama. This annual workshop was held so that teachers would have a firm grasp on the current events of the space age and how they could incorporate that knowledge into their classrooms, according to program director Dr. Charles Arey. Part of the workshop included flying the teachers to various hubs of aerospace activity, such as Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Maxwell Airforce Base in Montgomery, and Cape Kennedy in Florida.

This annual workshop was an Alabama response to the NDEA and a push for America to one-up the Soviets in space technology and education in the classrooms.<sup>37</sup>

Teachers were also required to adhere to moral and ethics codes that explicitly mentioned the importance of patriotism and citizenship education. “The teacher must represent the values of a patriotic citizen that he would have his students acquire,” one guide declared.<sup>38</sup> The guide mentions that a teacher should possess the qualities that he or she is trying to instill in their students. Wayne Teague, the author of *Guide for Teaching Ethics and Moral Values in the Alabama Schools*, expressed very openly in his writing that teachers who did not uphold the American ideals of patriotism and citizenship were not qualified to educate the youth of Alabama and that they would make extremely poor examples of citizenship for students to look up to in their communities.<sup>39</sup>

Superintendent of Education Dr. Austin Meadows, who served in this position from 1956 to 1966, was a strong advocate for the NDEA and all the baggage that came with it. Meadows supported the NDEA not only because of the anti-communist teaching requirements and courses of study that were being dispersed from the Alabama legislature, but also because of the funding that drastically helped improve education. A comprehensive testing system, created by the NDEA, was a program intended to emphasize the aptitudes and abilities of the individual student, rather than a class or school as a whole. Meadows

said that they were the “most important high school developments on a statewide basis since the turn of the century.”<sup>40</sup> The testing program was designed to make a personalized plan of study for students to ensure they were taking courses that would help them get admitted into institutions of higher learning or that would help them to become employed in the workforce upon graduation. Meadows said in a speech, “We must do a better job of teaching our American system of representative government versus Communism and the other ‘-isms.’ It is not enough to just teach democracy in general terms.”<sup>41</sup> Meadows had his plate full during the implementation of the NDEA in Alabama however, because the desegregation of schools was taking place at the same time.

It is abundantly clear that civics education in Alabama high schools was a political tool to push anti-communist ideology from the Alabama statehouse to the classrooms. The NDEA was a catalyst in ensuring that Americanism and American ideologies would

be the favored choice when compared to the Soviet communist system of economics and government. Alabama leaders and educators favored the anti-communist rhetoric and they were extremely successful in passing those ideals on to the students they taught. There were several documents, course guides, and classroom materials used to bring awareness of the situation with the Soviet Union and the threat that communism posed to American democracy. These education materials were also used to ensure students and their families would be prepared in the event of a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union. Teachers were held to an extremely high standard to represent American morals and ethics in their classrooms and anything that deviated from that norm was unacceptable. The federal and state government’s grip on the schoolhouses of Alabama sought to squeeze out any speck of pro-communist ideology that any Alabama high school student may have had.

## Notes

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Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev (right) and US President Ronald Reagan (center) meeting at Hofdi House during the 1986 Reykjavik Summit in Iceland. This moment marked a turning point in US-Soviet relations, signaling the beginning of a new era of cooperation between the two superpowers. (*Encyclopedia Britannica / Wikimedia Commons*)

# SAVIOR OR CHARLATAN:

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## Perspectives on Mikhail Gorbachev's Life and Legacy

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by  
Robert Ashurst

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Robert Ashurst earned his BA in history from AUM in December 2020 and has served on the editorial board of the *AUM Historical Review* since 2017. He has been fascinated with learning about the past since he was very young and knew going into college that history was the career path that he wanted to pursue. Robert plans to attend graduate school to eventually become a historian or history professor. His article won the 2020 Richard Evans Morse Memorial History Prize.

Mikhail Gorbachev, the final premier of the USSR, was one of the twentieth century's most influential figures. His efforts to remake the Soviet Union, one of the most powerful and dystopian countries in recent history, into something almost like the West would arguably alter the state of the world more profoundly than any event since the Second World War. For decades, the country wallowed in the depths of despotism, as any precious few glimmers of change quickly succumbed to the crushing force of the Communist Party and its beneficiaries. Under Gorbachev's leadership, real, positive change was finally beginning to blossom, mainly due to his policy of *perestroika*, meaning "restructuring," and one of its main components, *glasnost*, roughly translating to "openness." These initiatives were meant to allow for more government transparency, democracy, and private participation in the economy, all of which had been heavily suppressed or even downright criminalized under previous regimes. Though Gorbachev was not the first Party leader to attempt reforms in this direction, his efforts were undeniably the most far-reaching; Gorbachev's programs allowed the Soviet Union to reach towards the modern world in a way which it had not dared since Lenin's revolution in 1917.

It was in the midst of these sweeping changes, alongside the general dismantling of the Soviet Union's hegemony over its client states in Europe and Asia, known as the Eastern

Bloc, that Michel Tatu, Dusko Doder, Louise Branson, and Gail Sheehy tell the story of the Soviet Communist Party's final General Secretary as they witnessed the last months of the USSR before its collapse in 1991. *Mikhail Gorbachev: The Origins of Perestroika* by Michel Tatu provides a brief, limited synopsis of Gorbachev's life and political career painted by the author's disdain for socialism. While Tatu is cautiously optimistic, he is unsure if Gorbachev's reforms will bring lasting change to the Soviet Union. *Gorbachev: Heretic in the Kremlin* by Dusko Doder and Louise Branson presents a much deeper analysis of Gorbachev's personal and political experiences than Tatu, though with an equally scholarly tone. Their portrayal of Gorbachev is far more positive and hopeful than Tatu's. They express great admiration for his reform programs, even though they do not aim to create a democratic system similar to the West. Lastly, Gail Sheehy in *The Man Who Changed the World: The Lives of Mikhail S. Gorbachev* offers a more structured, chronological narrative, and presents Gorbachev as an almost tragic hero. It focuses on Gorbachev's interactions with others both inside and outside the Soviet Union, and how he transformed throughout his life from a communist zealot, to an idealistic reformer, and finally to something akin to a raving, embittered hypocrite.

The shortest and least detailed of these three works is *Mikhail Gorbachev: The Origins*

of *Perestroika* by Michel Tatu. He is a French journalist who lived and worked in Moscow for several decades, with a career spanning from the 1950s to the 1990s. He graduated from Hautes Etudes Commerciales in Paris in 1954 before going on to work the longest for the French magazine *Le Monde*.<sup>1</sup> Tatu's book is only 150 pages, a surprising portion of which is taken up by block quotes; for this reason, it is unable to go into much depth about many aspects of Gorbachev's life. Only about a third of its length is dedicated to Gorbachev's childhood and early adulthood before climbing the ranks of the Communist Party. The rest of Tatu's book primarily discusses Gorbachev's constant battle with the conservative opposition which favored the status quo and its stability, despite the stagnation it brought. Tatu explores Gorbachev's relationships with many different individuals who aided his rise to power and efforts toward reform, as well as those who undermined him at every turn.

Tatu believes that Gorbachev's struggle for greater levels of democratization and privatization is sincere, but that he is too enraptured by his own quest for personal power and the idea that socialism can be saved. He accuses Gorbachev of "applying the brakes rather than pushing forward with the necessary changes" in his reluctance to fully commit to *glasnost* and *perestroika*, and that his dedication to socialism is holding back the potential of Gorbachev's reforms. Tatu admires

the General Secretary's willingness to fight against the Party establishment in his efforts to implement reform scarcely attempted in the Soviet Union, but also questions if Gorbachev is the right leader to "preside over a crumbling empire" that has "a system drifting into chaos" due to his indecisiveness and propensity for compromise and centrism. He sees Gorbachev as naïve for believing that communism can be saved, stating instead that it must "first come tumbling down altogether" for a "normal society" to be created.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most glaring weaknesses of *The Origins of Perestroika* is its lack of original sources for much of its information. Tatu primarily uses Soviet state-owned publications such as *Pravda*, *Party Life*, and *Komunist*, the first of which is referenced by far the most throughout the book. Other sources include the minutes recorded during meetings of the Communist Party and other organizations, as well as speeches given by Soviet officials.<sup>3</sup> As a result, Tatu is not able to provide very many insights that would not have been known to those who are well-versed in Soviet affairs and history. The book is also particularly weak in its description of Gorbachev's early life, only spending a brief two chapters discussing the leader's childhood in the Stavropol region of the Northern Caucuses through his time in college at Moscow University.<sup>4</sup>

While Tatu displays a respectable wealth of knowledge about the Soviet Union

from his many years living there, his book is unfortunately too narrow in scope to be of much use as an academic source. Its moments of bias, bordering on vitriol, can be distracting, and its overuse of block quotes sometimes drowns out Tatu's own words.<sup>5</sup> When compared with the works of Doder, Branson, and Sheehy, Tatu is unable to provide much that is not covered better by *Heretic in the Kremlin* or *The Man Who Changed the World*.

Perhaps the most thorough of these books, placing particular focus on Gorbachev as General Secretary, is *Gorbachev: Heretic in the Kremlin* by Dusko Doder and Louise Branson. Doder is a Yugoslavian journalist who worked as a reporter, editor, and foreign correspondent for the *Washington Post*, and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting from Moscow in the 1980s.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, Branson is an independent journalist who attended Lancaster University and the University of Paris. She is a member of USA TODAY's Board of Contributors and the Council on Foreign Relations, and is professionally proficient in English, French, and Russian.<sup>7</sup> *Heretic in the Kremlin* is longer and more detailed than Tatu's book but follows the same general format. It features greater elaboration on Gorbachev's life before and after his rise to the top of the Soviet Communist Party, providing a relatively short biography of the leader while still maintaining a level of detail about his time in power that is greater

than Tatu's. Its structure is loose, following a general chronology of events by jumping back and forth between earlier and later years when relevant.

As opposed to Tatu and Sheehy, Doder and Branson offer a relatively positive view of Gorbachev's policy initiatives. They are uncertain about the future of the Soviet Union, particularly due to its economic decline, but are still convinced believers in Gorbachev as a champion of the people. They praise Gorbachev for ushering in "an exciting, new society, more just and more efficient" and describe him as a "superb political tactician" for his ability to operate within the incredible corruption and nepotism of the cut-throat Soviet political system.<sup>8</sup>

Doder and Branson contend that Gorbachev was, unlike his predecessors such as Nikita Khrushchev, a genuine reformer who truly wanted to improve the Soviet Union, independently of his own quest for power. Whereas Tatu, and to a certain extent Sheehy, suggest that Gorbachev had a significant interest in accumulating power for his own sake, Doder and Branson believe that this was far from his main reason, and that he mostly wanted power to further his reforms. They qualify this by comparing his campaign of *glasnost* to a similar reform conducted by Khrushchev, whom they accuse of using a "tightly controlled" version of openness which was "always in the service of [his] regime."<sup>9</sup>



This stamp, produced in 1988, depicts propaganda that was used to bolster public support for *perestroika*. It states: “Re-structuring is [reliant upon] the living creativity of the masses.” (Wikimedia Commons)

Doder and Branson admit that Gorbachev “sought power and has enjoyed wielding it,” but that he did so “with a larger purpose.”<sup>10</sup> Gorbachev reasoned, they propose, that he “was the right man with the right idea at the right moment, manipulating people and events for the good of humanity.”<sup>11</sup>

Unlike Tatu, Doder and Branson feature a wide array of different sources which help to produce a more complete, insightful view of Gorbachev. They include a diverse variety of publications, from both Eastern and Western countries, as well as a plethora of interviews conducted by themselves and others with people who Gorbachev knew and interacted with throughout his life. While the authors did not gain personal access to Gorbachev, they include excerpts from several interviews with him conducted by third parties,

in addition to his speeches and Gorbachev’s own writing. With such a wide selection of sources, Doder and Branson provide a greater insight into Gorbachev’s personal life than Tatu. Whereas Tatu primarily focuses on his own opinions of Gorbachev and his political maneuvers, with insights limited mostly to information made available by the Soviet press, Doder and Branson are able to show the opinions of Gorbachev’s colleagues on events as they happen, without being filtered through the state-owned media. For instance, they are able to show that Gorbachev understood the need for expert advisors, but could also be impatient with them, using an interview with his “advisor on American affairs” Georgi Arbatov to illustrate this point; Tatu does not present this level of personal detail.<sup>12</sup>

Doder and Branson provide some much-needed personal context to Gorbachev's actions and beliefs, an element that Tatu's work lacks. However, as with *The Origins of Perestroika*, Doder and Branson's writing is stiff and scholarly. They present a loosely chronological order of events, which can be confusing at times and might make the reading difficult. Nonetheless, *Heretic in the Kremlin* provides an exceptional level of nuance when speaking of Gorbachev's ascent to power and, more notably, his time in power.

It first seems that Doder and Branson are too forgiving of Gorbachev in their assumption that his gradual accumulation of power throughout the late eighties was more to enact positive change rather than personal gratification. However, as the book progresses, they provide compelling arguments that this was indeed his main goal despite originally being divided on Gorbachev's character. The authors admit that they were once at odds about the potential for change in Russia and were skeptical of Gorbachev's motives, but that the leader's actions convinced them throughout his time as General Secretary.<sup>13</sup> This stands in stark contrast to the views presented by both Tatu and Sheehy, who seem to develop a worsening opinion of Gorbachev as the eighties come to a close. *Heretic in the Kremlin* takes a markedly different perspective from the other works discussed, featuring exceptional detail and thought-provoking insights; it is highly

recommended for those looking to gain a deeper understanding of Gorbachev and his political career.

By far the most approachable of these three books is *The Man Who Changed the World: The Lives of Mikhail S. Gorbachev* by Gail Sheehy. She worked as a contributor for the magazines *New York* and *Vanity Fair* and has written over seventeen books throughout her career. Her most notable work is that on family relationships and women's issues, as well as different presidential candidates and world leaders.<sup>14</sup> Sheehy's writing is more narrative and conversational than the formalistic approaches of Tatu, Doder, and Branson. Her book is also more biographical, putting greater emphasis on Gorbachev's early life, his rise to power, and his time as General Secretary. Similar to *Heretic in the Kremlin*, Sheehy uses Gorbachev's interactions with those around him to gain a more personal perspective of who he was as a person rather than just his political pursuits.

Sheehy, while supportive of the idea behind *glasnost* and *perestroika*, takes a decidedly more negative view of Gorbachev's policy initiatives. Though she respects Gorbachev as an exceptionally talented politician, and does not see him as a liar or fake reformer, Sheehy harbors doubts about the reforms' effectiveness, going as far as to call *perestroika* an "abject failure."<sup>15</sup> She even questions Gorbachev's commitment to his policies and the ends which he hopes

to achieve. Her book's main theme is that Gorbachev undergoes many transformations throughout his life, encouraged by the political pressures which force him to bend his principles to the point of outright hypocrisy in order to make any meaningful change. She posits that Gorbachev learned to live a life of "double-think," a term which Sheehy borrows from fiction writer George Orwell, in which he constantly and strategically juggles his pursuits of "conviction and compromise."<sup>16</sup> His willingness to publicly praise and agree with those he hated, to discard his principles in an instant, Sheehy argues, was the only way that a lowly peasant from the backwater region of Stavropol could ascend the Soviet political ladder made of corruption, bribery, and "mafia."<sup>17</sup> His ability to charm even those with whom he vehemently disagreed with politically did not just serve him well within the Communist Party. This attribute extended to his interactions with Western leaders as well. Gorbachev's slowly blossoming friendship with both US President Ronald Regan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was, according to Sheehy, won through his intellect and wit. She even claims that Thatcher saw herself as Gorbachev's "friend and tutor from the West."<sup>18</sup>

Sheehy sees Gorbachev as a person who is always in flux, always adapting and changing to meet the political challenges which threatened to undo his reforms. She

quotes Nikolai Shishlin, one of Gorbachev's close confidantes, as saying, "I'm quite sure there are several Gorbachevs," which is similarly indicative of her own views.<sup>19</sup> Sheehy sees this as the defining feature of the last Soviet premier, and the attribute which best explains both the early success and eventual disappointment of Gorbachev's reforms.. He towed the party line in the beginning – making sure to stay in favor with those who could aid him – before allowing his passion for reform to show once he took power. After 1987, but most noticeably in 1990, Sheehy describes a "new" Gorbachev who quickly began to lose touch with the Soviet people. At this late point in his career, as the Soviet Union's economy approached a point of utterly catastrophic failure, Sheehy believes that Gorbachev had lost his characteristic political coolness, which previously drove his policy initiatives. Instead, he began to lash out at those who opposed him and shut them down when they criticized his increasingly controversial actions. Boris Yeltsin, a hugely popular politician among ordinary Russians and himself a former supporter of Gorbachev, defeated the General Secretary in the first truly democratic Soviet election for the Presidency, a position which Gorbachev created to grant himself more power. Sheehy accuses Gorbachev of having "nobody but himself" to blame for his "thin-skinned," reactionary attitude which led to Yeltsin's popularity.<sup>20</sup>

Much like Doder and Branson, Sheehy presents many interviews to create a more personal narrative describing Gorbachev, making ample use of quotes from his friends, family, and associates, as well as from ordinary Soviet citizens whom she encountered.

Even more than the other authors, though, Sheehy relies on many sources from Western publications, such as the *Washington Post*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Times*, and many more. Sheehy also makes many references to other writers on the subject, including several to *Heretic in the Kremlin*.<sup>21</sup> Unlike Tatu, Doder, and Branson, Sheehy does not use endnote citations, and rather opts for citing lines from each page as they appear. She does not always cite outside information used, which can make it ambiguous as to what is her own knowledge and what was obtained from elsewhere. Few sources from the USSR outside of interviews with Soviet citizens and the author's personal anecdotes are cited, with a notable lack of many Soviet publications. This gives her work a decidedly Western perspective, and indeed she often portrays how foreign and alien the Soviet social and political norms are to those common in the West. Sheehy does not come across as an expert in Soviet affairs and history, and while she is able to draw meaningful conclusions, it is clear that her sources, particularly interviews and other authors' writings on Gorbachev, are used as a substitute for her lack of a background in the field.

Sheehy's lack of prior knowledge is her book's greatest shortcoming, and the absence of proper citations is problematic, but it is not the only issue which prevents it from being a definitive source on Gorbachev's life. In using those who interacted with Gorbachev as a vehicle through which to describe him, Sheehy sometimes focuses too heavily on other actors. One instance of this which goes on a bit too long is at the start of the chapter "The Great Persuader Abroad," in which Sheehy discusses the importance of military action in forming the public's opinions of a political leader. In this example, she briefly describes the military backgrounds of several Western leaders for roughly a page and a half before connecting it to Gorbachev, which seems unnecessary.<sup>22</sup> This is usually not too detrimental, as Sheehy is often able to discuss side characters only so much as their reactions provide useful context, but she occasionally spends too much time on those around the General Secretary instead of talking about Gorbachev himself. This is only a minor issue compared to the book's more apparent flaws, however.

Taken as an entry-level book, the positive aspects of *The Man Who Changed the World* definitely outweigh the negative. It is remarkably pleasant to read, engrossing in its narrative, and provocative in its conclusions, an admirable feat for someone not as knowledgeable about Gorbachev and the Soviet Union as a trained scholar would be. Sheehy

offers an easy-to-follow chronological order of events unlike Tatu, Doder, and Branson, which makes the various stages of Gorbachev's life easier to understand for novice readers. She also provides a much deeper and more complete picture of Gorbachev's early years and rise to power than that found in either of the other two books, which helps in supporting her overall theme of Gorbachev as an ever-changing man.

Gail Sheehy's *The Man Who Changed the World* is an enjoyable read which offers a great deal to anyone looking to immerse themselves in the story of Gorbachev and the struggles which shaped him. The book is very obviously meant for a mass audience which does not know much about Gorbachev and the inner workings of the Soviet Union, but does not sacrifice detail for ease of readability. While the lack of properly academic citations may make this book unreliable as a scholarly source for its factual content, the author's eye-opening interviews with Gorbachev's colleagues, friends, and family, as well as Western politicians, could prove to be of great use to researchers. *The Man Who Changed the World* is a strong starting point for those not familiar with Gorbachev's story.

Of these collected works, *Heretic in the Kremlin* is the most suitable as an academic resource, as it provides the most detailed analysis of the Soviet political landscape under Gorbachev's regime. It includes the greatest

variety of sources of the three books, and its authors have the most extensive backgrounds and knowledge about the Soviet Union. The book draws an undeniably positive, but factually sound, conclusion of Gorbachev's leadership, his motives, and his policies. While it is fairly challenging to read, it is the best resource overall. *The Man Who Changed the World* is not meant for the same audience, and outside of its interviews is of less value to academia. It is clearly intended to entertain as much as to educate, and thus is the most appealing to new readers, especially college students. To that end, it serves its purpose well, and complements Doder and Branson's work brilliantly with its greater emphasis on Gorbachev's younger years. *The Origins of Perestroika* is unfortunately lacking in specificity due to its comparatively brief length and narrow range of sources. While Tatu's experience as a journalist in Moscow during the 1950s and 1960s provided him an unquestionably rich understanding of Soviet policy, his work overlaps significantly with the other two books mentioned in this article. His work is fairly difficult to read and does not offer much in terms of unique insight not covered by the other authors. Those looking to cite *The Origins of Perestroika* would likely be best served using it as a guide for discovering primary sources, mostly from Soviet state-owned publications.

All three of these books were published before the end of 1991, chosen in an effort to gain insight into the authors' various conclusions about Gorbachev while he was still in power and facing the Soviet Union's most dire economic and political crisis. This means that they were all written on the eve of the superpower's demise, right before one of the most significant geopolitical realignments of the modern era. For this reason, one area which demands further research is: What happened to Gorbachev after the Soviet Union's collapse? Did he ever regain his relevance in Russian politics in the post-Soviet era? Or did he simply fade into obscurity, remembered only for the painful years of economic despair that followed his reign and his failed efforts to bring freedom and democracy to his people in a desperate bid to save the dying dream of communism? The answers to these questions could only be speculated by Tatu, Doder, Branson, and Sheehy – most of whom were astoundingly astute in their common predictions of an impending pandemonium in the Soviet Union. On that note, given how much time has passed, what is known about Gorbachev now that was not known before

the collapse of what President Reagan called the "evil empire" decades ago? Were there potentially valuable sources locked away in the Soviet archives which could shed new light on Gorbachev that might now be available to the public? This is another question which warrants investigation, as such sources could potentially have information that shows another side to Gorbachev not yet documented. And, perhaps the most important question of all is, did Gorbachev really make a difference in the end? Did *glasnost* and *perestroika*, the two ideas to which Gorbachev dedicated his life, bring about any lasting positive change in Russia? Even if they were unsuccessful as public policy initiatives, did Gorbachev and his reforms accomplish anything permanent, or was their role in the Eastern Bloc's struggle for democracy and self-rule entirely insignificant? In order to form a complete history of Gorbachev and his impact, these questions must be answered. To do so, one should look to the outcome of that turbulent period and assess how successful each of the former Soviet nations were in reaching toward a newer, brighter world.

## Notes

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# REVITALIZING SOUTHERN AFRICA'S LINGUISTIC HERITAGE

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by  
Kimberlee Fernandez

Trevor Noah, comedian and television personality, has brought to the forefront issues facing South Africans that have stirred “every day” people and scholars alike to take a closer examination of cultural and linguistic heritage throughout southern Africa. Noah, an outspoken advocate for his home country of South Africa, came to America in 2012 and became the host of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* in 2015. He is a man who believes that knowing different languages is one of the key characteristics which promotes a strong historical and cultural knowledge, along with a deeper sense of personal identification. His

mother has a Xhosa background and is the single most influential person in Noah’s life. Noah is fluent in several languages, including Afrikaans, Zulu, and Xhosa, due to his mother’s influence and background. However, many people in southern Africa are not so lucky and their cultural and linguistic heritage is slowly dwindling as fluent speakers of indigenous languages continue to decrease in number. The efforts to revitalize the disappearing linguistic and cultural heritage of southern Africa have become increasingly challenging for linguists, scholars, historians, writers, and preservation groups. As the number of people who are able to speak certain sub-groups of the Khoisan language family and other non-Bantu “click” languages dwindle, so too do the opportunities to spread the historical and cultural knowledge that is present within these diminishing language groups. This article will address the special linguistic features that distinguish certain endangered non-Bantu “click” languages and Khoisan/San languages from other Sub-Saharan African languages. This article will also discuss current revitalization efforts promoting the significance of linguistic heritage and the importance of writers’ use of indigenous languages within their works combined with assistance from the publishing

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Kimberlee Fernandez, a non-traditional transfer student, is a senior at AUM after earning her associate's degree from Enterprise State Community College in 2017. She is a double major in history and English, as she believes that a student cannot understand history without reading the literature of that era, nor can a student understand literature without being familiar with the history of its era. Her goal is to obtain her master's degree and share her passion for history and English through teaching composition and survey level courses in the Alabama Community College System.



(Shaund and Nick Roux / Burmesedays / Wikimedia Commons)

industries. These topics will be discussed while utilizing analyses of current attempts being undertaken to salvage critically endangered languages in the countries of South Africa, Tanzania, Namibia, and Botswana. There are several promising revitalization efforts being made throughout southern Africa, from indigenous language centers in South Africa, to the few fluent native speakers of critically endangered languages – like the N|uu language – who allow linguists to video and audio record them, which provides an optimistic hope that these dying languages will not fade away with the last generation of fluent speakers.<sup>1</sup>

For the purpose of this article, the non-Bantu “click” languages and the Khoisan languages will be directly addressed as “click”

languages, unless addressed by the particular sub-group language name, i.e. N|uu. The non-Bantu “click” languages are often placed under the general category of the Khoisan language family, but there are differing scholarly opinions on whether that language classification is accurate. Some scholars prefer to categorize all “click” languages of southern Africa into one group: Khoisan. They divide the Khoisan languages into three distinctive groups: North Khoisan, Central Khoisan, and South Khoisan. These distinctive groups are then placed into sub-branches, or sub-groupings, merging geographical locations with the languages that are mutually understood. However, there are some scholars that prefer to use the classification of “Non-Bantu Click Languages”

to classify the unique “click” languages of southern Africa. Despite the differences between sub-groups, when comparing “click” languages, one finds many similarities. The differences include how many speech sounds are in the orthography, each with a differing number of phonemes, vowels, and non-click consonants. Some of the similarities include five basic types of clicks and the historical and cultural significances of the “click” languages themselves.<sup>2</sup>

The five basic clicks are bilabial, dental, alveolar, lateral, and palatal. Bilabial clicks, symbolized as Ø, produce a pop-like sound by pressing lips together and then releasing quickly. Dental clicks, symbolized as |, produce a “tsk, tsk,” sound when placing the tongue right behind the teeth. Alveolar clicks, symbolized as !, produce a different pop-like sound than the bilabial click due to the placement of the tongue. When doing the alveolar click, one places the tongue flat on the roof of the mouth, just past the ridge directly behind the teeth, and by using a slight intake of breath, the tongue is released. Once released, the tongue makes a pop-like noise, comparative to a popped top or cork from a glass bottle. Lateral clicks, symbolized as ||, produce the sound that most English speakers might equate with prompting a horse to walk. This sound is made by placing the tongue on one side of the teeth and making a sucking-like motion. Palatal clicks, symbolized as ‡, produce a sharp, clap-

like sound by placing the tongue flat on the palate of the mouth and then quickly releasing.<sup>3</sup>

Due to the work of scholars and linguists, there is now a record of historical and cultural aspects that include “healing trance dances, hunting magic and intensive usage of wild plant and insect food, a unique kinship and naming system, frequent storytelling, and the use of a landscape-term system for spatial orientation.”<sup>4</sup> The significances of “click” languages are largely due to the hunter-gatherer/hunter-herder culture and a series of unique medicine dances associated with healing aspects. With just a series of “clicks,” one may convey a large amount of information to the people around them. A few clicks may reference a large geographical drop-off area, such as a cliff for hunters to be cautious of, indicate the movement of animals, describe noises or objects, or be used to direct the position of the hunters to a prime position to hunt prey. Scholars and linguists have taken an active role in studying and recording several of the endangered and dying languages in attempts to preserve the cultural and historical heritage attached with each language group. These historical and cultural aspects are different from those found in other endangered languages due to the ability for the “clicks” to convey a large amount of information with the smallest of sounds. Linguists, working closely with geneticists, have studied these languages and have determined that they are ancient

languages. It would be interesting to discover if these ancient “click” languages came about because clicks sound more natural and would not startle animals as other formed “worded” languages might have. Another curious aspect of the “click” languages that continue to bewilder scholars and linguists is, even though most of the other parts of most “click” languages have transformed over time, the clicks themselves are still very much present.<sup>5</sup>

A strong revitalization effort for indigenous peoples of southern Africa has been promoted since the 1990s. The 1995-2004 campaign, the *International Decade of Indigenous People*, was an effort by the United Nations to draw attention to the need for revitalization efforts to focus on indigenous peoples and languages. Several conferences were held throughout Africa, including the *Conference on Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage* in 1997 at the University of the Western Cape. This conference spotlighted indigenous clans and communities that were shoved aside and became insignificant since the first European colonists landed in southern Africa. People within urban areas began to relate to and embrace this lost historical and cultural identity. At this conference, the historic reconstitution of eleven clans prompted urban dwellers toward a movement of revitalization of indigenous cultures. There was a surge in urbanites searching for a way to identify with their long-lost rural heritage. Since the 1990s

there has been a strong desire among regular “every-day” people and scholars to not only identify with, but to revitalize the linguistic and cultural heritage of the southern African “click” languages. Preservation is a key element to revitalization efforts. Another key element is education.<sup>6</sup>

In South Africa, there are promising signs for revitalization efforts. One such effort is through the formation of the Cape Royal Council in 2018. The main purpose of the Cape Royal Council is to promote a place for cultural identification and to “ensure that the Khoie and San communities are represented by experts in academia, education and industry” in order to enable the indigenous communities and peoples “to benefit from the development of their cultural and natural resources.”<sup>7</sup> This type of representation for minority groups promotes a sense of optimism and hope – hope to receive an education and good employment and optimism that the minority groups will not lose their individual language, culture, and heritage in order to achieve such basic needs.<sup>8</sup>

Another group that has come to the forefront to promote integration of indigenous languages into the popular and national social realm is the DOBES Program. The Volkswagen Foundation founded the DOBES (Dokumentation bedrohter Sprachen) Program in 2000. This initiative brings together world-wide preservation groups, linguists, archeologists, and researchers hoping to



San language speakers at a tourist lodge in Botswana. (Mopane Game Safaris / Wikimedia Commons)

record, document, preserve, and revitalize endangered languages all over the world. The DOBES Program has taken an active role in preserving and revitalizing the “click” languages of southern Africa. The project on the †Akhoe Hai||om language in Namibia hopes to not only record and preserve the language but states that it hopes “to capture the language of kin-talk and naming” in order “to encourage †Akhoe Hai||om to try to establish social relations on their own terms (literally) as a means of empowering this marginalized group of people.”<sup>9</sup> One of the main goals DOBES hopes to accomplish through encouraging and educating the †Akhoe Hai||om is to have

a gradual integration, combined with training and empowerment, “into the national culture of Namibia” before it becomes another lost, dead language.<sup>10</sup>

The basic need for education is a key component to learning one’s linguistic, historical, and cultural heritage. Dr. Matthias Brenzinger and Dr. Sheena Shah, from the Centre for African Language Diversity at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, have taken on the task to not only study and record the last three speakers of the N|uu language, but to tackle the project of producing a trilingual reader to help educate the †Khomani community in Upington, South

Africa. The trilingual reader, published in 2016, has translations of the N|uu vocabulary and phrases translated into Afrikaans and English. This reader is a teaching tool used to guide elementary aged children in N|uu basics, which includes the N|uu alphabet, basic greetings, plants, animals, and many other areas to expand a child's N|uu linguistic skills. However, Dr. Brenzinger and Dr. Shah have placed this reader as an online book so that the world may have access to the fascinating aspects of the N|uu language. This project inspires a sense of hope for revitalization while providing the #Khomani people with the ability to learn about their rich, but fragile, linguistic history.<sup>11</sup>

In the past several decades, there has been an influx of South African literature due to the new post-apartheid freedom of speech. Prior to 1994, free speech was strictly and severely censored to include only what the national government allowed, particularly during South Africa's state of emergencies. When South Africa ended the strict rule of apartheid in 1994, there was an influx of free-speech literature that surfaced. This post-apartheid genre of literature has emphasized the need for the publishing industries to help revitalization efforts by capturing dwindling cultural and linguistic heritages within the pages of books. The revolutionary Kenyan writer, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, delved into the literary world of writing works in his own indigenous language. Ngugi's influence has

stretched over decades and covered many topics, to include the importance of capturing cultural, historical, and linguistic heritage. Ngugi's revolutionary approach to writing greatly influenced post-apartheid writers. As mentioned above, the United Nations decade (1994-2004) to celebrate indigenous peoples, combined with this new era of indigenous literature, sparked a desire to encapsulate the fading "click" languages in print. Dr. Patrick Ngulube is with the Department of Interdisciplinary Research of the College of Graduate Studies at the University of South Africa. Dr. Ngulube has focused much of his research on the preservation of endangered indigenous cultures and languages. His theory is that authors and the publishing industry have a responsibility to engage in the collective recording, reevaluation, and retransmission of indigenous languages and cultures through their selected media. His claim is that without proper preservation techniques, including publications, languages such as N|uu, |Xam, ||Ku||e, !Gan!ne, and several others, are facing the very real danger of becoming dead languages.<sup>12</sup>

In conclusion, although efforts to capture and record the disappearing linguistic and cultural heritage of southern African "click" languages have become increasingly challenging for linguists, scholars, historians, writers, and preservation groups, promising efforts are being made to salvage the fragile

pieces that remain. The efforts by Dr. Matthias Brenzinger and Dr. Sheena Shah, along with contemporary popular writers like Trevor Noah, combined with the attempts of projects like the DOBES Program, promote optimism and hope that these diminishing languages will not disappear. Using technology, via audio recordings, videos, and electronic data, there are a variety of ways to preserve the critically endangered “click” languages of southern Africa. The most forward-looking efforts are those that transmit the living language to the next generation rather than simply recording the memories and voices of the elders. A

commonality found within all people is the need to preserve historical, cultural, and linguistic heritage and forms the fundamental basis of human connectiveness and identity. Many African people carry with them a sense of hope, one that is as ingrained within their character as their genetic makeup is within their DNA. Through this optimistic hope, one can find a renewed sense that just because these languages are critically endangered does not mean that they will be forever lost. Hope is as powerful as history, for only through hope will linguistic revitalization efforts and cultural heritage survive.

## Notes

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# THE INVISIBLE ALLY: Mexico's Role in the Defeat of the Axis in the Second World War

by  
Russell K. Stovall

The first spark of what would become the Second World War was witnessed in Asia when Japanese troops laid claim to Manchuria in 1931. Benito Mussolini spread the fire to Africa in 1936 when he expanded his Italian empire into Abyssinia. Adding fuel to the fire and fanning the flames, Adolf Hitler brought war to the European continent as his *Wehrmacht blitzkrieged* its way through Poland in September 1939, after having annexed the Sudetenland and completed the *Anschluss* with Austria a year earlier. As the fighting

mushroomed into a full-blown world war, the United States—which was still reevaluating its participation in “The Great War” two decades earlier—was less than anxious to get involved and, other than supplying the Allies with critical warfighting matériel, it sought to remain neutral. The war continued to expand, however, and the United States would be dragged into the fight on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese attacked U.S. forces stationed at Pearl Harbor. Less than six months later, Mexico, the United States’ neighbor to the south, was also drawn into the global conflict. And as the saying goes, the rest is history. Or is it?<sup>1</sup>

Much is widely-known about the colossal efforts of the Big Three—the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union—in taming the Axis powers of Germany, Japan, and Italy. But there is so much more to the story. What about the “little guys”? What about the contributions of the dozens of other countries who also helped bring the Axis to its knees? More specifically, what about the wartime contributions of Mexico? Mexico entered World War II shortly after the U.S., but outside of Mexico, its contributions have largely been overlooked. Unbeknownst to all but the most serious World War II aficionados,

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Mexico was a major supplier of critical raw materials. Moreover, through the *bracero* program, Mexico provided the U.S. with desperately needed guest workers to harvest its crops and labor on its railroads. Also, a substantial number of Mexican males living in the U.S. were subject to conscription and many of them served honorably in the U.S. military. Lastly, the 201<sup>st</sup> Squadron, or Aztec Eagles, took the tricolored Mexican flag into combat as they flew close air support missions and helped liberate the Philippines. Although Mexico's role in securing the Allied victory over the Axis powers in World War II may seem small in comparison to those of the Big Three, that does not mean that its contributions were insignificant. Indeed, Mexico was an "invisible ally."<sup>2</sup>

In the years preceding the outbreak of World War II, relations between Mexico and the U.S. were rocky, and understandably so. The U.S. had defeated Mexico in the Mexican War in 1848 and claimed vast amounts of Mexican territory as its booty. U.S.-Mexican relations soured further with the United States' intervention in Veracruz in 1914, and its sending of U.S. Army troops into northern Mexico in a failed attempt to capture Pancho Villa in 1916-17. Relations between the two countries deteriorated even further with Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas' nationalization of foreign oil assets on March 18, 1938.<sup>3</sup>

The rift that precipitated the nationalization of the oil industry began several years earlier when the Cárdenas administration tried to force the foreign oil companies to pay higher taxes, boost employee pay, and increase oil production. The oil companies rejected these demands and would later refuse to comply with an order to settle the wage dispute. Cárdenas, who negotiated directly with Standard Oil's representative, made every effort reach a compromise beneficial to U.S. and British oil companies only to be rebuffed. Failing to reach a compromise, the Mexican government seized the assets of the seventeen foreign oil companies and created the state-owned monopoly—*Distribuidora de Petróleos Mexicanos* to handle oil exportation and delegated the responsibility for oil production to *Petróleos Mexicanos* or PEMEX. In exchange for the takeover, the U.S. State Department demanded a prompt and full payment of \$200 million to compensate the oil companies. Although Mexico hotly disputed the overvaluation of the foreign oil companies' assets, it mattered little as they did not have sufficient capital for an immediate payment anyway. Nonetheless, Cárdenas made repeated overtures to pay a lesser amount and to spread the payments out over time.<sup>4</sup>

For Mexico, expropriation appeared to be the only solution. The *ejido*, or communally farmed land, had been collectivized and required an ever-increasing amount of

government funding to purchase the farming equipment necessary to expand the program. However, a disastrous harvest in 1937 left the Bank of Mexico unable to repay these loans, which had used the prospective harvest as collateral. Moreover, as a result of insufficient financial reserves, and an overall lack of experience with managing deficit spending, Mexico abruptly spiraled into an economic crisis. As his citizens were faced with a shortage of food and out of control inflation, Cárdenas believed that the nationalization of oil would solve the economic meltdown. Indeed, it successfully ended the oil worker labor dispute and immediately brought much-needed revenue to the struggling, cash-strapped country. Moreover, the expropriation of oil became a cause for national celebration; in this new wave of nationalism, even the anti-Cárdenas sentiments held by conservatives began to wane.<sup>5</sup>

The U.S. and Great Britain were both preoccupied with the budding war in Europe while Cárdenas was busy nationalizing Mexico's oil industry giving his administration ample time to seize oil wells, resume oil production, and begin efforts to resuscitate Mexico's ailing economy. Britain felt blindsided when their last-minute compromise was rejected, but considering the events unfolding in Europe, Mexico's seizure of British oil property was not a priority issue.<sup>6</sup>

The U.S., on the other hand, was not so nonchalant. The U.S. State Department was in full support of the oil companies. Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Sumner Welles, the Under Secretary of State made a vain effort to apply diplomatic and economic pressure to force Cárdenas to reverse course and rescind the oil expropriation order. In retaliation, the U.S. government denied Mexican loan applications and sought to restrict purchases of Mexican silver. But what hit Mexico the hardest was the State Department's cooperation with the major oil companies in their boycott of Mexican oil. Mexico's overseas oil sales fell by over 50 percent, sales to the U.S. declined by 61 percent, and sales to Latin America dropped a staggering 75 percent in PEMEX's first year of operation. Mexico was in dire need of new customers.<sup>7</sup>

At the outset, Germany was uninterested in Mexican oil because both Shell and Standard Oil had agreed to meet Germany's oil needs should a war with France break out. The French had also refused to purchase Mexican oil; they were concerned that doing so would jeopardize their chances of buying British oil in the event of war with Germany. In the fall of 1938, PEMEX scored a break and a customer when the German navy or *Kriegsmarine* encountered difficulties receiving oil shipments and began looking for other suppliers. Soon thereafter, Mexico negotiated deals to sell and barter oil to the

energy-poor countries of Germany, Italy, and Japan—the future Axis powers.<sup>8</sup>

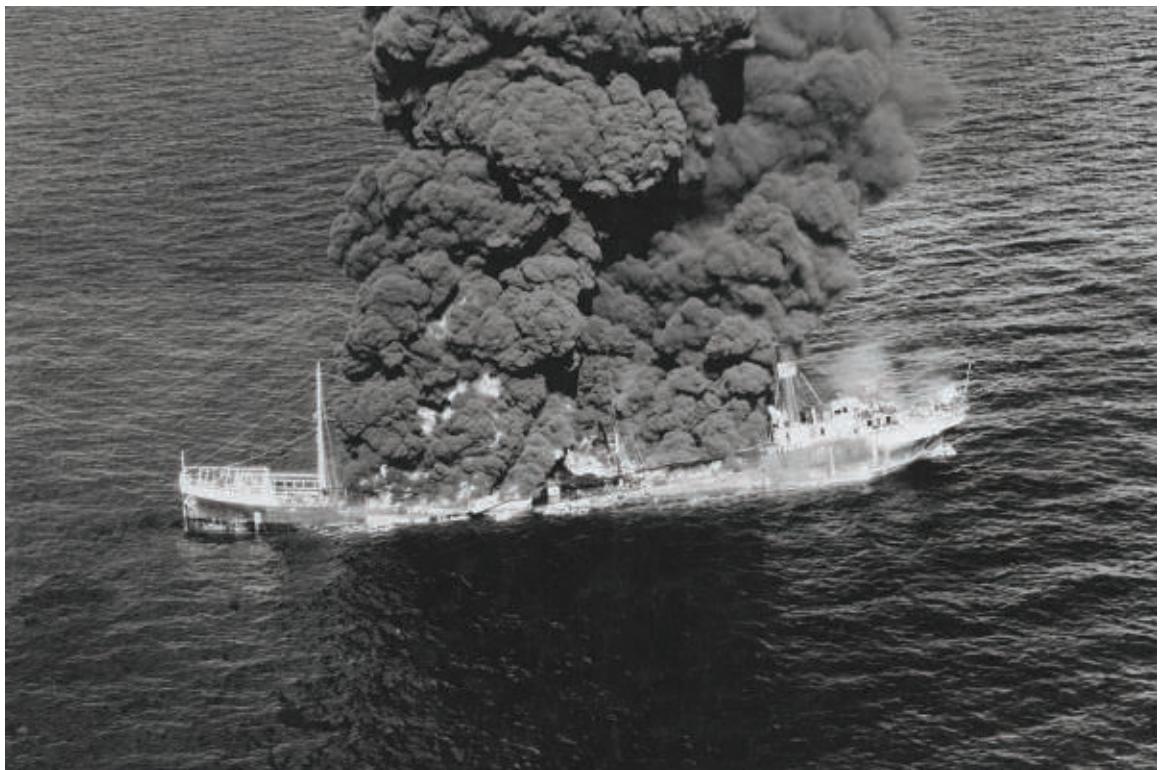
Following U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's reelection in 1940, his administration posited that it was in the best interests of the U.S. to accommodate Mexico, rather than to continue playing hardball. And with the looming possibility of the war reaching U.S. shores, Roosevelt became more concerned with protecting the United States' southern flank than he was with supporting the major oil companies. Increasing the possibility of U.S.-Mexico cooperation was the election of a new Mexican President—Manuel Ávila Camacho. An agreement to finally resolve the divisive U.S.-Mexico oil dispute—and ultimately soothe tensions between the two nations—was reached on November 19, 1941, and soon Mexican oil was again flowing into the U.S.<sup>9</sup>

The settlement of the oil dispute was not just about oil; the U.S. also sought better relations with Mexico due to the perceived Nazi threat. However, the U.S. was not alone in harboring the fear of an Axis attack; the Ávila Camacho administration was concerned that a surprise German or Japanese attack would result in an immediate invasion of U.S. military forces. To minimize the risk of the U.S. turning Mexico into a war zone, Ávila Camacho approved the extensive operation of secret U.S. military forces led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. These forces advised, trained, and cooperated with Mexican counterintelligence

agents and helped write Mexico's espionage, subversion, and sabotage laws. The work of the U.S. and Mexican intelligence agencies appears to have met with some success; their efforts revealed a sophisticated Axis spy ring and potentially thwarted sabotage operations planned for the Americas. However, intelligence still managed to find its way to Berlin.<sup>10</sup>

Following the Japanese attack on U.S. forces based at Pearl Harbor, in a show of solidarity with its neighbor to the north, Mexico severed diplomatic relations with the Axis and froze their assets. Additionally, the Ávila Camacho administration ordered German, Japanese, and Italian immigrants living along the Mexican coast to relocate one hundred kilometers inland. Moreover, the Ministry of the Interior required that all messages be transmitted in either Spanish or English.<sup>11</sup>

While the U.S. had been somewhat cautious to not push Mexico into the arms of the Axis, it would be Germany's bellicose actions that would eventually thrust Mexico in the other direction. Tipping the scales in the favor of the Allies was a series of disasters at sea perpetrated by Germany's submarines or U-boats, up to twelve of which lurked in the waters of the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic at any given time beginning in January 1942. German U-boats sank fifty-three ships between February and August 1942, including seven



The PEMEX oil tanker *Potrero del Llano* burns off the coast of Miami, Florida in the morning hours of May 14, 1942, after being struck by torpedoes from the German submarine U-564 the night before. (U.S. Navy / Wikimedia Commons)

PEMEX-owned tankers carrying oil bound for the U.S. The first such tanker was the U.S.-flagged, but PEMEX-owned, *Tamaulipas*, which the *U-552* dispatched to its watery grave off the coast of North Carolina on April 10, 1942. Surprisingly, this blatant act of war received scant attention in Mexico.<sup>12</sup>

Other than closing German consulates in 1941, Mexican authorities did little to dismantle its spy rings operating there; German spies continued sending valuable intelligence to Berlin regarding the cargoes and destinations of ships departing from Mexican ports. This would prove to be a costly and deadly oversight. On May 13, 1942, Mexico's neutrality was

tested when the *U-564* torpedoed the *Potrero del Llano* off the coast of Florida and sent it and its six thousand tons of oil to the ocean floor, killing thirteen of its thirty-five crew members. Unlike the previous sinking, this time Mexico's government protested and demanded that the Axis powers issue an apology and reimburse Mexico for its losses. Instead of an apology and reparations, Germany responded with more torpedoes.<sup>13</sup>

The *casus belli* occurred on May 20 when the *U-106* scored two torpedo hits on yet another PEMEX tanker, the *Faja de Oro*, sending it to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico and killing seven crew members. Mexico

could remain neutral no longer. In response to these unprovoked attacks, President Manuel Ávila Camacho called a special meeting of the Permanent Commission of Congress on May 28, 1942. During his address to Congress, Ávila Camacho emphasized that the sinkings were unjustifiable and declared that a state of war had existed between Mexico and the Axis powers—Germany, Italy, and Japan—since May 22<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>14</sup>

With a state of war officially declared, some of Mexico's high-ranking military leaders were anxious to join the fight. However, Ávila Camacho had no desire to send his military to fight in Europe or the Pacific. Moreover, even after the loss of the PEMEX oil tankers, an estimated 85 percent of the Mexican citizenry opposed fighting for the U.S. or Great Britain. Fully aware of the prevailing anti-American sentiment, Ávila Camacho had to tread carefully as he worked to shore up relations with the Allies.<sup>15</sup>

Mexico wished to protect its own territory and counteract the menace of German U-boats by patrolling the skies over the Yucatán channel and the Gulf of Mexico. To do so, however, Mexico would need considerable assistance from its neighbor to the north. Foreign Secretary Ezequiel Padilla notified George Messersmith, the U.S. Ambassador, that the Mexican military had some three hundred pilots who could fly these patrols, but they needed aircraft and additional training. Such

assistance would soon be provided through the U.S.-Mexico Lend-Lease Agreement signed earlier on March 27, 1942 by Sumner Welles and the Mexican Ambassador to the U.S., Dr. Francisco Castillo Nájera. This agreement was made possible by the 1941 Lend-Lease Act, which was originally enacted to allow Britain to borrow war matériel under the condition that they pay for it after the war, however, it was soon extended to include Russia and other Allies.<sup>16</sup>

Lend-Lease was instrumental to the modernization of Mexico's military. The first delivery under the new program took place in March 1942 and included six Vought-Sikorsky OS2U-3 Kingfisher observation/anti-submarine aircraft. Captain 1<sup>st</sup> Class Pablo Avelar Rubio and five additional pilots received training on their new aircraft at Brownsville, Texas. Due to recent Japanese aircraft and submarine sightings off the California coast, they were based at El Ciprés in Baja California upon their return. Mexico was also slated to receive eight North American AT-6C Texan armed trainer aircraft in August, but due to persistent hostile German activity in the Gulf of Mexico, six of the more readily available AT-6B Texans were added to the order and scheduled for a June delivery. Major Luis Noriega Medrano led five other pilots from the *Dirrección de Aeronautica Militar*, colloquially referred to as the *Fuerza Aérea Mexicana* or Mexican Air Force, on their urgent mission to pick up the six weaponized

AT-6B Texan aircraft at Duncan Field in San Antonio, Texas. While there, they also attended a two-week familiarization course to learn about the combat capabilities of their new aircraft. Following their return to Mexico in mid-June, the pilots received orders to Veracruz where they were assigned to the Military Region of the Gulf.<sup>17</sup>

German submarines continued to wreak havoc in the Gulf of Mexico but would soon be challenged. On June 26, patrolling the waters south of Tampico, the *U-129* sent the PEMEX tanker *Tuxpan* to Davy Jones' Locker and the following day, deposited PEMEX's *Las Choapas* there as well. Yet another PEMEX tanker hauling oil to the U.S., the *Oaxaca*, met its fate on June 27, when it was lost to the *U-171* off the Texas coast. In response, the Mexican Air Force began around-the-clock anti-submarine patrols and got an early taste of combat and a little revenge on July 5, when one of its pilots, Major Luis Noriega, spotted the *U-129* on the prowl some twenty-five to thirty miles north of Tampico. After receiving permission to attack, Major Noriega dropped two 100-pound bombs from his AT-6B and significantly damaged the U-boat, although it would ultimately make a successful escape for repairs.<sup>18</sup>

Mexico's wartime contributions extended far beyond its efforts to defend the waters of the Western Hemisphere from the menace of German U-boats. Mexico also

provided combat troops to the Allies. Soon after joining the war, Mexico enacted legislation similar to the United States' Selective Service Act, which obligated all U.S. males aged eighteen to forty-five to register for the draft. Additionally, in December 1942, the U.S. and Mexican governments penned an agreement allowing Mexican males legally residing in the U.S. to be drafted into the U.S. military; this agreement also permitted the U.S. to establish recruiting offices in Mexico. However, there was not a reciprocal agreement allowing the Mexican government to draft U.S.-born males living in Mexico into its military until an agreement was reached in January 1943.<sup>19</sup>

Many Mexican males would answer the call to arms and many would shed their blood alongside their U.S.-born comrades on the battlefields of Europe and the Pacific, and many would be recognized for their bravery and sacrifice with awards such as the Congressional Medal of Honor, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Philippine Presidential Unit Citation, and the World War II Victory Medal. Among these men were two Mexican-born U.S. Army soldiers who epitomized heroism—Staff Sergeant (S/Sgt) Marcario García and Private First Class (Pfc) Silvestre Herrera. S/Sgt García, originally from Villa de Castano, Mexico, single-handedly attacked and destroyed two German machine gun emplacements that had the men in his unit pinned down. Injured during the assault,



President Harry S. Truman awarding the Congressional Medal of Honor to Staff Sergeant Marcialo García on August 23, 1945. (National Archives and Records Administration / Wikimedia Commons)

García refused medical treatment until his unit accomplished its objective. When President Harry S. Truman awarded S/Sgt García the Congressional Medal of Honor for this courageous and selfless act, García became the first Mexican national to receive the United States' highest military award for valor. Also receiving the Medal of Honor from Truman was Pfc Silvestre Herrera, who is believed to be an undocumented immigrant from Chihuahua, Mexico. Herrera made a daring, one-man assault through a minefield in an attempt to silence a German machine gun emplacement. Although he lost both of his feet to an exploding mine and was bleeding profusely,

Pfc Herrera continued firing at the enemy until other men from his unit eliminated the gun emplacement.<sup>20</sup>

The exact number of Mexicans who served in the U.S. military during World War II remains a mystery, but most estimates tend to be around fifteen thousand. Supporting that figure is a 1948 report from the Immigration and Naturalization Service stating that 15,487 Mexican nationals were inducted into the U.S. Army from July 1, 1940 to June 30, 1945. However, some historians believe this to be a low estimate and suggest that the actual number may be as high as two hundred and fifty thousand. In addition, an unknown number of Mexican nationals valiantly served in the armed forces of other Allied countries as well, albeit in much smaller numbers. Of particular note is Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Pilot Officer Luis Perez Gomez, who flew the renowned Supermarine Spitfire air superiority fighter on twenty-nine combat missions in Europe before being killed in action. Also in the RCAF was Sergeant Francisco Lua Manzo; he flew thirty combat missions as a gunner/radio operator aboard Handley Page MK.III and Avro Lancaster heavy bombers. Additionally, a small number of Mexican airmen flew combat missions as pilots and gunner/radio operators while assigned to the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, and at least two served as enlisted aircrew members in the *Forces Aériennes Françaises Libres* or



U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mexican President Ávila Camacho attend a state dinner in Monterrey, Mexico on the evening of April 20, 1943. During his visit, FDR urged Ávila Camacho to contribute armed forces to the war. (National Archives and Records Administration / Wikimedia Commons)

the Free French Air Forces. In addition to the military service of the aforementioned Mexican nationals, an estimated five hundred thousand to one million first-generation Mexican-Americans served in the U.S. armed forces during World War II.<sup>21</sup>

Although Mexicans had long served overseas with the U.S. and other Allies, it seemed highly improbable that any Mexican military units would be sent into combat overseas. First, Mexico's military lacked modern weapons; it was in no condition to fight and

had just begun replacing its antiquated weapons with newer arms acquired through the Lend-Lease Act. Second, President Ávila Camacho believed that sending troops to fight abroad ran counter to Mexico's "pacifist tradition," and as such, focused on defending the homeland.<sup>22</sup>

In an April 1943 meeting, President Franklin D. Roosevelt urged President Ávila Camacho to contribute armed forces to the war effort. However, Ávila Camacho was not yet ready. But as the war continued to rage, Ávila Camacho became increasingly aware that

only the nations that fought against the Axis would be involved in the peace negotiations. As such, in November 1943, Ávila Camacho declared that if requested by the Allies, Mexico was prepared to join the fight against the Axis powers. To relay Mexico's shift in policy, Ambassador George Messersmith met with President Roosevelt in February 1944 and notified him that Mexico was now willing to enter the war. Messersmith delivered this news with the caveat that Mexico was not ready and that deploying a symbolic force of up to three air squadrons would be the best option. After getting the nod from Roosevelt, Messersmith coordinated with the U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall and the commander of the U.S. Army Air Forces, General Henry "Hap" Arnold to make the requisite arrangements for one Mexican air squadron to begin training in the United States.<sup>23</sup>

Ávila Camacho's military officers had long been ready, but before he could send Mexicans to help win the war, he would first need to win the support of his people. To do just that, Ávila Camacho had the Mexican Air Force stage a flying demonstration outside Mexico City on March 5, 1944, where his pilots showed off their flying and dive-bombing skills in front of an awestruck crowd of one hundred thousand spectators.<sup>24</sup> A few days later, President Ávila Camacho announced to his senior Air Force officers that the time had

come for Mexico to join the war; he went on to say, "I consider no one more suitable to carry our colors as a gesture of highest cooperation than the Air Force."<sup>25</sup>

Following a highly-competitive recruiting and screening process, the three hundred men who would comprise the *Escuadron Aero 201* or 201<sup>st</sup> Squadron—the Aztec Eagles or *Águilas Aztecas*—were ready for training in the U.S. After arriving at Randolph Field in San Antonio, Texas on July 25, 1944, the Aztec Eagles were then sent to various military bases around the U.S. to receive specialty-specific training. The pilots received initial training in the AT-6 Texan trainer aircraft and then graduated to the more advanced Curtiss P-40 Warhawk and Republic P-47 Thunderbolt fighter aircraft. As the pilots and ground crews of the 201<sup>st</sup> were nearing the completion of their training, on December 27, 1944, the Mexican Senate gave Ávila Camacho the authorization he needed to deploy the Aztec Eagles abroad. The men of the 201<sup>st</sup>, training completed, rejoined at Majors Field in Greenville, Texas to attend their graduation ceremony on February 22, 1945. And just over a month later, the Aztec Eagles steamed out of San Francisco Bay aboard the liberty ship *Fairisle* en route to the Philippines.<sup>26</sup>

The Aztec Eagles arrived in Manila, the Philippines on April 30, 1945, and reported to their base in Porac, near Clark Field. The pilots of the 201<sup>st</sup> completed their requisite advanced



Captain 1st Class Radamés Gaxiola Andrade (third from the left), a pilot with the 201st Squadron, stands with his maintenance crew in front of his P-47D Thunderbolt. (U.S. Air Force / Wikimedia Commons)

combat training on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and were declared ready for action. From June 4<sup>th</sup> to July 4<sup>th</sup>, the Aztec Eagles flew fifty-three combat missions in the rugged P-47 Thunderbolt fighter-bomber, providing close air support for Allied ground troops fighting on Luzon, the main island of the Philippines. At this late stage of the war, most of the remnants of Japan's air forces were dedicated to protecting the homeland, but the threat remained. As such, the pilots of the 201<sup>st</sup> were also tasked with flying several long-range missions over Formosa in search of Japanese aircraft during the months of July and August. The Aztec Eagles flew their final combat mission, escorting a ship convoy bound for

Okinawa, Japan, on August 26, 1945.<sup>27</sup>

The 201<sup>st</sup> Squadron has the notable distinction of not only being the only Mexican military unit to fight in World War II, but it was also the first and only unit deployed to fight outside of Mexico. Moreover, the combat missions of the 201<sup>st</sup> mark the first instance of Mexico and the U.S. fighting a common foe.<sup>28</sup>

True, Mexico's military involvement was small and limited primarily to the last few months of the war, but the same cannot be said of its contribution in the field of agriculture. Mexico made a significant contribution to the Allied war effort with its reorganization from subsistence farming to agribusiness. The

Allies were in short supply of industrial oils—hydraulic fluid, paint solvents, and oils used to protect aircraft engines—and were in desperate need of the necessary raw materials, such as castor seeds and rapeseed oil to manufacture them. Also in short supply were henequen, sisal and binder twine, rubber, sugar, tomatoes, garbanzo beans, and various other crops. To satisfy the higher agricultural demands, by 1943 Mexico had increased the number of acres under cultivation by over three million.<sup>29</sup>

Mexicans also played a vital role in U.S. agriculture. As the Dust Bowl migrants, who had flocked to California to toil in its agricultural fields in the 1930s, began migrating to the cities in search of higher wages in the ever-expanding defense industry in early 1942, and as farm workers answered the call to arms, U.S. growers, particularly in the southwest, soon found themselves in dire need of labor. The obvious solution was to contract guest workers or *braceros* from Mexico to supply the much-needed labor; this agreement is considered to be one of the high points in U.S.-Mexican wartime cooperation.<sup>30</sup>

While it may have been the obvious solution, the *bracero* program was not without controversy. For example, the *haciendados* in northern Mexico were concerned about losing their workers to higher-paying jobs in the U.S. Another sticking point was that U.S. officials were in favor of allowing *braceros* to bring their families, whereas Mexican negotiators declined

such a provision; they were concerned that it would encourage permanent emigration. The U.S. and Mexico hammered out an agreement in August 1942 that provided the U.S. with the stoop laborers it sorely needed and also offered the protections the Mexican government sought for its citizens. The wartime *bracero* program provided workers to the U.S. on six-month contracts under the following conditions—the Mexican government would recruit the *braceros*, not the U.S. growers; wages would not be less than thirty cents per hour and would be equivalent to U.S. workers; the Farm Security Administration would be the official employer of the *braceros*; housing and sanitary conditions would be the same as those of the U.S. workers; *braceros* would be guaranteed work at least 75 percent of the time; and 10 percent of the workers' wages would be withheld for payment upon their return to Mexico. Ultimately, some two hundred and twenty thousand official guest workers and an untold number of workers who slipped in unofficially helped relieve the labor shortage on U.S. farms and orchards. Also, more than one hundred thousand Mexican railroad *braceros*, who labored on over thirty railroads across the U.S. from 1943 to 1945, helped free up U.S. men for military service.<sup>31</sup>

Mexico's most important wartime contribution, however, was not the manpower it supplied through the *bracero* program, nor was it the unknown thousands of Mexicans who put boots on the ground or in the sky serving in the

militaries of the Allied nations. Rather, it was as a supplier of strategic materials. Before the outbreak of World War II, the U.S. Army and Navy Munitions Board drafted a report entitled “Strictly Confidential Report on the Mexican Mining Industry” that categorized 20 metals required by the war industry as strategic or critical; Mexico was a major producer of all but five of these metals.<sup>32</sup>

During the early years of World War II, Mexico took advantage of its neutral status to sell oil and minerals to both Axis and Allied countries. Indeed, before the chain of events that would lead to global war was set in motion, the Axis had already begun stockpiling resources. Even after German tanks rolled through Poland in September 1939, large shipments of Mexican oil, mercury, lead, tin, copper, quartz crystal, zinc, platinum, and other strategic minerals continued to flow to Germany, Italy, and Japan. However, this free flow of raw materials would change as the war progressed.<sup>33</sup>

In August 1940, Mexico ceased exporting oil to the Axis powers; and in July 1941, roughly five months before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Mexico placed prohibitions on the export of strategic materials to non-American countries and to other countries that did not follow comparable policies. Moreover, beginning with the April 1942 Suárez-Bateman Agreement, Mexico and the U.S. would pen numerous agreements for

Mexico to supply those strategic and critical metals to the U.S. instead. These raw materials powered 40 percent of the U.S. war industry—an industry so enormous that in 1944 was manufacturing some 40 percent of the world’s military hardware. So, if it was American-made weapons that defeated the Axis, it was Mexican strategic and critical metals that made their production possible.<sup>34</sup>

There is no question that the alliance of the Big Three—the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union—was responsible for the majority of the heavy-lifting that was required to defeat the indomitable Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis in World War II. Indeed, countless books have been written, documentaries made, and movies produced to remind us of this incredible feat. Known only to the most serious World War II or Latin American Studies scholars, however, are the wartime contributions of the United States’ “invisible ally.”

Mexico entered World War II less than six months after the U.S., and although Mexico may have sent only one small unit into combat—the Aztec Eagles—it supported the war effort more substantially in other areas. An untold number of Mexican males served in the U.S. military and the militaries of other Allies. Additionally, through the *bracero* program, Mexico provided desperately needed guest workers to harvest crops in the U.S. and labor on its railroads. And most importantly, Mexico was a major supplier of strategic and critical

raw materials, without which the U.S. defense industry could not have manufactured the weapons needed to destroy the Axis. Indeed, Mexico played a significant role in the Allied victory in World War II.

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# THE CARNIVAL CAMPAIGN:

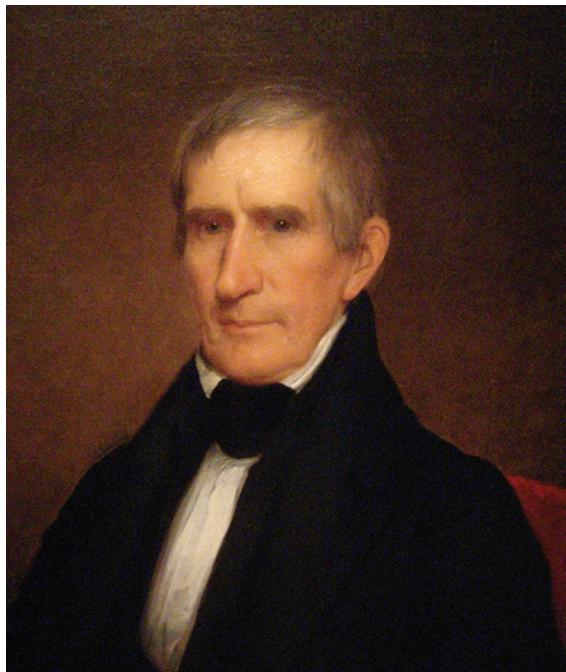
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## How the Election of 1840 Changed American Politics

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by  
Lee Rives

The pomp and ceremony of the presidential election is, today, a given for the citizens of the United States and abroad. For all its controversy, the three-ring circus that is the American political campaigning system is accepted by the people of America. Most think the backhanded politics, petty behavior, and general chaos that are seen today were not seen in the past, though this could not be farther from the truth. As demonstrated by the 1840 presidential campaign, in full light of



An 1841 portrait of William Henry Harrison, painted not long after his successful election. (Albert Gallatin Hoit / Wikimedia Commons)

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its moniker as the “Carnival Campaign,” these political games are nothing new to the political world. From a myriad of travelling speakers, log cabins mounted on wagons, and plates stamped with images that varied from William Henry Harrison’s face to the likeness of a log cabin, the marketing and activism of the 1840 campaign was a sight to behold. Fights between members of opposing parties and large, often raucous, public rallies broke out and campaign songs, the seventeenth century equivalent

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of television ads, were wildly popular. Like all modern campaigns for the presidency, if not all levels of public office, the presidential election of 1840 marked the beginning of the current system. Through the grassroots efforts of everyday Americans, the new involvement of women, and the use of newspapers to attack political opponents, the Carnival Campaign was full of innovative political strategies.

One of the key elements of the Carnival Campaign was the grassroots effort that made the election so energized, which led to a lasting change in the way elections unfold even to this day. Mobilizing the common man through political rallies, while not uncommon before this point, was taken to a new level of effectiveness. During the campaign, Harrison was styled as a farmer, a friend to rural folk, with stories abounding of his log cabin home in North Bend, Ohio, where he would offer hard cider to his guests. While this is not quite true – Harrison's home at North Bend might have started out as a simple log cabin, but by the time he was running for President, it was a far more refined structure and Harrison's tastes were for finer things than hard cider – the archetypes served him well in garnering him the affection of the common man, who would find both to be familiar indeed, as most Americans of this time lived in log cabins and likely sipped a little hard cider now and then.<sup>1</sup>

Another reason Harrison was attractive to voters was his past as a military hero. The

nickname that would become his famous campaign phrase of “Tippecanoe and Tyler too!” came from his involvement in a battle in Indiana between American settlers and Native Americans. The conflict had started as settlers encroached on Native American land and destabilized the local Miami and Shawnee culture due to European influence and trade. This extended to how justice was meted out in the mixed community, manifesting in “a double standard by which Indians received scant justice from whites, while the latter at times trespassed into Indian territory or committed crimes against the red man with impunity.”<sup>2</sup> Understandably, this led to major tensions in the region and Harrison – then Governor of Indiana – favored the settlers under his protection. This was especially true when rumors began to circulate that the British, who would burn the White House and other buildings in Washington, D.C. roughly three years later in the War of 1812, were instigating American conflict with the Shawnee and supporting the latter with war matériel. Soon, both sides had worked themselves into respective frenzies. On one hand, the settlers called for “the savages to be made sensible that every aggression against [settlers would] meet with a correspondent punishment,” as stated by Lydia Bacon, the wife of a militia quartermaster. On the other hand, the Shawnee resolutely promised, in the words of a group of local Miami chiefs, “if our lands are invaded,

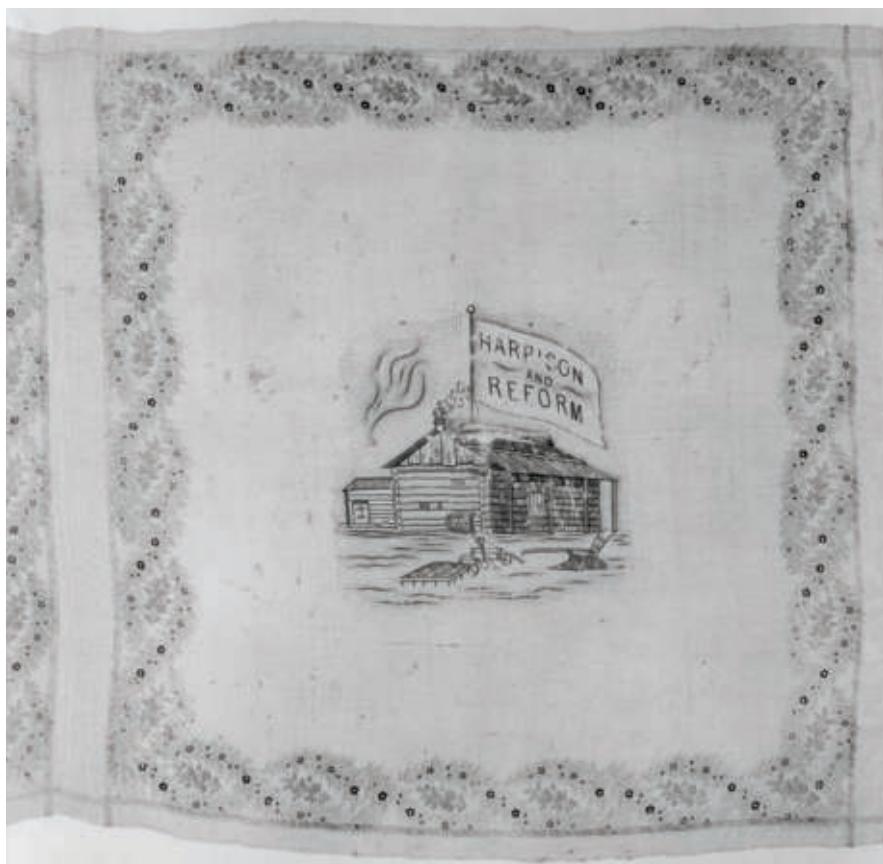
we will defend them to the upmost, and die with the land.”<sup>3</sup>

Harrison responded to the situation with force. After several years of uneasy back-and-forth attempts at negotiations between Harrison and the famous brothers Tenskwatawa and Tecumseh, the battle of Tippecanoe broke out on November 7, 1811. Tenskwatawa, a renowned prophet of the Shawnee tribe, led the assembled Native American forces, ranging from Shawnee to Miami and more, against Harrison and a mixed group of militia and regular army men. The battle began chaotically,

starting as dawn touched the horizon and lasting for over two hours as the fighting played out in and around the American camp and ending with no clear victor. However, the long duration of the battle meant that the Native Americans were forced to retreat from their nearby settlement of Prophetstown due to a lack of ammunition. Harrison saw an opportunity to snatch a small victory from the debacle and burned the empty village in retaliation. This battle, therefore, showed that Harrison could at least hold together a body of men and served as consolation to the

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A photograph of a log cabin themed campaign handkerchief, one of many campaign gimmicks employed by the Harrison-Tyler campaign. (Library of Congress / Wikimedia Commons)



concerned local civilian population. While it was not immediately a feather in Harrison's cap, and was in fact seen in a negative light for many years, Harrison was able to claim he was a clear-headed and able leader, as well gaining a lifelong bond with veterans of the campaign. The latter, along with the brotherhood of military service in general, would serve Harrison well as he kicked off the Carnival Campaign of 1840.<sup>4</sup>

As Ron Shafer points out in his book *The Carnival Campaign: How the Rollicking 1840 Campaign of "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" Changed Presidential Elections Forever*, "the gatherings [of the 1840 election] were part three-ring circus and part old time revival meeting, complete with marching bands, floats, and political preaching"<sup>5</sup> Before this point, elections had been competitive but subdued in nature. On one particularly boisterous occasion, the Whigs – the party of the future President Harrison – and the Democrats – the party of incumbent President Martin van Buren – both held their conventions in May 1840 in the city of Baltimore, Maryland.

In the days leading up to the conventions, "the population swelled by the tens of thousands of people," many of them supporters of the Whigs, who styled themselves as the party of the common man.<sup>6</sup> The convention marked an enduring pattern in the rallies that would follow. In honor of the convention, a large procession of "nine open

carriages... carrying dignitaries... [a] marching band" playing Harrison campaign songs, and a multitude of pro-Harrison and anti-Van Buren banners were present.<sup>7</sup> People lined the streets and balconies of Baltimore, jostling for a place to see the exciting spectacle, and famous men such as statesmen like Henry Clay and Daniel Webster "thrilled the estimated crowd of 25,000... with political rhetoric" until the sun went down, then "speeches continued after a short dinner break until the early hours of the morning" and continued throughout the day.<sup>8</sup> When the Carnival Campaign swept into unsuspecting towns, it drew not only locals but also people from neighboring communities, often bringing with it unrest and merriment in equal measure, a mixture that many people are likely to recognize today.

Similarly, another aspect of the 1840 Campaign that would be familiar to modern spectators was the widespread involvement of women in politics. Before this point, women's roles in politics were extremely limited, if they were involved at all. But "now, for the first time, women organized political meetings and some even spoke at them" functioning as coordinators and advocates, as well as their traditional societal roles as wives and mothers.<sup>9</sup> This was possible due to the unique whirlwind of events that was the Carnival Campaign – it turned political rallies into "clambakes and barbecues, similar... to the religious camp meetings of old" and allowed women

to participate first by gaining a foothold in the “domestic chores” expected of them, but also allowing a level of participation by both genders seen at old camp meetings.<sup>10</sup> However, this was not equally spread in both parties. While “Whig women were ready to do or die for Old Tip,” the ladies of the Democrat party were encouraged to shun political activism to avoid a “doubtful reputation,” as Benjamin Tappan, a Democrat, put it.<sup>11</sup> Many of the women who were involved in this election would go on to push for women’s rights later, such as “Amelia Bloomer... [who attended] Whig political gatherings and wrote campaign slogans for Harrison marches... [and] would later attend the Seneca Falls Convention for women’s rights” in 1848, as well as being involved in co-writing pro-Harrison articles with her husband in his newspaper.<sup>12</sup>

Amelia Bloomer was not the only woman to find her voice in newspaper and pamphlet writing, or the only woman who saw this as a turning point for women’s rights. Another familiar name that emerged from the election was the famous “women’s rights activist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who organized the... [Seneca Falls] Convention, [and] cited the 1840 election as the start of women’s involvement in politics and government.”<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the organized efforts of the ladies of Nashville were able to secure the appearance of statesman Henry Clay to attend a Whig rally in their city, even after he “had previously

turned down two invitations... to attend the rally, begging off for reasons of exhaustion.”<sup>14</sup> Indeed, some women were so energized in their political beliefs they pledged to have “Whig husbands or none,” sometimes even declaring so by wearing bright sashes stating this fact.<sup>15</sup> Of course, this enthusiasm was nothing new. Women of America had long considered the country’s politics, but they simply had no outlet to express such thoughts. Before this point, such public declarations of political preference and opinion would have likely carried social reprimands if not being ignored. The freedom allowed to women during the Carnival Campaign opened the door and prepared society for later reform efforts in women’s rights.

A final, but no less key element of the 1840 Campaign, was the use of newspapers. Primarily used to promote each respective party’s candidate while tearing down the other, the Whigs in particular “created a new kind of propaganda machine” in defense of Harrison and targeting Van Buren.<sup>16</sup> Before this point, even though many newspapers were partisan, they did not participate in the kind of behavior seen during the 1840 election and afterward. Normal publications that might lean a little toward one party over another but were largely evenhanded suddenly chose sides and proceeded to go to war against their opponents. One pro-Harrison paper edited by staunch Whig George D. Prentiss of Kentucky, though a

pre-existing publication, shifted into an ardent campaign ground for the Whig party. On the first day of voting, Prentice admonished his readers, saying: "Look here, fellow Whigs! If you eat your dinner to-day before depositing your vote, may your beef and potatoes sit like fifty nightmares in your stomach!"<sup>17</sup> During the election, several newspapers such as the *Log Cabin* were formed to be "devoted entirely to a presidential campaign" and in favor of a certain candidate – such as in the example above, Harrison.<sup>18</sup> Through a combination of articles, advertisements, poems, and songs, these campaign newspapers hyped interest in their party's candidate and sometimes stretched the truth in their best interest. Songs, in fact, soon became a popular campaign medium spread, at first, via newspapers. Soon, the songs published in newspapers, set to popular tunes of the day, became "the most successful campaign device used by the Whigs," both to tout the virtues of Harrison and the shortcomings of Van Buren.<sup>19</sup> Whig newspapers like the *Log Cabin* "were part of a national strategy to flood voters with tales of abuse by the Van Buren administration" in what the modern viewer recognizes as a classic mudslinging strategy.<sup>20</sup> By playing up Van Buren's failings and damaging his reputation, the Harrison campaign brought over many supporters, especially when they combined this with Harrison's log cabin strategy. Throughout the campaign, Harrison embraced the log cabin and hard cider reputation that had

started as a passing insult and used it to his advantage. Through campaign newspapers like the *Log Cabin*, run by Horace Greeley, the Whigs "generat[ed]... enthusiasm for the campaign" while the Democrat equivalent, the *Extra Globe* "was heavy handed in its relentless attacks on Harrison and the Whigs."<sup>21</sup> Campaign newspapers ran only for the duration of the campaign, a fleeting glimpse of the mudslinging tactics similar to many seen in political elections today and sometimes even the nineteenth century's equivalent to today's "fake news." This was the beginning of the partisan nature of the media as is seen in today's presidential races.

In closing, the 1840 campaign for the presidency saw many changes to the political structure of campaigning that are still firmly entrenched to this day. The involvement of Americans in large-scale political rallies and the chaos and pandemonium that is second nature to any campaign, but especially expected with the presidential campaign, is nothing new. The Carnival Campaign cemented the success of grassroots campaigning, as well as its unique place within American politics. With this surge in grassroots politics came greater involvement of women and their empowerment within realms outside their traditional roles. By the time the Harrison campaign was in full swing, women not only organized political gatherings and coordinated them, but also wrote about and openly discussed their own

political views. From this came the push for women's rights and equality of the sexes within American society. And perhaps most key to all of this was the involvement of newspapers, which told the news far and wide. Newspapers made it possible for large rallies to be organized and offered a place for women to publish their political stances. All elements discussed here

are still vital to campaigning for political office today and are likely to remain so, with the rise of populist politics and a renewed polarization of political parties. One would hope that, as with the Carnival Campaign, there are good things which will also emerge from what seems like chaos to many, even though those living through it might not see it.

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# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE ROMAN EMPEROR TIBERIUS

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by  
Skylar Bass

The second Roman emperor, Tiberius, has a storied past as a brilliant general and military tactician. Though his exploits in northern Europe, as far north as the Elbe River in modern day Germany, left the region vulnerable to Roman expansion, it never extended that far. Tiberius accumulated several accomplishments and victories on the battlefield, but his reign as emperor had its own share of battles. In cultures that are far different from cultures that exist today, it is particularly important to have context to connect the reader



This bust of Tiberius is housed in the *Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* in Copenhagen, Denmark. This is a museum that houses ancient and modern art and the private collection of Carl Jacobsen. (Giovanni Dall'Orto / Wikimedia Commons)

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to the person of interest and their actions in question. The reign of Tiberius may have been ripe with corruption and incompetence especially in his later years, however, his life before becoming an emperor may very well explain his religious intolerance, his extended reclusiveness, and his overwhelming mistrust of the people around him.<sup>1</sup>

Tiberius was born in 42 BCE to Tiberius Claudius Nero, a politician, and Livia, the future wife of Augustus. Livia divorced Tiberius's father and married Augustus Caesar

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to establish a political alliance. Tiberius was given the best opportunities that any young Roman male could ask for. He was well educated in many subjects and he developed a love for philosophy. In accordance with Roman custom he was expected to join the army and advance through the military ranks, thus gaining experience on the battlefield. Although Tiberius had many successes on the battlefield, he was not given a triumphal procession until later in his life and although he was given credit for a majority of his successes, they were not publicly announced or celebrated. A triumphal procession would not only portray Tiberius as a great leader but it would also publicly identify him as a hero to the people. This was potentially a plot devised by Augustus to prevent Tiberius from “stealing the spotlight” from the heirs that he had chosen, thus limiting Tiberius’s fame and the importance of his accomplishments to prevent him from gathering a political following. At this point in Tiberius’s life and career, he was always the second choice.

In 11 BCE, Tiberius was forced to divorce his first wife, Vipsania Agrippina, whom he had married in 19 BCE, for the political security of the Julio-Claudian line of emperors as per the plan of Augustus Caesar. He married Augustus’s daughter, Julia Augusti filia. This was a reluctant marriage for both of them. In 9 BCE, Tiberius’s brother Drusus Nero was wounded while riding and developed a

fatal case of gangrene. This was a great loss to Tiberius as he and his brother had maintained a close friendship. Soon after his brother’s death, Tiberius returned to Germania to continue the fourth Germanic campaign that his brother had started.<sup>2</sup> This immediate return to the battlefield most likely served Tiberius well in the sense that his mind would be occupied by other thoughts for the time being. The battlefield was where Tiberius was comfortable, it was natural to him. In 6 BCE however, Tiberius had reached a point in his life that he had grown tired, as his constant position on the battlefield and his praetorship had finally caught up to him. The position of praetor was the second highest judicial position in Rome behind only the consul in judicial rank. On any given year there were only eight praetors in the Roman Empire; therefore, the position was highly desired and carried a broad range of responsibilities. The praetors were responsible for adjudicating the laws of the empire and casting judgement on criminals but in addition to judicial powers, praetors were allowed to command armies. Exhausted by his incessant responsibilities, Tiberius placed himself in self-exile on the island of Rhodes where he led a modest life studying the philosophy that he was so fond of in his youth, but never had a chance to indulge in.<sup>3</sup> To gain permission for this leave of absence, Tiberius starved himself in his room for four days until the emperor realized that he was serious about the leave

and granted his request. However, as Augustus Caesar understood it, this leave of absence was not supposed to last for eight years. During his absence, his wife Julia was unfaithful. She was witnessed casually sleeping with numerous men who had political ambitions, and while this offense could be overlooked under normal circumstances, this was different. Even though her husband Tiberius had gone into self-exile on the island of Rhodes, the fact that her lovers had political aspirations placed more suspicion on them in Emperor Augustus's mind. Two of Julia's lovers, Appius Claudius and Sempronius Gracchus, were exiled to separate reaches of the Roman Empire, but not a third, Julius Antony.<sup>4</sup> He was not exiled due to the trust that he had betrayed, but he was permitted to take his own life instead of being executed because of his close ties to the Julian and Claudian families. This habit of placing caution at the forefront of any political decision was likely passed on to Tiberius.

Another aspect contributing to Tiberius's insecure and cautious nature was the fact that he was always the second choice in regards to the throne.<sup>5</sup> The previous favorites for the succession of Augustus were Marcellus, Agrippa, Lucius, Gaius, Drusus, and then finally Tiberius and then Germanicus. While Tiberius would be allowed to rule, the true Julio-Claudian line would reestablish itself with Germanicus after Tiberius's departure from the throne. This trend of Tiberius being the

second choice was especially apparent when Tiberius was attempting to return to Rome after his extended leave of absence on Rhodes. Augustus refused to allow his return and Tiberius's recent divorce from Julia weakened the link between Tiberius and Augustus. In stoic philosophy, the stoics attributed life and death to fate and everything in between to fortune, or the goddess *Fortuna*. It seemed that *Fortuna* was on Tiberius's side as Augustus's grandson, Lucius, fell ill and died in Spain.<sup>6</sup> After the death of Lucius, Tiberius was the clear successor; however, Germanicus and Drusus were still the favored sons of both Rome and Augustus Caesar. They were too young to lead at this time, however. One quote attributed to Tacitus states, "The other priests offered prayers for the well-being of the emperor, but they also commended Nero and Drusus to the same gods as him. They did so, not out of affection for the young men, but from sycophancy which, in a corrupt society, is as dangerous when taken to extremes as when it is absent. For Tiberius, never well-disposed to Germanicus's family, could not bear the boys receiving as much honor as he did in his advancing years."<sup>7</sup> Upon the death of Augustus Caesar in 14 CE, Tiberius became the successor to the throne.

Tiberius was not overly ambitious of becoming the emperor despite his love for attention. He continuously refused the title of *Pater Patriae*, which would have made him the uncontested ruler of Rome. He did not diverge

much from the policies of Augustus, and in many ways, he continued what Augustus had started. Tiberius's relationship with Augustus before and after his self-exile to Rhodes had led him to become the most suitable choice to succeed Augustus as emperor. However, as in any political transition, there were bound to be growing pains. In regard to the Senate, they felt that they needed Tiberius to imitate Augustus; however, despite his reverberation of Augustus's words, Tiberius was no Augustus. He wanted the senators to make their own decisions and fulfill their personal responsibilities. In fact, Tiberius held contempt for the lack of responsibility that the Senate imposed upon itself.<sup>8</sup> "The story goes that, whenever he left the Curia, which was the Senatorial building near the center of Rome, Tiberius was in the habit of declaring, in Greek: 'Ah, men ready to be slaves!' Clearly, while he objected to the freedom of the people he was also sickened by such abject submission from his slaves."<sup>9</sup> He wanted them to act as high ranking politicians, not men fulfilling their masters' wishes. The senate had grown accustomed to doing whatever Augustus had asked of them, and in response, they had forfeited their own individuality.

During the reign of Tiberius, the worship of the Egyptian goddess Isis began its ascent as one of the primary mystery religions of the Roman Empire. Tiberius outlawed Isaac practices and suppressed their worship with

force. In one such example of his action against nontraditional Roman religion, Tiberius had a freedwoman crucified for her role in aiding in the seduction of a noblewoman by using the noblewoman's interest in Isaac religion to deceive her. In the same set of events, he also had the temple of Isis razed to the ground and the idol of Isis thrown into the Tiber river. Jews and Christians were also included in this same style of religious suppression.<sup>10</sup> Tiberius did support one sect of nontraditional Roman religion, however, and that is the creation of the Imperial Cult. The deification of Roman rulers began with Julius Caesar in 44 BCE during the reign of Augustus Caesar. The apotheosis of Augustus Caesar in 14 CE, however, made him the first Roman Emperor to be deified. This occurred in the first year of Tiberius's emperorship, and marked the beginning of emperor worship in the Roman Empire. Tiberius also supported the Imperial Cult by building foundations to Augustus. This was a continuation of Augustus's policy and a clear representation of Tiberius following the *mos maiorum*, which is the ancient customs from which the Romans attained their social traditions.<sup>11</sup> In a speech to the Senate denying his own deification, he also defended the deification of Augustus. "I know, senators, that many have regretted a lack of consistency on my part in not denying a similar request made recently by the communities of Asia. Accordingly, I shall lay before you my defense

of my earlier silence and, at the same time, the procedure I have decided to follow in future. The deified Augustus had not forbidden the establishment at Pergamum of a temple to himself and to the city of Rome, and I regard all his actions and utterances as law. I followed that precedent, which had his approval, and did so all the more readily because in this case veneration of the Senate was actually being combined with a personal cult of myself. But while a single acceptance may be forgivable, to be worshipped throughout the provinces with a statue, like the gods, would be pretentious and arrogant; and the honor paid to Augustus will fade if it is cheapened by such indiscriminate flattery. I am mortal, senators, my functions are those of humans and I am satisfied if I have the highest position amongst them.”<sup>12</sup>

In 14 CE, Augustus received his apotheosis with consent from the Senate at the request of Tiberius. Tiberius attributed Augustus’s divinity to the extent of his contributions to the world.<sup>13</sup> For those same reasons, he downplayed his own successes and refused these divine honors, since he himself refrained from any expansion during his reign as emperor. Although Tiberius extended the cultural, political, and religious influence of the Imperial Cult, he refused to receive any divine honors for himself. Despite his objections, he did receive divine honors in many locations around the empire at the local level.<sup>14</sup> Policies often have unintended consequences, and

according to Eusebius of Caesarea, that is what happened with the establishment of the Imperial Cult. Both the Imperial Cult and Christianity developed during this period. The roots that were established by the Imperial Cult created solid ground for Christianity to stand on. Despite not being organized as one cult, the Imperial Cult provided, foremost in a religious context, that the Roman emperor could ascend to godhood. This provided for the people’s understanding of Christianity’s belief that Jesus Christ was actually God in human form. Without that religious link, Christianity in the Roman Empire may have remained just what Tiberius believed it to be, a superstition.

Tiberius’s stance on nontraditional Roman religion was one of disdain and prejudice. He had an Isaac temple razed to the ground and its sacred idol desecrated for its role in the seduction of a noblewoman. He had continued the policy that his forefathers had implemented – the *pax deorum* was to be absolute. In Roman religion, the *pax deorum*, or the Peace of the Gods, depended on the faithful execution of worship and sacrifice to the gods. As long as these rituals and worship were maintained, the Roman Empire was to remain in a state of peace, prosperity, and invincibility. People who worshipped gods that were not in the Roman pantheon were accused of trying to sabotage the *pax deorum*. Any natural disaster or unfavorable situation that impacted the empire was viewed as a divine

punishment from the gods and it was typically blamed on some sort of infringement of the *pax deorum*. More particularly, the monotheistic religions like Judaism and Christianity suffered because their followers were not allowed to worship any god other than their own and because of this they were typically blamed for anything negative that happened in the empire. As an added protection from divine judgement, foreign religions, or *supersticio*, were not allowed into the city. The most noteworthy punishment of religion during the reign of Tiberius was the crucifixion of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Jesus, being the leader of the Christian movement, was regarded as a political opponent because he had been accused of claiming to be “the King of the Jews.”

The charges brought against him included treason, and as was the case with many during the reign of Tiberius, he was sentenced to death. There were punishments against nontraditional religions that were suggested by Dio, and possibly Tacitus, which state that the banishment of Jewish and Egyptian rights were due to the many successful conversions of Roman citizens by Jews. To support this idea, according to Dio, there was a large influx of Jewish people into Rome around 19 CE.<sup>15</sup>

Tiberius supported traditional Roman religion by building and restoring temples to the traditional gods and goddesses. This is evidenced when he restored the famous statue of Zeus of the Thunderbolt which, during his

time, was perceived as Jupiter Capitolinus. In 15 CE, the second year of the reign of Tiberius, the Sibylline Books were to be consulted, however, Tiberius acknowledged the point and objected. “That same year the Tiber, in spate after an unbroken spell of rain, had flooded the low-lying areas of the city, and there was much loss of life and property as it receded. Asinius Gallus accordingly proposed consulting the Sibylline Books. Tiberius demurred, his tendency to conceal reaching the divine as well as the human plane; but Ateius Capito and Lucius Arruntius were authorized to find the means to hold the river in check.”<sup>16</sup> Tiberius also altered elements of ancient morality in regards to the Flamen of Jupiter, due to a lack of candidates, as there was no one that had met the prerequisite conditions. The Flamen of Jupiter was the chief priest of the most powerful and respected god in Roman religion. “This, then, should be remedied through a senatorial decree or a law, Tiberius concluded, just as Augustus had modified certain severe elements of ancient morality to suit contemporary practice. After a discussion of the religious implications, it was decided that the structure of the office of Flamen should remain unchanged, but a law was passed by which the wife of the Flamen of Jupiter would remain under her husband’s authority for religious purposes, but in all else have the same rights as other women.”<sup>17</sup>

Tiberius held his own religious convictions in addition to the respect that he

held for the traditional gods and goddesses. Tiberius was an avid practitioner in the art of divination through astrology. “I should not omit the prophecy of Tiberius concerning Servius Galba, consul at the time. After summoning him and sounding him out on various topics, Tiberius finally made a comment in Greek, along these lines: ‘You, too, Galba, at some point will taste command,’ a reference to Galba’s power, which arrived late and was short-lived. This came from Tiberius’ knowledge of the art of the Chaldeans, acquired during his retirement at Rhodes.”<sup>18</sup> Tacitus goes on to explain the nearly universal Roman interpretation of fate. “However, the notion that a person’s future is marked out at the moment of birth cannot be dispelled from the minds of most human beings. They believe that things turning out differently from what was predicted is due to the chicanery of false prophets, and that is the reason for the loss of confidence in an art for whose validity both antiquity and our own day provide clear proof.”<sup>19</sup> Tiberius held the prophecies of his teacher, Thrasyllus, in the most superior regards, and in his own mind he granted him oracular authority. It is clear that Tiberius, like most Roman citizens, believed in a predetermined fate and in the power to discern that fate through the use of divination. Tiberius, despite his faith in both a predetermined fate and the accuracy of astrological discernment of the future, was always paranoid of what the future held.

Throughout his reign, Tiberius displayed many signs of paranoia. This paranoia was evident due to the war that he waged on his political opponents in his many treason trials. However, it was his extended absences from the political landscape during his reclusiveness on Rhodes, and later Capri, as well as his reliance on Lucius Aelius Sejanus that show evidence of a man who was living in fear of his profession. For most of his life, Tiberius was surrounded by death, but the assassinations of Germanicus and Drusus the younger made his paranoia that much more reasonable. In 26 CE, Tiberius exiled himself again, this time to the paradise island of Capri. According to Suetonius, during the eleven years that Tiberius was absent from Rome and present on the island of Capri, he indulged in secret orgies. Erotic art decorated his villa and young boys and girls ran around the woods participating in deviant intercourse to excite the flagging passions of Tiberius.<sup>20</sup> Tiberius had once again stepped away from his responsibilities to indulge in his passions and interests. Even at the death of his mother, Tiberius showed nothing but disregard as he continued his pleasure-seeking lifestyle. “With no change in his hedonistic lifestyle, Tiberius by letter pleaded the great pressure of business as his excuse for failing to attend the final ceremonies for his mother.”<sup>21</sup> While on the island, he divided his consulship with the Praetorian prefect, Lucius Aelius Sejanus, his most trusted friend and the most powerful

official in Rome.

The friendship between Tiberius and Sejanus is best exemplified by the following conversation that Tacitus records. “For, he went on, you are wrong, Sejanus, if you think you are going to remain at your present rank, and that Livilla, formerly married to Gaius Caesar and then Drusus, will be content to grow old with a Roman knight. Granted that I myself should allow it, do you think men who have seen her brother, her father, and our ancestors in the top position are going to accept it? Yes, you want to remain within your present station. But those magistrates and dignitaries who burst in on your privacy against your will and consult you on every matter – these are spreading the word, and not discreetly, that it is quite some time since you rose above the ceiling of the equestrian rank and that you have gone far beyond my father’s friends. And, through jealousy of you, they also criticize me.”<sup>22</sup> It is clear that in his relationship advice to Sejanus, Tiberius is speaking not only as a superior, but also as a friend based on his own experiences earlier in life. Just as Augustus forced him to divorce the woman he loved for political security, he accordingly warns Sejanus of the threat of high-ranking politicians interceding into his personal affairs. Tiberius was also self-consciousness of his own image and the way that other politicians perceived him. While this marriage would be beneficial for Sejanus, for Livilla this marriage was a political downgrade.

She had twice been married to potential successors of the Julio-Claudian Dynasty, those being Gaius Caesar and Drusus the son of Tiberius. This was not a favorable relationship for the emperor to allow; however, he did allow the marriage six years later. There was also an incident that occurred in 28 CE that likely strengthened the relationship between Sejanus and Tiberius and allowed for Sejanus to consolidate respect and power in Rome. “They were taking a meal in a villa called ‘The Cavern,’ which was a natural cave between the sea at Amyclae and the hills of Fundi. There was a sudden rockslide at the mouth of the cave that buried a number of servants, precipitating universal panic and the flight of those attending the meal. Sejanus positioned himself over the emperor on his hands and both knees, setting himself against the falling stones, and such was the position in which he was found by the soldiers who came to the rescue. Sejanus’s authority grew after this, and disastrous though his advice might be, he was listened to with confidence as being a man with no concern for himself.”<sup>23</sup>

The manuscripts for Tacitus’s account of the life of Tiberius between the early years of 29 CE and the latter part of 31 CE were lost. Much of the information during this period is gathered from the events that transpired when the manuscript continues. Between 29 CE and 31 CE, Sejanus held tightly to the new powers that he had been given. Through his

machinations, two of the heirs to the throne, Drusus, the son of Germanicus, and his brother Nero, were made enemies of the state and executed. Antonia Minor, the mother of Livilla, wrote a letter to Tiberius claiming that the death of his son Drusus was an assassination arranged by his wife at the time, Livilla, and her lover, Sejanus. Tiberius hastily moved his newly adopted son Caligula away from Rome to the inaccessible island of Capri with him and had the accusations investigated. There are two different accounts of the reason for the dispatch of Sejanus. According to Tacitus, he was deemed guilty of everything that he had been accused of although the actual trial is missing from the manuscript. Dio, however, states that in 31 CE, Tiberius began to feel threatened by the amount of power that Sejanus had accumulated. Both the people and the Senate looked at Sejanus as their true ruler.<sup>24</sup> Whether or not Sejanus was truly planning a coup is debatable, though most evidence points toward this idea. However, the amount of power Sejanus had is beyond debate. He held power over much of Rome and commanded the Praetorian Guard, a personal army of approximately twelve thousand men. Tiberius had cared deeply for Sejanus as a friend and trusted him with his life when Sejanus served as the Prefect of the Praetorian Guard. “During those same days a senator, Granius Marcianus, who had been arraigned for treason by Gaius Gracchus, violently ended his own

life, and an ex-praetor, Tarius Gratianus, was condemned to capital punishment under the same law. The deaths of Trebellenus Rufus and Sextius Paconianus were not dissimilar from these. Trebellenus fell by his own hand, and Paconianus was strangled in prison for verses that he composed there against the emperor. Tiberius received news of these cases, not when he was cut off by the sea, as he had been earlier, nor through messengers travelling from afar. He had taken up a position near the city, so that, on that same day, or after the interval of a night, he could answer the letters of the consuls, while he was virtually looking upon the private homes awash with blood, and the work of his executioners.”<sup>25</sup>

The Senate celebrated after Sejanus’s downfall and issued a *damnatio memoriae*, a public erasure of someone that brought dishonor to the Roman state to eliminate the public memory of that person. Sejanus was not the only one that was erased from history due to his actions, however, as his children were also executed for his crimes so that his family line would not continue. “It was next decided that Sejanus’s remaining children should face punishment (despite the fact that the anger of the plebs was subsiding, and that most people had been appeased by the earlier executions). They were therefore carried into prison, the son aware of what lay ahead, but the girl so naïve as to repeatedly ask what she had done wrong, and where they were dragging her. She would

not repeat her offence, she said, and could be corrected with the beating usually accorded a child. Contemporary authors record that, capital punishment for a virgin being unheard of, she was raped by the executioner, with the noose lying beside her. The two were then strangled and their bodies – at that tender age – thrown on the Gemonian Steps.”<sup>26</sup> Many of Sejanus’s friends and followers also shared his fate, regardless of whether or not they were involved in the plot. Most of the accused disavowed their friendship with Sejanus; however, there is an account of one knight named Marcus Terentius that had the gallantry to hold onto the claims of his friendship. He stated, “In my circumstances, acknowledging the charge may perhaps be less expedient than denying it; but, no matter how things turn out, I am going to admit that I was a friend of Sejanus, that I actively sought to be so, and that I was happy to attain that end... For we were cultivating the friendship not of Sejanus of Vulsinii, but of a member of the Julian and Claudian families, into which he had entered by a marriage connection. He was your son-in-law Tiberius, your colleague in the consulship, one performing your duties in the senate... Plotting against the state and planning to assassinate the emperor should be punishable offences; but when it comes to friendship and its obligations, ending these at the same time as you must acquit you and us together, Tiberius.”<sup>27</sup> This bold statement successfully brought about the

acquittal of Marcus Terentius of all charges and brought his accusers exile and execution. The ferocity of the trials, however, left a heavy wound on the citizens of Rome.

In 31 CE, Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus, also known as Caligula, was adopted by Tiberius. These last years of Tiberius’s reign have been referred to by many as a reign of terror, as the period ran rife with prosecutions and accusations.<sup>28</sup> In 33 CE, the assassination of Drusus Caesar, the adopted grandson of Tiberius, left the only potential heirs to Tiberius’s crown as his grandson, Tiberius Gemellus, and the recently adopted son Caligula. Tiberius had arranged for them to be co-principates. In March of 37 CE, Tiberius grew ill, and according to the renowned doctor Charicles, his breathing was failing him.<sup>29</sup> “Charicles even so assured Macro that Tiberius’s breathing was failing and that he would last no more than two days. All arrangements were then accelerated, with discussions held amongst those present, and messages sent to legates and armies. On 16 March his breathing failed, and he was thought to have ended his mortal existence; and, surrounded by a large crowd of well-wishers, Gaius Caesar was going out to initiate his reign when, suddenly, word came that Tiberius’s voice and vision were returning and that people were being called on to bring food to revive him after his fainting spell. At this there was total panic, and all fled in various directions,

everyone feigning grief or ignorance – all but Gaius. Frozen in silence, he was now, after the highest hopes, anticipating the worst. Undaunted, Macro gave orders for the old man to be smothered by piling bed clothes on him.”<sup>30</sup> Tiberius’s worst fears had befallen him. He was assassinated at the orders of the Prefect of the Praetorian Guard, the man that had sworn to protect him. Macro had fulfilled the destiny that Sejanus had potentially sought just six years earlier from the same position. The Stoics attributed both birth and death to fate, while all else was under the control of fortune.<sup>31</sup> Despite his attempts to distance himself from the dangers that Rome held, it was Tiberius’s fate to be assassinated by a Prefect of the Praetorian Guard.

From a young age, Tiberius was denied love due to the forced separation from his first wife, Vipsania. According to many contemporary scholars, their marriage was regarded as a happy one. One account states that after the divorce from Vipsania, Tiberius saw her in public one day and became so distraught and inconsolable that he followed her to her front door. The rejection of his first love left a lasting scar on Tiberius’s heart. As he grew into adulthood, he was not allowed to indulge in his passions and interests as his education had been cut short when he was recalled for a diplomatic mission.<sup>32</sup> Although he was given a consolation of being allowed to take renowned tutors with him, his mind

had to be focused on the missions ahead, therefore he could never focus on his studies. He was not allowed to devote much of his time to the passions that he so enjoyed. Tiberius fully submitted to his carnal desires while on Capri. The other reason for secluding himself on such an inaccessible island that had rocky shores and only two points of entry, was for the safety that was offered by being outside of Rome. Death followed Tiberius everywhere he went, and he isolated himself on the most secure outpost that he could find. The Villa Jovis where Tiberius stayed had a view of the sky at which Tiberius could keep one eye on his enemies and the other on his future through his practice of astrological divination. The support of traditional Roman religion and the intolerance of nontraditional religions can be attributed to the policies that Augustus Caesar had implemented, as Tiberius held Augustus’s guidance in high regard. Not only did Tiberius follow in the footsteps of Augustus, the senate also urged him to do so. His many crucial victories for the Roman Empire such as the domination of Raetia and Vindelici, and later in the Balkans were nearly ignored in regard to his deserved recognition, for the sake of promoting the current heir of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, Agrippa. The assassinations of his children, the deaths of all of the previous heirs to the Julio-Claudian lines, and the betrayal of his closest friend, Sejanus, all served to drive Tiberius to the brink of madness. Prior to

Sejanus's betrayal, Tiberius was regarded as a great emperor. He followed in the footsteps of Augustus, maintaining the *pax deorum* and the *mos maiorum*. He was modest for declining every divine honor that was offered to him. Additionally, he made very modest changes to the religious status quo with exception of the nontraditional religions, such as that of the Egyptians and the Jews. After a life on the battlefield he did not try to expand Rome's borders any further, but instead he maintained it with an army of 125,000 legionnaires and an empire that was much richer.<sup>33</sup> At the point of Sejanus's potential betrayal, however, it is widely agreed that Tiberius had reached a tipping point and he had fully given in to his most carnal desires, disregarding any who potentially opposed him. His typical morose attitude had become a violent madness. The most vivid and telling description of Tiberius's

later years comes from Seneca who said, "Under Tiberius Caesar there was a repeated and almost nation-wide madness in bringing accusations, which bore more heavily upon the peaceful citizens than any civil war. The talk of drunken men was caught up (for the purpose of bringing accusation against them), the innocent intentions of men telling a joke. There was no safety; every occasion for practicing cruelty was used. And no more was the news of the outcome of the trial of the accused awaited because it was always one and the same."<sup>34</sup> Tiberius had finally embraced the power that came with being the sole ruler of an empire. Everyone accused was guilty of whatever crime Tiberius had suspected of them and most of them were punished by death or exile. The only peace that Tiberius found outside of Rhodes was in death.

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## Additional Contributors

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**Alexandria Beeman** is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in graphic design and will be graduating in May 2021. Alexandria has always had a passion for the visual arts. She is an artist first, then a designer, and hopes to make a difference with her aesthetic contributions.

**Meghan Bush** is a sophomore majoring in secondary education with a focus on social sciences. After graduation she hopes to teach at her former high school and later go on to make improvements to the history curriculum taught in high schools in order to help future students foster a love of history much like her own.

**Brennan DePace** is a sophomore majoring in history and a member of the honors program at AUM. He works as a legal assistant at the Adoption Law Firm and plans on attending law school after college with the hopes of practicing law.

**Todesia Flavors** is a senior majoring in history and minoring in art history. She enjoys studying ancient history and contemporary African history. She also loves Egyptian art and architecture. After completing her graduate education, she plans on becoming a history teacher.

**Sonja Hadder** is a sophomore studying history and philosophy. Their interest in history has been cultivated over many years of study, from participating in their Model UN club to competing in the National History Day competition in Washington D.C. Currently a part of the honors program at AUM, they plan on specializing in early American political philosophy and going on to receive their curating certificate so that they can work in museums in the future.

**Garrett Miller** is a junior history major and particularly enjoys studying the history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Upon graduation from AUM, he plans to attend graduate school.

**David Rains** is a fourth-year student majoring in history. He is interested in how cultures have changed over time, especially socially and politically. This is his first year on the editorial board.

**Nicholas Yeend** began his bachelor's degree in graphic design in late 2017 and expects to graduate in December 2021. His true passion lies in animation, comic books, and storytelling. This goal has been with him since a young age when he created short stories to entertain his family and friends. After graduation, he intends to work in the graphic design field while furthering his pursuit as a storyteller.

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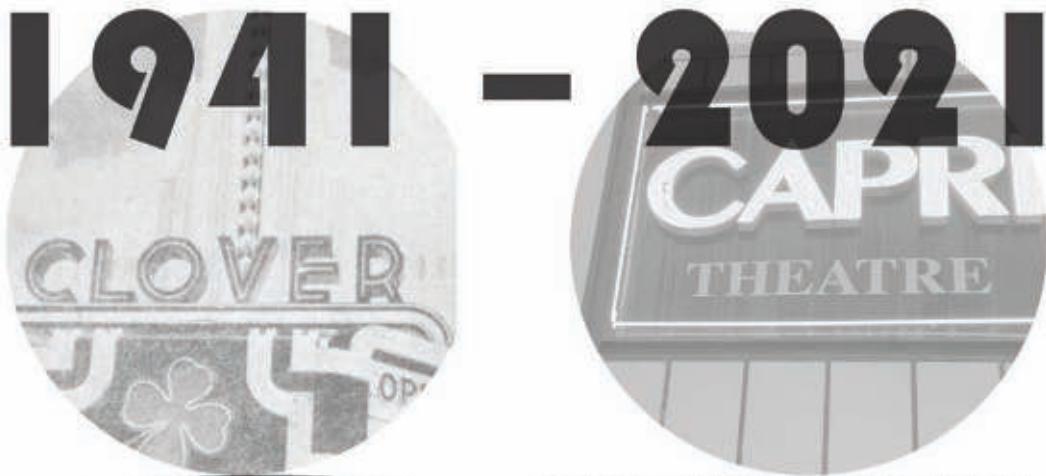
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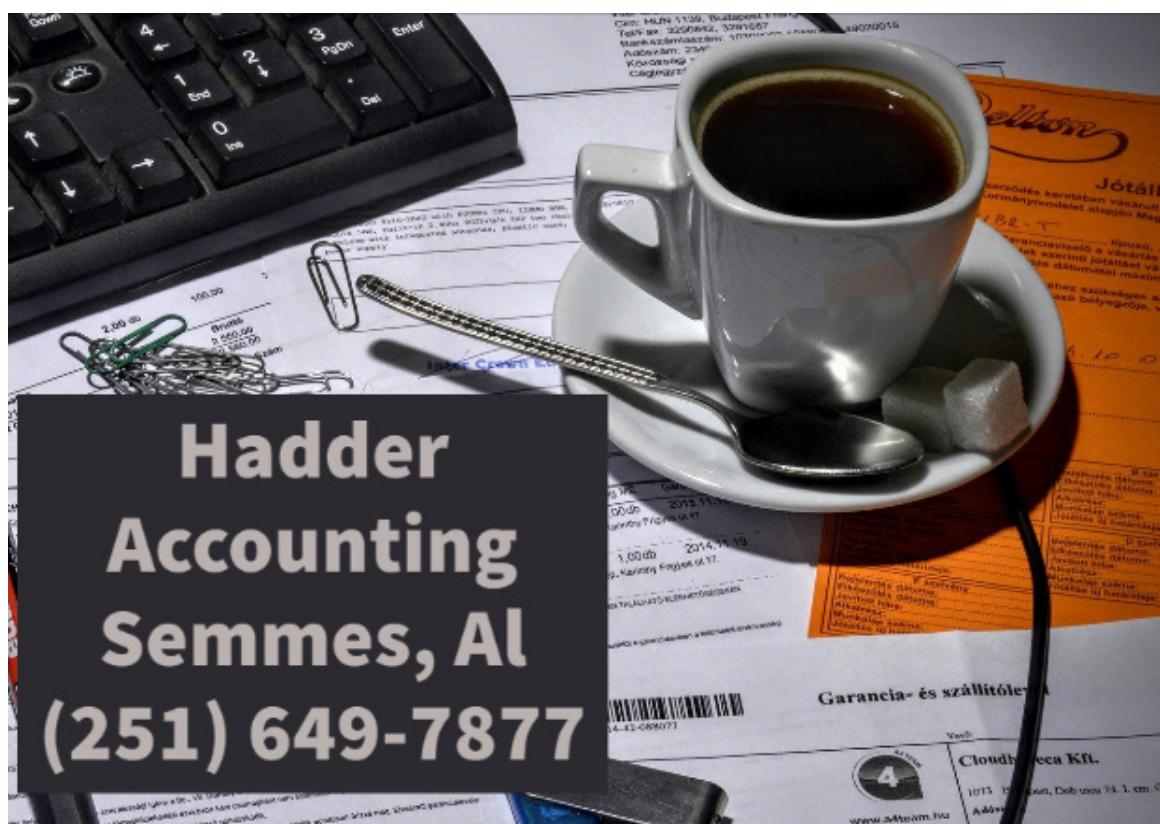
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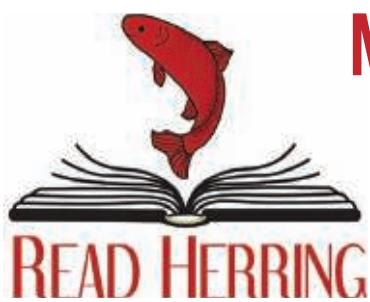
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