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Contents

5	Ammunition for the Reds: Alabama During the Cold War <i>Jennifer Kellum</i>	26	Franciscus Zabarella: A Theory for Unity <i>Kelhi DePace</i>
	Letter from the Editors <i>Kelhi DePace Katie Kidd</i>		A Conversation with Dr. Ed Bridges <i>Ryan Blocker Kelhi DePace</i>
	6		32

44

**Einsatzgruppen:
The Manifestation
of Hate**
Tim Bernier

64

**Additional
Contributors**

71

**Max Herzel,
Holocaust Survivor**
Aaron Bern

**A Review of
*The Israel-Palestine Conflict:
One Hundred Years of War*
by James Gelvin**
Beth Wesley

Call for Papers

50

68

As editors of the *AUM Historical Review*, we are excited to present the third issue of our student-edited journal. Included this year are essays from such divergent subjects as the Cold War in Alabama, modern conflicts in the Middle East, and the struggle for religious unity during the Italian Renaissance. We are also excited to include two Holocaust themed essays: one, an interview with Birmingham's own Holocaust survivor, Max Herzel, and the second, an award-winning paper on the Einsatzgruppen of Nazi Germany. In the case of this article, we would like to offer a caution, as the paper's content and imagery require mature reading.

As always, we encourage any AUM student to submit their historical work, regardless of the topic; please see the call for papers at the *Review's* conclusion. This journal exists to both acknowledge excellence in student writing and to benefit us all as we seek to grow in our historical knowledge and skill.

This journal is a labor of love, and as editors, there are many we would like to thank.

Thank you to Dean Michael Burger and the School of Liberal Arts, and specifically the Department of History, for continued support. We thank Professor Breuna Baine and all of her Typography 2 students, especially Amber Hall and Alex Trott, whose work has made this year's publication a visual success. Thanks also go to Molly Freeman for designing the map, to Professor Terry Winemiller for helping us recruit her, and to Marla Vickers and Frank Miles of University Relations for their support.

A special thanks must be extended to Graydon Rust and past associate editors Tracy Wilson and Allison Hamilton. The *AUM Historical Review* is their legacy, and we are honored to continue the work they so diligently began. We thank Dr. Steven Gish for directing our progress and keeping us on track, and Tracy Goodwin for her continued assistance and encouragement.

Thank you to the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) for supporting the research of so many AUM students, and for providing the *Review* access to a wider audience. We are delighted to include an interview with ADAH's Director Emeritus, Dr. Edwin Bridges, and we would like to thank him for his time and his example as an excellent historian. We would also like to extend a special thanks to Mike Widener of the Lillian Goldman Law Library at Yale Law School for his assistance and suggestions in obtaining illustrations, and Frank Couch of the *Birmingham News* for his help with obtaining the Autherine Lucy image.

Finally, we thank fellow editors Ryan Blocker, Aaron Bern, and Jennifer Kellum for their tireless efforts and constant good humor, and our contributors Tim Bernier and Beth Wesley, for their excellent writing and good spirit during the editing process.

We hope that you enjoy and learn from this edition of the *AUM Historical Review*.

Kelhi DePace and Katie Kidd, Editors

Ammunition for the Reds: Alabama during the Cold War

By the 1950s, the United States and the Soviet Union were in the grips of a political and ideological war. Termed the Cold War, the two superpowers never engaged in a direct military conflict; instead, they used propaganda and supported wars in other countries in an effort to gain political, economic, and global influence. The United States attempted to create an international panic over communism while the Soviet Union integrated itself into the racial struggle and civil rights movement in America. In this theater, two Alabamians, Autherine Lucy and Jimmy Wilson, grabbed the attention of the world. The four days of violent demonstrations that marked the entrance of Lucy as the first black student at the University of Alabama in 1956 and Wilson's death sentence for stealing \$1.95 in 1958 brought denunciations of racism and hypocrisy upon the United States, the supposed leaders of the free world. As the United States and the Soviet Union used psychological warfare as a means for political control in various countries during the Cold War, the turbulent race relations in America

by **Jennifer Kellum**

moved beyond the borders of a domestic disturbance. The Alabama events involving Autherine Lucy and Jimmy Wilson negatively affected the western control of non-European countries as the Soviet Union used American racism to push the newly decolonized Third World nations towards communism.

The end of World War II in 1945 ushered in the beginning of the Cold War as former allies became enemies. Because their ideologies and visions of Eastern European settlement divisions were fundamentally conflicting, only the goal of defeating Nazi Germany secured the alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union.¹ After the war, countries formerly occupied by Germany became targets for the USSR. Under the 1947 Marshall Plan, President Truman planned to secure billions of dollars to

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A 1964 Chinese propaganda poster reads: "Oppressed peoples, unite to resolutely fight against US imperialism." (Maopost.com)

aid Germany in an effort to rebuild the country as a vital part of the industrialized world. Soviet leader Josef Stalin, haunted by Germany's betrayal and invasion during the Second World War, desired a weak German state to prevent its resurgence.² In response to the Marshall Plan and despite his promises to the contrary, Stalin seized control of Eastern European nations, installing pro-communist governments to create a buffer zone between Russia and Germany. To the United States, such actions not only violated the former allies' agreement for self-determination among the newly freed regions of Eastern Europe, but it also proved to them that Stalin desired worldwide power. The United States resolved to block Soviet expansion and contain the spread of communism in Eastern Europe and in America. Fear of communism became a major feature of U.S. government policy on the national and state level.

As the Cold War began, the Soviet Union and its propaganda agencies targeted and exploited flaws in the American system. Not only did the Soviet Union want to attract new adherents to communism, but it also sought to denigrate its enemies. In the case of the United States, the continued problem of race relations and racial discrimination made an easy target and appeared to highlight a major problem in the otherwise successful American

system. Political, military, intellectual, and business leaders in the United States attempted to combat this aspect of anti-American propaganda by addressing the "Negro question" or "Negro problem," which grew more prominent and problematic after the end of the Civil War. The year 1890 introduced the First Mohonk Conference on the Negro Question, held at Lake Mohonk in New York, where for three days intellectuals from around the country discussed how to elevate the disenfranchised minority to become a part of American society. The Negro Question focused on the role of education, economics, and politics for black Americans; it is, essentially, what the civil rights movement attempted to answer and fix. In his opening address during the First Mohonk Conference, A.K. Smiley prophesied that if the Negro Question was not resolved, black Americans would "become a dangerous element to the community, liable to be thrown at any moment into the hands of demagogues who may use them for bad purposes."³ Almost four decades later, in 1929, this sentiment was echoed by Fred R. Moore, owner and editor of the black newspaper *New York Age*, who warned Republican leaders of the increasing trend of black workers to join the Communist Party because of Jim Crow laws.⁴

In the decade before the onset of the Cold War, members of the Communist Party latched onto the racial discrimi-

nation in an effort to influence black Americans. James S. Allen, in *The Negro Question in the United States* (1936), argued that the Communist Party of the United States equated the nature of the Negro Question to that of other

oppressed nations:

socially and politically oppressed people who deserve “national liberation.”⁵ Likewise, in his pamphlet *The Negro People and the Communist Party* (1943), Ben Davis Jr.

urged black Americans to join the Communist Party to become “fighter(s) for eliminating the shame of Jim Crow” and “for the full liberation of your people.”⁶ Davis painted a utopian destination when he described the Soviet Union as a state that outlawed racial discrimination, and where everyone has the right to “jobs, security, education, leisure, cultural development, freedom, happiness, and equality.”⁷

Black Americans fought in World War II to help free oppressed nations and promote democratic ideals, yet they returned home to continued racial suppression. Compared to the beginning of the conflict, the end of the Second World War saw an increase of blacks serving in the military, from five thousand to just over one million. Despite the heroism, injuries, and deaths of thou-

sands of black soldiers, the armed forces remained segregated and unequal by the end of World War II as blacks were given menial jobs, and shoddy housing and weapons.⁸ Back home, black World War II veterans faced persecution and

violence for wearing their uniforms. The United States’ fight to liberate Eastern Europe gave black Americans another tool to combat racial discrimination. Using the same refer-

ences of democracy and the Declaration of Independence utilized by American politicians during World War II, black soldiers staged sit-ins and other protests in segregated places.⁹ The postwar violence against black soldiers gave the Communist Party another weapon to use as anti-American propaganda, but it also grabbed the attention of U.S. President Harry S. Truman.¹⁰

As communists continued to infiltrate minority groups in America, politicians attempted to quantify the damage caused by United States racial tensions and Soviet propaganda. In 1946, President Truman commissioned a committee to investigate whether the federal, state, and local governments could strengthen and improve civil rights. The committee noted that the protection of civil rights

Two Alabamians grabbed the attention of the world

was essential for continued domestic tranquility and national security.¹¹ It also noted how the strife and discord in the nation led the United States to lose an unquantifiable amount of money, production, and power in the global market.¹² The President's Committee on Civil Rights recommended that the government take a greater leadership role in securing and improving civil rights. The problem was not only an internal one, however, as Secretary of State Dean Acheson stated in 1946 in a letter to the Fair Employment Practices Committee. Acheson noted that foreign nations were quick to point out the disconnect between American principles and practices; to Acheson, it became "next to impossible to formulate a satisfactory answer to [America's] critics."¹³ By this time, the nation's civil rights record was fodder for detractors and reduced the good standing of the United States in the eyes of millions of people around the world. Criticism regarding American race relations came from many nations. A Russian magazine from the 1930s depicted a lynched black man hanging from the Statue of Liberty. Such art is indicative of the works that played upon the oppressive nature of the United States. The artwork emphasized solidarity among non-whites and advocated violence to combat American imperialism. The Soviet Union led the critics during the Cold War, using language

that mirrored that of the other liberation movements like the French Revolution. Evocative, emotional language was a common technique of communist propaganda according to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover during his testimony in 1947 before the House on Un-American Activities Committee. Communists used such language "with the hope the victim will be attracted by what he is told the Communist way of life holds in store for him."¹⁴ The violence directed at Autherine Lucy, the first black student at the University of Alabama, gave the Communist Party more ammunition to use in their fight for black supporters.

In 1952, Polly Anne Myers persuaded her friend and former classmate, Autherine Lucy, to join her in applying to the University of Alabama's graduate school, promising her that they would receive support from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for the legal battle that was sure to follow. For two years, the battle waged in the courtroom until the landmark 1954 case forced the university's hand. The university refused admission to Myers on moral grounds – she was pregnant before she married – but after multiple delays and investigations, they could find no reason to exclude Lucy. On Friday, February 3, 1956, Autherine Lucy became the first black to enroll in the University of Alabama in the school's 125-year history.

While a few students welcomed Lucy, the majority protested the inclusion of the black student.

The days that followed were filled with violence and angry, racist protests. On Friday night, students attended a cross burning on campus and set off firecrackers and smoke bombs. Groups gathered and marched through the university waving Confederate flags and chanting phrases like, “Hey, ho, Autherine’s gotta go!” and “Keep ‘Bama white!” before parading two miles to downtown Tuscaloosa.¹⁵ On Saturday night a bigger crowd of protesters formed, estimated at about two thousand, and gathered on university president Oliver C. Carmichael’s lawn, jeering, hissing, and throwing garbage at his residence. The campus protests continued throughout the weekend and peaked when Autherine Lucy returned to campus Monday morning. As a crowd mobbed Lucy and her university escorts, hitting them with rocks and eggs, an elderly, white-haired woman yelled, “Kill her, kill her, kill her!”¹⁶ The onslaught persisted until university officials decided Lucy should return home to Birmingham under the protection of the Tuscaloosa police until she reached the city limits.¹⁷ The absence of Lucy did not pacify the mob, which numbered from a few hundred to an estimated three thousand participants, consisting of “students, factory workers, high school

truants, and some unknown persons with guns.”¹⁸ Reporters, already on the university campus to witness the historic event, documented the demonstrations, and as the violence grew, so did the media attention. Images of a young white man, cheered on by the mob, jumping on a car driven by a black man made front-page news; yet, in the end, the Tuscaloosa police arrested only three non-students who had egged and assaulted the university’s chaplain during the height of the demonstrations.¹⁹

Faced with this chaos, President Carmichael announced on Tuesday, February 7, that the university’s board of trustees had voted unanimously for the suspension of Autherine Lucy for her own safety, as well as that of the student body and faculty members.²⁰ Some newspaper reports cited mob rule had defeated the university officials and the Supreme Court. Buford Boone, who later won a Pulitzer Prize for his reports on segregation, lamented in a *Tuscaloosa News* editorial how the university “knuckled under to the pressures and desires of a mob” resulting in the “break-down of law and order, an abject surrender to what is expedient rather than a courageous stand for what is right.”²¹ In response to the university’s decision to suspend Lucy, her lawyer sought an injunction against the university to reinstate her. A blunder by Lucy, however, gave the university the excuse it needed



Birmingham, 1956: Autherine Lucy, with her lawyers Thurgood Marshall and Arthur Shores, leaves the Federal courthouse after her expulsion from the University of Alabama was upheld. (Birmingham News / Al.com)

to bar her. Shortly after her suspension, Lucy had announced the university itself had orchestrated the mob using this “cunning stratagem” as an excuse to prevent her from attending.²² The school officials deemed this charge baseless and slanderous, and permanently expelled Autherine Lucy from the University of Alabama. While President Carmichael stated that the university would follow court orders, albeit reluctantly, to admit black applicants, Lucy would not be readmitted.²³ She only attended three days of class.

To some, America’s domestic problems crippled the authenticity of its democratic ideals and its fervor for international invention seemed inexplicable in its current conditions. Letters, some empathizing with Lucy’s plight while others condemned her insubordination, flew into the governor’s office and to editors of newspapers. In one letter to Governor Folsom, New York resident Reverend Wilton Caver decried the notion that the United States would “talk about the freedom of another country or interfere with its people” when black Americans were openly denied their rights as natural citizens.²⁴ Caver was referring to *The Voice of America*, a radio program that began in 1942, after America entered World War II, and had served as a source of war news and commentary. By 1947, the *VOA* included a Russian language broadcast to the Soviet

Union that devoted much of its time to “answering Soviet attacks considered hostile to the United States or harmful to its national interests.”²⁵ As the emergent leader of the free world and the defender of democracy, the United States made itself an easy target for negative propaganda about its race relations. While considered a domestic problem by most Americans, the contradictions between American democratic ideology and its systematic discrimination against minorities held international implications, particularly in Africa.²⁶

In the years after World War II, America held a sharp interest in Africa, economically, militarily, and politically. The United States coveted African minerals, such as chrome, rubber, and diamonds, and, as a result, trade with Africa steadily increased. Airfields, defense areas, and American military missions ensured a military stake in Africa, while the political support of millions of Africans could potentially secure American interests and goals in that continent.²⁷ Under a section entitled “Goals of United States Policy,” a memorandum prepared in the Office of African Affairs in 1955 briefly addressed ways the U.S. could strengthen its political, economic, and social position in Africa. It began by noting the need to keep developing countries “free from inimical foreign influences” such as communism. In addition, the United States would have to

“consolidate its cultural and moral positions with respect to the Africans,” an act requiring tact and diplomacy in both Africa and the United States.²⁸

The end of World War II launched a major period of decolonization in Africa as its nations fought for independence from European rule, leaving Africans rallying for national and political identity. A 1958 National Security Council Report (NSC 5818) noted that as the colonial period ended, Africa had emerged as an “increasingly important influence on the course of world events” and international politics when the Soviet Union focused on the region.²⁹ The United States believed any Soviet involvement in Africa was a tool for communist infiltration and an effort to “undermine the fledging institution of countries just emerged from colonial status.” Herbert Hoover Jr. in the State Department noted how the USSR used diplomatic missions in Canada and Australia as fronts for propaganda and espionage activity; “less sophisticated” regions like Africa, he argued, would undoubtedly fall under the communist influence with “disastrous political consequences.”³⁰

Because of its political uncertainty, Africa became a target for foreign ideologies and propaganda such as communism and democracy, as well as a breeding ground for extreme nationalism. While African government officials were aware they still required the aid of

their former colonizers for financial investment, imports, and trade, a growing number of the African people saw any involvement by the Europeans as signs of continued colonialism and Western oppression.³¹ The Soviets appealed to both the government and the people in their effort to capture the hearts and minds of Africans. According to NSC 5818, the Soviets portrayed themselves to the African people as non-European and anti-colonial, a tactic that worked well in Ghana and Liberia where they established diplomatic missions.³²

Under the label of fellowship, the USSR targeted African youths and universities and used the media to exploit the drive for independence and social growth. By 1959, American officials noted how the vocabulary of the youth of Africa became increasingly “Neo-Marxist,” partly due to the Indian Communist Party and Soviet ideology broadcasted through Cairo.³³ The Soviets also catered to Africans in Europe and in the Soviet Union, creating African organizations, such as the African Training School in Moscow, and making them a key part of the 1957 Moscow Youth Festival. The USSR promised economic aid to African governments and gave the continent a public importance, promoting Africans as a group no longer marginalized as simply workers of the allegedly racist Western capitalists.³⁴ They attacked American aid programs to Africa, claim-

ing they were ploys for Western political domination, and continued emphasizing the racial discrimination in the United States.³⁵ The U.S. used propaganda to combat such claims, but racial discrimination and violence in the States overwhelmed any American advancement in the political and ideological war.

During the Cold War, Americans were keen to present an image of an egalitarian nation, but the Autherine Lucy incident hindered their ability to combat anti-American propaganda. Several letters to Governor Folsom berated him and the university for seemingly increasing the veracity of communist propaganda. "Congratulations!" began one letter, "Your state managed to play into the hands of Russia without half trying!"³⁶ In another letter, Thomas Jordan of Beverly Hills, California wrote he could recognize how the world that watched the "performance" of a few Alabamians would find it hard to understand "our way of life and our Democratic ideals."³⁷ Newspaper clippings sent to Governor Folsom contained headlines such as "Alabama Mob Keeping Red Propaganda Alive," and "Ammunition for the Reds" that echoed the sentiments of the letters. The governor of New York spoke before the United Parents Association of New York stating that "mob rule" in Alabama had hurt America's fight against communism.³⁸ In a clipping mailed to Folsom, Mrs. Eleanor

Roosevelt, in her syndicated column, "My Day," wrote, "It is understandable communists in this country should now be attempting to inject themselves over the controversy over civil rights in the Southern states."³⁹ While communist interjection into civil rights was not a new tactic, the growth of global media aided in spreading its anti-American agenda.

The FBI called the attempt to integrate of the University of Alabama "probably the most widely publicized [case of desegregation] in both the communist and free press."⁴⁰ According to the FBI, members of the Communist Party said they would use whatever means available to make the case a national incident.⁴¹ In terms of attention, the Lucy incident far exceeded their expectations. Radio broadcasts in Moscow made note of the "persecution" of Lucy and the growing public protests against her treatment.⁴² A Danish organization called the League of Tolerance offered Lucy a full scholarship to the University of Copenhagen.⁴³ The Belgium League of Human Rights advised they would begin petitions for Lucy to attend any Belgium university of her choice if the University of Alabama did not readmit her.⁴⁴ Governor Folsom received an article from the *Egyptian Gazette* that detailed the Lucy case as well as racial oppression and violence in the United States; attached was a letter stating such actions only weakened the prestige of

America abroad.⁴⁵

Americans in foreign countries gave firsthand accounts of the international reactions to the violence against Lucy. Charles R. Temple traveled through South America in 1956 under a fellowship from the Institute of Current World Affairs, an organization that fosters independent studies of foreign countries to young Americans. Temple wrote to the ICWA that during his time in South America he encountered a Peruvian communist who, reacting to the Lucy situation, told him the “United States couldn’t hope to stand for ‘democracy’ unless it solved the Negro Problem.” Temple described Peruvians who wished to travel America but feared hostile treatment in the States because their skin was not white. One man asked Temple if the United States government realized how their treatment of black Americans reduced U.S. status in South America. Another Peruvian recounted his meeting with an Alabamian who chided him for Peru’s treatment of native Indians, although it mirrored the treatment of blacks in America.⁴⁶

Similarly, while in Lebanon in 1956, Richard H. Nolte, a Middle East expert for the American Universities Field Staff and another fellowship recipient of the ICWA, wrote to the ICWA about Egyptian reactions to the Lucy affair, transcribing editorials and stories published in Egyptian newspapers. One

editorial, entitled, “Ten Thousand ‘Pure White Americans’ Threaten Negro Girl with Murder,” reflected the hyperbole associated with the Lucy case and the American image overseas.⁴⁷ An army officer wrote to Governor Folsom, telling of his reluctance to admit to being from Alabama when he was stationed overseas. Invariably after his admission, someone would make the telling remark that Alabamians have to go outside Alabama, or even outside the U.S., to learn about the “American way.”⁴⁸

Communists around the world used the media to exploit the Autherine Lucy incident and denigrate American democracy outside the United States. On February 25, 1956, the United States Information Agency reported on a radio broadcast from Hanoi in North Vietnam in which a letter allegedly written by Lucy was read. The awkwardly worded letter, written to the students of Vietnam, described Lucy’s ordeal and American propaganda techniques. It ended by questioning the United States’ purpose in South Vietnam, unsubtly hinting it was not altruism, but rather subjugation that guided white Americans. The next day, on *Voice of America*, Lucy denied writing the letter and any connection to communism. She also denied writing an article printed in *Unita*, an Italian communist newspaper that denounced the United States and revealed Lucy’s alliance with communism.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, the ties

between the civil rights movements and communism ran deep and no denials by Lucy could sway the opinions of some Americans who believed that many, if not all, of the race problems in America could be connected to communism.

In the 1920s and 1930s, blacks in the South had migrated to the Communist Party of the United States for several reasons. The CPUSA fought for the oppressed and disenfranchised working class, which heavily included blacks. Robin D.G. Kelley, in *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression*, explains that the willingness of communist groups, such as the International Labor Defense (ILD) that defended the Scottsboro boys in the landmark 1931 case, to entangle themselves in unions and legal cases helped increase the popularity of communist groups among blacks. The CPUSA of Alabama also became the first party to support a black gubernatorial candidate in 1930. Kelley argues that the CPUSA offered more than simply an opposition party for black Americans; it offered an understanding of poverty and racism that linked the local struggle of blacks Americans to that of world politics and a growing international movement.⁵⁰

Because of the Communist Party's aggressive rhetoric and tactics, the more subtle and less antagonistic NAACP distanced itself from the organization, placing the two groups in competition

for black supporters. By 1937, however, as the ILD ceased to exist in Alabama, black communists were encouraged to join the NAACP, boosting its membership numbers to a high not seen in over a decade. These members brought with them the aggressive tactics of the CPUSA, influencing the NAACP to adopt a direct action policy.⁵¹ Yet within a few years, the NAACP began to cut ties with extremists and alleged communist groups as anti-communism gained momentum in the United States.⁵² A 1945 article in the *Black Worker* called communist leadership the "kiss of death" to any movement and claimed blacks had enough of a handicap without being labeled "Red" as well.⁵³ Despite this, and because of their similar platforms for racial equality, the NAACP would remain irrevocably tied to the Communist Party in the minds of many Americans.

In his 1955 address before the Peace Officers Association, Georgia Attorney General Eugene Cook claimed the NAACP wanted to force the "Communist inspired doctrine of racial integration and amalgamation" upon the South. He further illustrated the connection between the NAACP and communism, focusing on NAACP members' ties to suspected communist organizations. According to Cook, the NAACP's only black founding member, W.E.B. Du Bois, had seventy-two government charges of communist, communist front,

or subversive activity against him.⁵⁴ Because the CPUSA and the NAACP both advocated racial equality, it is not surprising those in communist or communist front groups would also support the NAACP. Du Bois, however, did believe that communism could potentially solve racial problems. Although he criticized him years before, Du Bois' eulogy to Josef Stalin in 1953, where he called Stalin a "great man...simple, calm, and courageous," only seemed to cement the connection between communism and the NAACP.⁵⁵

Several letters sent to Governor Folsom referred to the NAACP as the "National Association for the Advancement of the Communist Party." One letter compared the organization to Russian dictators, a small, ruling minority pushing procommunist policies.⁵⁶ Another claimed the "left-wing Red sympathizers who guide the destinies of the NAACP" were responsible for the violence at the University of Alabama.⁵⁷ In his statement to the faculty and students, university president Carmichael said he believed the majority of the demonstrators were not students but outsiders determined to make trouble.⁵⁸ Letters to the governor echoed this idea, but placed the blame on communist organizations and the NAACP where Carmichael refused to specify.

One letter from Mississippi ranted that communists had ruled the Supreme

Court since 1952, an accusation the letter writer believed negated the legality of the 1954 desegregation decision.⁵⁹ A letter from Washington, D.C. claimed the effort to force Lucy into the University of Alabama was a sinister plan with the intended effect of blackmailing America to accept communism by exaggerating racial tensions.⁶⁰ In Cleveland, Ohio, police raided a left wing drinking party attended by three known communists, one of whom made an appeal for money for Lucy; some took this as evidence of the Lucy case being a national communist undertaking.⁶¹ These citizens saw the fight against Lucy and integration as a war against communism and as a fight to maintain the status quo. In some letters, blame shifted to Lucy, who dared to venture into a place she was not wanted either through her own volition or under the guidance of the NAACP. An editorial by Buford Boone summarized the point of view of many white Southerners: they would not submit to force or intimidation to change their way of life. They did not accept the legality of the 1954 Supreme Court ruling, as they believed states should control their schools and laws did not change tradition. Boone ended his editorial with a simple request: "leave us alone."⁶² Yet, individual states could not distance themselves from U.S. involvement in international problems and its attempt tried to eradicate communism globally. Consequently, the ra-

cial persecution in Alabama continued to strain the relationships between America and other nations.

Europe's history of African colonization and the ongoing racial discrimination against blacks in the United States caused a problem for both regions in combating communism in Africa. Europe, like America, needed African markets and raw materials, and had to avoid appearing imperialistic to the increasingly independent continent. The United States had to portray a sincere interest in Africa rather than an interest in keeping communism out of the region. By August of 1958, the United States had conceived of policies designed to promote the social, political, and economic goals of the African "without insisting that he align himself in the East-West power struggle."⁶³ Yet, cases like those against Jimmy Wilson undermined America's desire to be viewed by other nations as an advocate of equality and independence.

If the Autherine Lucy case was the most widely publicized incident of desegregation overseas, the case of Jimmy Wilson was likely not far behind in the attention it gained in the foreign and domestic press. In 1957, Alabama courts sentenced Wilson, 55, to death for robbing an 82-year old white woman of \$1.95. The woman, who had hired Wilson for odd jobs, also accused him of assault and attempted rape, but the charge

of burglary committed at night carried a heavier penalty. Enacted in 1927, this Alabama law called for a ten-year to life imprisonment or death for nighttime burglary, but in thirty years, only four men, all black, were sent to the electric chair for the crime.⁶⁴ Convicted by an all-white jury, Wilson, who had previously been imprisoned twice for grand larceny, appealed to the State Supreme Court, but it upheld the verdict in June.⁶⁵ The State planned to execute Wilson on September 5, 1958, but, after a failed appeal, the date changed to October 24.

Days before the first scheduled execution, American newspapers reported the international uproar over the verdict. The International Commission of Jurists, a human rights organization, appealed to Folsom for clemency in the interest of Wilson and the reputation of the United States.⁶⁶ A Belgrade newspaper claimed Wilson received the death penalty because his victim was white and he was black.⁶⁷ A British canon and the British Labor Party both pled for clemency from Folsom, claiming the case provided ammunition for anti-western propaganda.⁶⁸ The majority of the letters came from Canada, Folsom announced during a special news conference, with more than three thousand letters arriving in a single day.⁶⁹ One Canadian letter reported that the House of Commons discussed the Wilson case; other letters urged the governor to take care of America's image

abroad. Hundreds of letters came with money enclosed, usually \$1.95, to be used for Wilson's defense or pay for his crime; Folsom's office responded to most letters and returned most of the money.⁷⁰

Some Americans wrote to Folsom calling for Wilson's execution, not only because it followed the letter of the law, but also as a message to the rest of the world that Southerners would not yield to political and foreign pressure. These letters were in the minority, however, and political pressure mounted. Folsom received a telegram from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles the day before Wilson's first scheduled execution. While he assured Folsom he had no desire to interfere with Alabama's judicial process or Folsom's gubernatorial duties, Dulles stated that it fell to him to relay foreign matters that concerned Alabama. In the three-page telegram, Dulles listed countries with immense public reactions to the Wilson case: Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, Trinidad, Jamaica, Ghana, Liberia, Germany, France, Belgium, Brazil, and Uruguay. The prime minister of Ghana personally inquired about the facts of the case, while officials in Liberia stated the execution of Wilson would "greatly damage the position of the United States in all of West Africa," a region that gained international importance after World War II as the Cold War extended into postcolonial Africa.⁷¹

Like the earlier case of Autherine Lucy, the Jimmy Wilson case also hampered the American efforts to fix the perception of its race relations in African nations. The 1958 NSC 5818 reported that black South Africans closely aligned racism with colonialism, limiting the progress Americans could make in that area. The U.S. government sought several ways to improve its image including emphasizing "U.S. progress in the field of race relations through all available media," although Soviet propaganda techniques far surpassed those of the United States. The report also urged American companies operating in Africa to "practice non-discrimination...to the maximum extent consistent with local laws" as an extension of improved race relations. Shortly after this report came out, however, the Wilson case gained international attention. While there were obvious racial problems in America, U.S. officials claimed the picture Africans held of these problems was "distorted" by communist propaganda.⁷² To many, the Alabama handyman became the quintessential symbol of racial discrimination and oppression in the so-called land of liberty and equality. An Indonesian political cartoon targeted Wilson's new symbolism by depicting the Statue of Liberty holding the severed head of Wilson in place of the torch.⁷³ Two University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee students wrote a letter to the editor of

The Milwaukee Journal claiming the “rest of the civilized world” was against the execution of Jimmy Wilson.⁷⁴ On September 29, 1958, Governor Folsom commuted Wilson’s sentence to life in prison, the most he could legally do; it is unknown if Folsom would have acted so without the international and political pressure. Folsom sent a telegram to the secretary-general of the British Labor Party notifying the organization of his decision. When the telegram was read before a group of 1,200 Labor Party delegates, the crowd both cheered Folsom for commuting the sentence and jeered at Wilson’s life sentence.⁷⁵

The Autherine Lucy and Jimmy Wilson cases in Alabama intertwined with the international image and prestige of the United States. The violence directed toward one black woman seeking an education contradicted the inspiring opportunities offered through democracy as portrayed by Americans. A heavy sentence imposed upon a black man for a petty crime reinforced Soviet propaganda of the United States as hypocritical oppressors. As Third World nations became pawns in the Cold War, the U.S. could no longer minimize the treatment of minorities at home. Believing public opinion had an increasing influence on government officials and policies in Third World countries, the United States quickly had to minimize the images of racial injustice that were

transmitted around the world when Soviet Cold War tactics incorporated the civil rights movement. As the Soviet Union scrutinized and exploited acts of racial discrimination, the United States was forced to change racially motivated domestic policies to match the doctrines it promoted overseas.

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A Conversation with Dr. Ed Bridges

by **Ryan Blocker**
and **Kelhi DePace**

Dr. Edwin C. Bridges is no stranger to the history of Alabama. For thirty years (1982-2012), he was the Director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH). During his tenure, ADAH has grown in both collections and size. In 2005, the addition of the west wing allowed for improved collection storage conditions, as well as increased public accessibility to ADAH's holdings. Furthermore, Dr. Bridges worked to improve and integrate new technology, thereby bridging the gap between the digital age and traditional archival practices.

Originally from Bainbridge, Georgia, Dr. Bridges graduated from Furman University where he earned both the Woodrow Wilson and Danforth fellowships. He received both his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. He taught high school social studies for two years in South Carolina, worked as a contract researcher for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and taught at the Georgia Institute of Technology before working for the Georgia Department of Archives and History.

In 1982, after serving as the Assistant Director at the Georgia Department of Archives and History, Dr. Bridges accepted the position of Director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History and moved to Montgomery.

Dr. Bridges has participated in a variety of state and community activities. He has served as the president of the Alabama Historical Association and has worked with the Alabama Historical Commission, the Alabama Women's Hall of Fame, the Alabama Men's Hall of Fame, the Governor's Mansion Advisory Board, and the Alabama Historical Records Advisory Boards. Dr. Bridges is a recipient of the Alabama Humanities Foundation's Annual Humanities Award and has been inducted into the College of Communications Hall of Fame at the University of Alabama and the Alabama Academy of Honor.

We are delighted that he has participated in this email interview for the *AUM Historical Review*.

Ryan Blocker is a junior history major with a minor in sociology. She is a museum collections assistant at the Alabama Department of Archives and History and specializes in eighteenth and nineteenth century clothing.

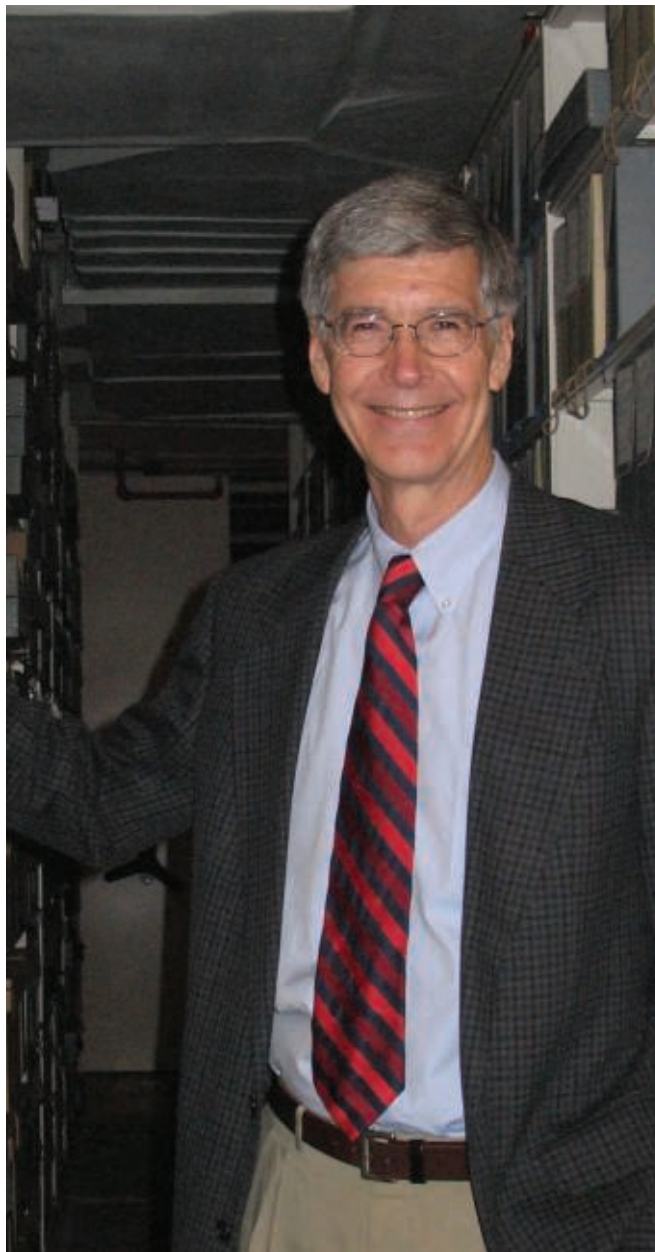
Kelhi DePace is a junior with a double major in English and history. She works in the education section of the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

Who or what had the most influence on you with regards to history?

I always liked history. It is a way of understanding almost anything. Just ask: How did it get to be that way? Seeing individual pieces of information click into larger strings of connections and consequences is great fun. For me, as a white boy growing up in a small town in south Georgia in the 1950s, there were plenty of things I wanted—and needed—to understand.

What brought you to Alabama and its history?

It was a fluke. I was assistant director of the Georgia Department of Archives and History and was actually offered the chance to succeed the director there who was retiring. But, Milo Howard, the director of the Alabama Archives, had recently died. When I was invited to come over and interview for the Alabama job, I was not at all interested, but our family happened to be



Dr. Ed Bridges, Director Emeritus of the Alabama Department of Archives and History. (ADAH)

going to the beach for spring break the weekend before the Monday interview. It was easy to stay another day at the beach and come through Montgomery on the way back to Atlanta, so why not? When I saw the Alabama Archives and learned more about it, my interest increased. The deciding factor was that the Alabama Archives is under a board of trustees and Georgia's was under a politician—the secretary of state. Georgia's election primaries that spring (1982) brought these politics to the fore and made clear the advantages of the governance structure of the Alabama Archives. My fears of the system in Georgia have been more than borne out by what has happened over the last 30 years. The politicians there almost ruined what had been one of the strongest state archival programs in the nation.

What do you see as the biggest challenge to students in the field of history?

I guess it is finding a job. I think history students can do many different things, not just those that seem obvious as history jobs. But non-traditional ventures may require more specialized study or some time working up through the system. Regardless of the specific area of work, there is a tremendous demand everywhere for people who are smart, can write and communicate, and work hard. In almost any organization, talent,

ability, and dedication will be recognized and rewarded. History can help hone thinking and writing skills and can help provide tools for this kind of larger career success—to say nothing of its even greater value for self-understanding.

What advice do you have for students of history? Either advice you received or wish you would have?

Work hard. Keep probing. Doors will open, and you never know where they lead. I did not know what an archives was when I decided to pursue history. I just loved the subject and wanted to keep trying to understand how things in the world around me came to be as they are. I was lucky that some wonderful opportunities came my way. There were some others I did not try and wonder from time to time about where those might have led, but I have had a very happy career.

Why did you choose public/museum history over teaching history? Was it a conscious choice, or did it just happen?

Initially, I planned to teach at the college level, but changed my mind because of a combination of things. I taught part-time at Georgia Tech, and while I loved the classes, I hated grading big stacks of tests. I had classes of 175 students and refused to give multiple

choice tests. But reading those stacks of blue books wore me out. Also, in the mid-1970s there was a glut of new PhDs and a scarcity of new teaching positions. After a few years at the Georgia Archives to finish my PhD, I found I loved being at the intersection of history and current policy. It was better for me than what I had thought I wanted as a university professor.

As the director of ADAH and now as the director emeritus, what were and are some of the most exciting ways you engaged in history?

There have been a few times when I've had the chance to be involved in providing historical input on current issues and where I think my ideas have had an impact. That has been pretty satisfying. I have also loved getting to know the former leaders whose records we acquire and store. It is amazing to hear them talk about their experiences and to come to know some of them as friends. Also, I really like working with the general public, trying to provide ways and opportunities for ordinary citizens to engage with history and enjoy some of the same kind of insights that have made history so much fun to me.

In this digital age, what are the difficulties and challenges that archives/museums are experiencing? What are

the benefits?

The greatest challenge to archives—probably since modern archives developed—is dealing with electronic records. It is a daunting set of issues. At the same time, computers have revolutionized the way we do our work, increasing both productivity and effectiveness. From the researcher's perspective, the range and accessibility of material available on-line is almost unbelievable. Some tasks I spent weeks on when I was in graduate school can now be done in a few hours.

Do you only study Alabama history, or are there other eras or places that you are interested in?

I have always tried to read broadly. I love ancient history and medieval Europe and dabble in the history of science and intellectual history. I have spent a lot of time on the twelfth century, which I see as the seedbed from which modern civilization emerged. I am currently working through the Oxford University Press series on American history, and these books are just fantastic.

What are you working on now? Future projects?

I am trying to write up some of what I have learned about Alabama history. I'm not sure how the efforts will turn out and whether I will produce any-

thing publishable, but I think there is a need for new material that tells the story of Alabama for the general public and that also reflects the wonderful scholarship of the last half century.

Favorite person or period in Alabama history?

I have not found any part of Alabama history to be boring. Some times and topics are more painful than others, but they are all interesting. And, as I more and more see the pieces as part of a larger whole, every new element that illuminates the big story from a different angle just adds to the richness. There are so many interesting people, but for starters, how about—in chronological order—Menawa, James G. Birney, Elisha Woolsey Peck, Frances Griffin, Thomas Kilby, and John LeFlore? They were all remarkable people—and there are many, many others.

Current or all-time favorite history book?

My two current favorites are from the Oxford University Press series I mentioned above: Daniel Walker Howe's *What Hath God Wrought* and David Kennedy's *Freedom from Fear*. Mills' Thornton's two extraordinary books, *Dividing Lines* and *Politics and Power in a Slave Society* are the works in Alabama history

that have had the greatest impact on me. And then there is Faulkner's *Go Down Moses*—to me, the greatest book in American literature and a stunning view of southern history.

F r a n c i s c u s

Zabarella: A Theory for unity

Franciscus Zabarella, canonist and cardinal, began his legal education at the University of Bologna in 1378.¹ That same year, the Great Schism tore the Roman Catholic Church apart.² The Schism lasted until 1417, when the Council of Constance reconciled the break and elected Pope Martin V.³ Although Zabarella died before the Schism ended, he worked before and during the Council of Constance to ensure the reunification of the Church.⁴ His tract, *De Schismate*, was particularly influential.⁵ This tract contained Zabarella's own development of conciliar theory. Through *De Schismate*, which developed from canon law and the writings of earlier canonists,⁶ Zabarella "paved the way for the Council of Constance."⁷ Due in part to his theory, the Council of Constance achieved Zabarella's goal of unity within the Roman Catholic Church.

The Great Schism in the Roman Catholic Church arose from contention between rival popes in Rome and Avi-

gnon, with a third pope in Pisa eventually joining the struggle. The Schism brought the topic of authority within the Church under scrutiny.⁸ The solution required a redefining of the power of the pope, with more power given to the cardinals, the General Council, and the Church as a corporation.⁹ Although the power of the pope remained and grew after the Great Schism ended, the Council of Constance was successful in reuniting the Roman Catholic Church,¹⁰ which was Zabarella's goal.

A brief history of the Roman Catholic Church prior to 1378 is foundational to understanding the Great Schism and Zabarella's attempt through conciliar theory to remedy it. From 1309 to 1377, the papacy was in Avignon, a district near France. Some considered it scandalous that the papacy, founded in Rome, was in Avignon. Moreover, all of

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the Avignonese popes were French, and as such sided with the French secular princes in their decisions. In 1378, Pope Gregory XI moved the papacy to Rome. Although he had planned to return to Avignon, as the cardinals requested, he died before they moved. The cardinals gathered in conclave to elect a new pope.¹¹ They chose Bartolomeo Prignano, the Archbishop of Bari, who became Pope Urban VI. However, the cardinals later declared the election of Urban VI invalid, claiming that tumultuous Roman crowds had pressured them into making the decision. After leaving Rome, they elected Robert of Geneva, who became Pope Clement VII.¹² This was the Great Schism: two popes, Clement VII in Avignon and Urban VI in Rome, both elected by councils of cardinals, both striving to rule the whole Roman Catholic Church.¹³

This division within the government of the Roman Catholic Church led to “uncertainty and instability across Europe” as countries granted obedience to different popes.¹⁴ During the forty “sombre years of the Schism the very foundations of medieval Catholicism seemed threatened.”¹⁵ It was impossible to agree upon one pope because, as required, cardinals in conclave had elected both men.¹⁶ Moreover, as the pope was the highest earthly authority of the Church, how could either pope be wrong in claiming the obedience of the entire

Roman Catholic people? A 1409 church council in Pisa, which attempted to remedy the Schism through the election of Alexander V as pope, only compounded the problem.¹⁷ Alexander V died shortly after and in 1410, John XXIII became pope. Instead of solving the problem, the council in Pisa further divided the Roman Catholic Church with three popes. By the end of the Great Schism, the Church would see a total of four popes in Rome, two in Avignon, and two in Pisa. When the Council of Constance convened, Benedict XIII was pope in Avignon, Gregory XII was pope in Rome, and John XXIII was pope in Pisa.¹⁸

In November 1414, the Council of Constance convened in Constance, Germany. Sigismund, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, presided over the gathering.¹⁹ The Council lasted about four years, ending in April 1418.²⁰ A large gathering for its time,²¹ the Council addressed topics other than the Great Schism, as they also dealt with the teachings propagated by John Wycliffe and John Huss, and attempted reforms within the government of the Church. While the reform attempts were not wholly successful, the Council of Constance ended the Schism and restored unity to the Church. Gregory XII of Rome resigned his claim to the papacy.²² Although he offered to resign the papacy on March 2, 1415,²³ the Council deposed

John XXIII of Pisa on May 29, 1415.²⁴ The Council of Constance excommunicated Benedict XIII of Avignon on July 26, 1417²⁵ and finally elected Martin V as pope on November 11, 1417.²⁶ While the Council did not end until April 22, 1418, it did achieve the goal of reuniting the Church after forty years of division.²⁷

Zabarella was involved in the Council of Constance's proceedings, and *De Schismate* provided the legal justification for the council.

Franciscus Zabarella was educated at the University of Bologna, in Italy, and his career in law and in the Church spanned the years of the Great Schism.

As a young man, Zabarella witnessed “the havoc wrought by the dual headship of European Christendom. This impression of the disaster was never to leave him.”²⁸ He taught canon law (the set of codes that act as standards for organizing and governing the Roman Catholic Church) in Florence between 1385 and 1390,

afterwards teaching in Padua, the place of his birth, until 1410.²⁹ As a canonist, Zabarella was “one of the most influential legal minds of his generation.”³⁰ Those seeking canon law degrees needed to know his work.³¹ In addition, Zabarella was a legal advisor to the Roman popes Boniface IX and Innocent VII,

who made him a cardinal in 1411.³² As Zabarella had lived during the whole of the Great Schism, the unity of the Roman Catholic Church was of great importance to him. His efforts to restore unity were sincere, as is clear from his writings.³³ It was possible, Zabarella believed, to remedy the Great Schism through “the application of the law and of the legal doctrine.”³⁴ *De*

Schismate was the comprehensive result of his desires and efforts.³⁵

Zabarella wrote *De Schismate* between 1403 and 1408 with the goal of ending the Great Schism and restoring unity to the Roman Catholic Church.³⁶ Through two developments in this work,



Drawing of Zabarella, dated 1400. Antoine Lafréry “*Illustrium iureconsultorum imagines*” (Rome?, 1566?). (Courtesy Rare Book Collection, Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale Law School)

Zabarella helped achieve this goal at the Council of Constance. First, he provided an exceptional compilation of prior conciliar theory. Before Franciscus Zabarella, there had been many forms of conciliar theory, yet Zabarella, “the great Italian scholar...a cardinal, an eminent Conciliarist, and a most distinguished canonist,” condensed these former theories.³⁷ *De Schismate*, his most well-known work,³⁸ gathered into one concept the theories of the prior two centuries.³⁹ Second, Zabarella added to this new theory and applied his additions to the needs of his time. As a respected canonist,⁴⁰ he knew canon law well and made extensive use of it in his theory.⁴¹ Nevertheless, some of the ways in which Zabarella applied canon law were “highly unorthodox”⁴² as these former canonists wrote “in totally different times and under totally different circumstances.”⁴³ However, Zabarella argued that the “extraordinary situation called for extraordinary measures.”⁴⁴ The terrible state of the Roman Catholic Church provided Zabarella with a justification for these new arguments.⁴⁵ As the Council applied his theory, Zabarella was justified in his arguments.⁴⁶

Foundational to Zabarella’s theory was his argument concerning power in the Roman Catholic Church. Although it was held that the pope alone was the head of the Church, Zabarella argued “that Pope and cardinals together formed a corporate head of the Church.”⁴⁷ His

description of the cardinals as *senatus*, or senate, in an address at the Council of Constance illustrates his belief that the cardinals “held the position just below the papacy.”⁴⁸ The cardinals “exercised a derivative authority [from the pope] as representatives of the whole Church.”⁴⁹ To justify this point, Zabarella had several examples and drew from the works of others, such as the canonist Joannes Moachus.⁵⁰ Pointing to a gloss of V.2.4. s.v., (this citation, like many others, references a legal document that set precedent and supported uniformity within the Church), Zabarella found “that the pope could not enact anything without previous consultation with his cardinals.”⁵¹ Also, Guido de Baysio, commenting on *Dist. 50, c.25*, “wrote that the cardinals could issue binding rules which had the force of law.”⁵² The rights of the cardinals and others in the Church also limited the pope’s authority,⁵³ Zabarella argued this because Christ gave authority to the Apostles (i.e., recognized leaders of the Church) and not Peter alone (recognized by the Church as chief among the Apostles and the first pope).⁵⁴

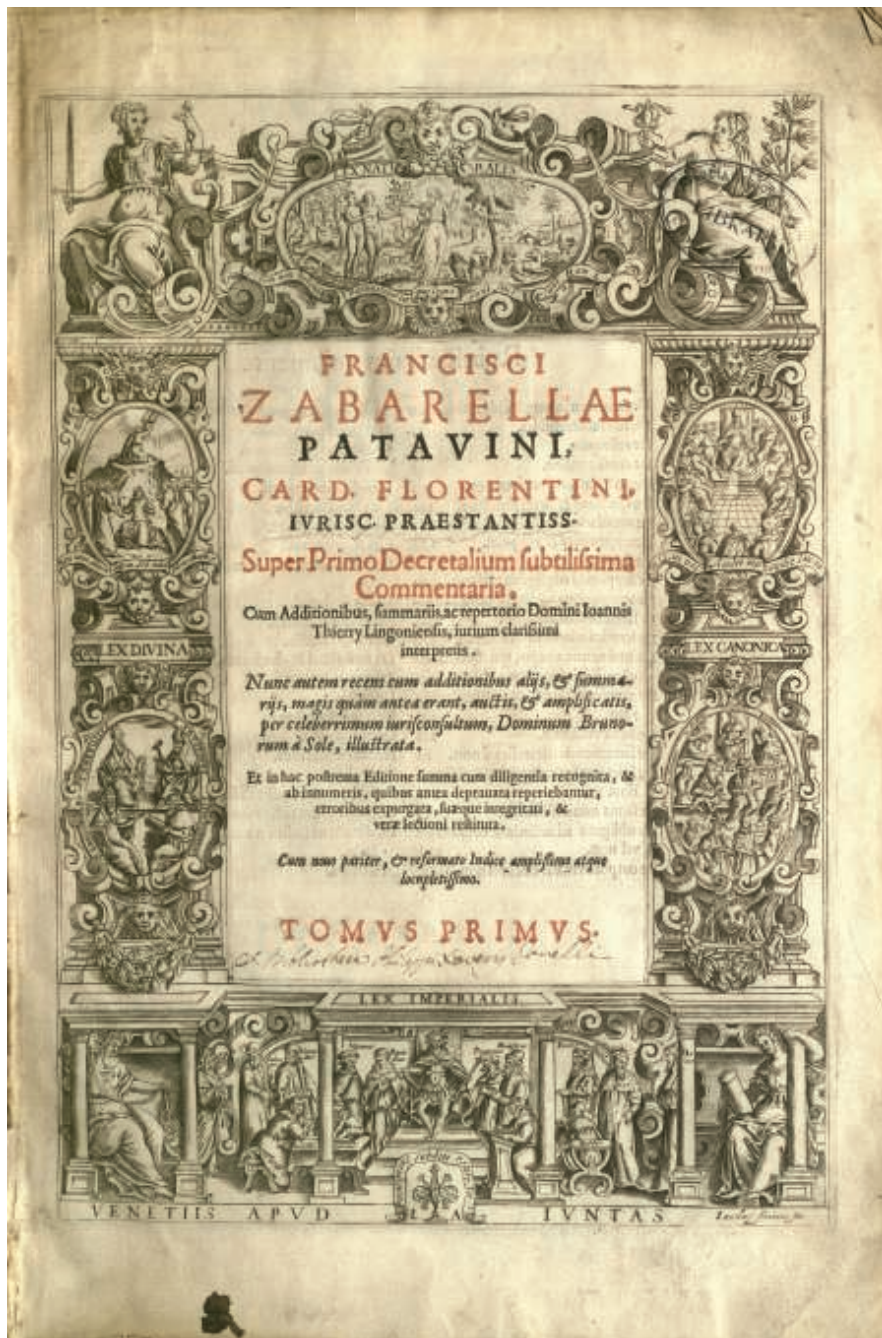
Zabarella further argued this “by applying the concepts of corporation law” to the interconnected relationships of the pope, the cardinals, and the General Council.⁵⁵ Zabarella used corporation theory to argue that the Church as a whole bears the power of the Church.⁵⁶

Just so, the pope cannot use his power to harm the Church, but must use his power to serve the Church.⁵⁷ If the pope is in error, the Church must correct or depose him.⁵⁸ Citing *Dist.* 19, c.7, Zabarella argued that the General Council specifically could correct an erring pope.⁵⁹ Moreover, canon law held that the pope was not immune to the law in the case of heresy and matters of faith. Zabarella applied this by arguing that because the Schism was harming faith in the Church, those causing the Schism were guilty of heresy.⁶⁰ When the pope was harming the Church in this way, “the cardinals, the higher prelates, and the emperor could step in to save the Church.”⁶¹ With these principles as a legal foundation, Zabarella’s theory proposed a way to reunite the Roman Catholic Church under one pope through a General Council.

Zabarella’s theory began by arguing that since the rival popes of Rome, Avignon, and Pisa could not rule the whole Church, not one of them was the rightful pope.⁶² He argued this from canon law, specifically *Dist.* 79, c.8.⁶³ By definition, the pope received obedience from the whole Church, but these rival popes were receiving obedience from various factions across Europe. If there was no one pope to whom all the individual churches submitted, where was the power of the Church vested? Zabarella contended that this power reverted to the General

Council.⁶⁴ He argued this with the help of Joannes Teutonicus’s gloss of the aforementioned canon law passage.⁶⁵ However, because popes called General Councils, how would a General Council be called if there was no pope?⁶⁶

In this particular situation, Zabarella contended that the rival popes should summon their supporters to a unified council. If they refused to do this, the duty would fall to the cardinals. If the cardinals refused, the duty would belong to the people of the Roman Catholic Church, with the emperor calling the General Council in their stead.⁶⁷ Zabarella was so intent on unity that if this failed, he said a General Council “could be brought together by any other means.”⁶⁸ He supported his claim that the emperor could summon a General Council through several historical examples. Emperor Constance “summoned the Sixth General Synod, as canon law itself says in *Dist.* 16. c. 6.”⁶⁹ Similar examples include Constantine and the Council of Nicaea, as cited in C.xi, q.i, c.5,⁷⁰ and Theodoric, who summoned a General Council to choose between rival popes in 499.⁷¹ Moreover, canon law, *Dist.* 96, c, 2 says that the Emperor may participate in such councils.⁷² Zabarella believed that “as long as such a council did come together, no matter what its method of convocation might be, once it were assembled it would be authorized to act”⁷³ because “the church is the body



Title page of a 1602 reprint of one of Zabarella's works on canon law. "Super primo Decretalium subtilissima commentaria" (Venice: Giunta, 1602). (Courtesy Rare Book Collection, Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale Law School)

of all the faithful, and the general council represents the church.”⁷⁴ The only stipulation was a unified council with the purpose of electing one pope.⁷⁵

At the Council of Constance, Zabarella applied the ideas found in *De Schismate*, although he had completed it in 1408 and the Council did not convene until November 1414.⁷⁶ In accordance with Zabarella’s theory, one of the popes, John XXIII of Pisa, called the General Council and Emperor Sigismund supported him. Because he had striven for unity through his development of conciliar theory, it was appropriate that Zabarella was the “official spokesmen for the council.”⁷⁷ Zabarella reiterated this desire for unity to those who joined the council, as this worthy goal had brought them together.⁷⁸ The Council of Constance, one of the largest gatherings of its era, demonstrated that many desired unity because those who attended, from throughout Europe, were allied with different popes.⁷⁹

On March 30, 1415, Zabarella read a decree from the council’s fourth session. The first part of the decree declared the Council’s goal as “the eradication of the present schism and for bringing unity and reform to God’s church in head and members.”⁸⁰ Another section of the decree reflects Zabarella’s theory:

This synod, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit,

constituting a general council, representing the catholic church militant, has power immediately from Christ, and that everyone of whatever state or dignity, even papal, is bound to obey it in those matters which pertain to the faith and the eradication of the said schism.⁸¹

The Council declared that they possessed the power of the Church in the form of a General Council. As such, they claimed authority over those claiming to be pope. Again, they claimed this authority for the express purpose of ending the Great Schism and restoring unity.

Whenever a new group of religious and secular officials representing a kingdom or country arrived at the Council of Constance, Zabarella would provide a sermon or address welcoming them.⁸² While he discussed his conciliar theory in many of these addresses, his primary focus was the goal of unity.⁸³ In another sermon, he attributed the division in the Roman Catholic Church to their failings as Christians.⁸⁴ The lack of unity showed “that they had not been truly the heirs of Christ and had not lived and acted as really Christian people.”⁸⁵ In one sermon, he quoted John 17:11, “Father keep them so that they may be one even as we,” again reflecting this desire for unity.⁸⁶ As supporters of all three popes joined the Council of Constance, Zabarella’s mes-

sage of unity began bearing fruit.⁸⁷

On October 15, 1416, the kingdom of Aragon formally joined the Council, withdrawing obedience from Benedict XIII. This was a major step towards reunification.⁸⁸ On November 28, 1416, Zabarella reported that they were beginning legal processes against Benedict XIII.⁸⁹ Benedict XIII's refusal to abdicate was the last obstacle holding the Roman Catholic Church back from unity.⁹⁰ As Zabarella had argued in *De Schismate*, the Council agreed that Benedict XIII's refusal, causing the Schism, was furthering heresy. Therefore, the Council deposed and excommunicated him on July 26, 1417. It was decreed that: "For, how greatly he has sinned against God's church and the entire [C]hristian people, fostering, nourishing and continuing the schism and division of God's church."⁹¹ The only remaining task was electing one pope to unite the Roman Catholic Church.⁹²

Zabarella's efforts in conciliar theory were finally producing the desired effect. However, political conflicts between the French and English, in addition to power struggles within the Council of Constance, delayed the final decision. Zabarella was ill during this time.⁹³ Finally, on November 8, 1417, Oddo Colonna was elected as Pope Martin V.⁹⁴ Tragically, Zabarella died six weeks prior to this event.⁹⁵ Zabarella's theory provided the justification for the formation

of this General Council, and provided a legal framework from which the Council claimed their authority. By reiterating that a pope was beneath the authority of the whole Church when it came to heresy, Zabarella justified the excommunication of Benedict XIII. Although he had not lived to see the result, Cardinal Franciscus Zabarella, through his exceptional work in conciliar theory, assisted in reuniting the Roman Catholic Church and ending the Great Schism.

Notes

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- 10 Francis Oakley, "Constance and its Aftermath: The Legacy of Conciliar Theory." <<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/index.cfm?PAGE=4037>> (October 7, 2012).
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- 32 Ullmann, 194.
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- 37 Tierney, *The Foundations of Conciliar Theory*, 220.
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- 41 Tierney, *The Foundations of Conciliar Theory*, 221, 231.
- 42 Ullmann, *The Origins of the Great Schism*, 196.
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- 44 Ullmann, 230.
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- 69 Ullmann, *The Origins of the Great Schism*, 219.
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- 88 Morrissey, “The Call for Unity,” 313; “Council of Constance 1414-18,” Session 22.
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- 91 “Council of Constance 1414-18,” Session 37.
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- 93 Morrissey, “The Call for Unity,” 316-317.
- 94 Morrissey, “The Call for Unity,” 317. “Council of Constance 1414-18,” Session 41.
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Max Herzel, Holocaust Survivor

An interview

by **Aaron Bern**

April 24, 2013

The 1930s and 1940s were some of the most tumultuous years in our modern history. World War II, and the events surrounding it, forever changed the landscape of the world we live in. The individuals who lived during this time, who fought, who suffered, and who persevered through these years, are becoming fewer every day. As a history student, it is important to recognize the value of these individuals. They provide the remaining living links to one of the most significant eras in human history. Essentially, they are the few living primary sources of an era that still has much to teach us. The following is the story of one such individual, Max Herzel, a Holocaust survivor. Mr. Herzel graciously granted the AUM Historical Review an interview when he visited the AUM campus for the 12th Annual AUM Holocaust Program, where he was speaking. This is the story of Max and his family, and their journey through the fear and turmoil of the Nazi invasion that thrust Europe into war. It is his story of survival through one of the darkest times in history, the Holocaust.

Max Herzel was born into a Jewish family in Antwerp, Belgium in 1930. His father, Oscar, was a diamond cutter and his mother, Nachama, was a seamstress in a dress shop. Max and his older brother, Harry, enjoyed what Max called a “normal life.” They attended Jewish day school and found themselves surrounded by family when they gathered for the Jewish holidays. Max recalls a childhood in which the boys were “surrounded by love from their parents and never lacked any necessity despite the family not being wealthy.” This happy family, like so many thousands of others, would be thrust into chaos as Adolph Hitler’s Nazi forces began their invasion of Europe.

May 10, 1940 is the day Max, ten years old at the time, recalls his world turning upside down. It was on this day that Germany invaded Belgium. Pandemonium set in as people in Antwerp began rushing to the grocers attempting

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to stockpile supplies. Holland had fallen previously after three days of fighting, and Luxembourg was taken, as Max states it, “in no time flat.” Luckily for the Belgians, Great Britain and France had agreed to aid Belgium if the Nazis invaded and they held true to their word. Max recalls, “Upon waking that morning, around six or six thirty in the morning, we could see German planes fighting British and French planes, and even some Belgian planes in the sky, even though there was not much of a Belgian air force.” Belgium fought off their invaders for eighteen days before succumbing to their German invaders. Max remembers his father’s reaction to the German invasion:

My father had a younger sister living in Brussels and he was concerned about her. Brussels was only about half an hour away by train and my father wanted to go ahead and check on her, but it was Shabbat* so we would not travel. Once Shabbat was over on Saturday night we boarded a train to Brussels. That half hour trip



Max Herzel holding a yellow Star of David patch, used by the Nazis to identify Jews. (“Yellow Star by Becky Seitel, from the Darkness into Life exhibit of the Birmingham Holocaust Education Center)

* Shabbat is the Jewish day of rest and seventh day of the week. It is observed from sundown on Friday evening through sundown Saturday evening. On Shabbat, individuals are restricted from many tasks such as working, exchanging money, and traveling (except for walking). This is why Max and his family had to wait for Shabbat to conclude to travel to Brussels.

took us the entire night. There was bombing of the train, bombing of the railroad tracks, strafing of the train by German planes, and people being arrested on board the train for being spies. After we travelled through the night we arrived in Brussels and about that time the Belgian army was forced to give up.

Belgian radio was calling for people in the major cities, specifically Antwerp and Brussels, to leave and seek refuge in the surrounding countryside due to the fact that heavy bombings were expected in those cities. Max and his family returned to the railroad station in Brussels to evacuate. "We maybe had with us an overnight bag or something, we only had expected to be gone half an hour. All of our valuables were left at home." They would not be returning to their home.

The scene at the train station was unlike anything this ten year old boy had seen before. The mass of people trying to get out of Brussels was unimaginable. In the chaos, Max remembers seeing "people in wheelchairs and on crutches, sick people, terrified people crying, all of whom were desperately just trying to get somewhere." He recalls it being "very overwhelming for a ten year old boy." When they were finally able to board the train, the Herzels traveled seven days

and nights in a horribly overcrowded boxcar. "We were packed in passenger trains like sardines. The cars were packed with humanity," Max recalls. They travelled the whole time never knowing where they would ultimately end up. When the train finally stopped, Max and his family were in Southern France where they took refuge and received aid from waiting French welfare agencies, such as the Red Cross. Max and his family thought they had escaped the chaos:

We thought we had gotten far away from the turmoil, but next thing we knew, France was attacked. France capitulated and was divided into two zones. Northern France was the occupied zone. It was occupied by the Nazis. Southern France, where we were, was the free zone. It had a fascist government, but it wasn't the Nazi fascists. Regardless, Southern France quickly became inundated with refugees, both from the Nazi invasion and the Spanish Civil War that had ended in the previous year.

The sheer number of refugees in Southern France exceeded the government's capacity for assistance. The Herzels, like so many others, relied on the welfare and food rations being supplied

by the French government; so in October 1940, when the French government threatened to cease providing aid to the mass of refugees unless they registered with the police every two weeks, the Herzels and most others complied. "Like innocent stupid people, we registered," Max recalls somberly. They could not survive without the food stamps they were receiving, so what choice was there to make? Shortly thereafter, Max, his family, and many other refugees were told to report to the railroad station. "When we arrived at the railroad station there was no cop, no dog in sight." It was an admittedly odd and eerie scene for young Max. They boarded the train and upon their arrival at their destination were filled with horror – they were surrounded by barbed wire. "They fooled us," he recalled. They had arrived at an internment camp at Agde in Southern France.

Agde was an old military prison and it burned down. After the fire the Herzels were again taken by train to a second internment camp, Rivesaltes. Rivesaltes was a major camp in Southern France that was a pipeline to the Nazi concentration camps. However, the camp was not prepared for the influx of prisoners from Agde. Upon the arrival of Max and his family, "they were still putting roofs on barracks. We were not supposed to be there yet, but there was no place else to send us. There was no barbed

wire; they even had to use Spaniards for guards because they did not have enough cops." The unpreparedness of the camp at Rivesaltes proved beneficial for the prisoners. Men and women were again separated, like at Agde, but Max and the other children found they could easily move around the camp. This allowed Max to see his parents fairly regularly while in the camp. Oscar, meanwhile, was keeping a close eye on the work and progress being done around Rivesaltes:

My father saw that work battalions were being formed to unload coal, clean chimneys, repair highways and railroad tracks, and do other labor. When he realized that barbed wire was beginning to be put up by the workers, well that's when he decided we were going to get the hell out of there. We were going to escape before we were no longer going to be able to do so. He bribed some of the Spanish guards so we could escape. It was the smartest decision my father ever made. He knew what the outcome was going to be, I did not, but my father had been hearing the rumors about what was to come.

Upon their escape from Rivesaltes, the Herzels became scattered. Shortly

after their escape, Oscar and Harry were captured by French police and sent to a work camp. When they were released from their work camp Harry joined with the French underground and Oscar went into hiding. At the same time Max and his mother were fleeing to “another city to meet with the local rabbi.” Max’s mother had become overwhelmed and grief stricken by the ordeal they had been through and attempted suicide. Nachama’s failed suicide attempt would actually ensure her survival throughout the war. She was committed to a local psychiatric hospital where she received medication, shock treatment, and was well cared for. Her doctor, knowing that she was a Jew, changed her identity and protected her until the Nazis were defeated. While his mother would be safe, Max was anything but. He was now an orphan in Nazi occupied France.

Max was placed in a Jewish orphanage. From there he was moved to a second Jewish orphanage. Then again. And again. He explains, “Little by little all the Jewish orphans were being moved closer and closer to the Italian zone of France. Even though Italy was Germany’s ally, it was much safer for Jews in the Italian zone than in the German ones.” It wasn’t just Jewish orphans who were trying to reach the Italian zone. Unbeknownst to Max, his father was also trying to escape to the Italian zone. Unfortunately, before many of them would make it, Italy

would switch sides in the war.

Upon Italy’s shift to the Allied side, Germany took control of the rest of France, including the zones that had been given to Italy. The Nazis began a door to door search for Jews and other targeted groups. As the situation in the Jewish orphanages became too dangerous, Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants (OSE), a Jewish underground agency, began moving the children as quickly as possible. “We were given new identities, Christian identities and educated on Christian beliefs and holidays,” Max remembers. He shared that many of the boys were sent to farms in the French Alps, where they posed as Catholic orphans working on the farm. Many of the girls were sent to convents. “OSE cared for about five or six thousand kids during that time. They were targeted for helping us. Some were murdered in the streets by the Nazis for their actions helping Jews.”

Max and the other Jewish orphans remained in hiding until the Allies regained France in 1944, following the invasion of Normandy. After France was liberated, OSE began attempting to reunite the children that had been in hiding with whatever remained of their families. Max’s mother had remained safe in the psychiatric hospital since her attempted suicide. Harry, his brother, had joined and fought with the French underground after being released from

the work camp. Harry would then join the French Army and serve in the occupation army in Germany. Max's father, Oscar, had been making his way to the Italian zone at the same time Max and the other Jewish orphans were trying to be moved there. Oscar was picked up, Max does not know when or by whom, close to the Italian border and was sent to the Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz. From Auschwitz, he was sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp. Oscar died in Buchenwald just weeks before the camp was liberated.

After the war, Max and Harry located an uncle in America to sponsor them and immigrated to New York City in 1948. Harry married, became a U.S. citizen, and sponsored his mother to come to America five years after them. Job opportunities brought Max, now married with two children, to Birmingham, Alabama in 1972. When asked what effects the atrocities that he and his family endured for being Jewish had on his faith, Max replied, "When you're as young as I was, you do not realize that it is your faith that is the reason you are being targeted. If maybe I was older my faith may have been impacted, but I was just too young." Today, Max works as a speaker for the Birmingham Holocaust Education Center, helping to raise awareness about Holocaust and genocide education.

Einsatzgruppen:

The Manifestation of Hate

by **Tim Bernier**

On June 22, 1941 the Nazi war machine, a force which had subjugated most of Western Europe with relatively few military difficulties, began an offensive in the Eastern European theatre against the Soviet Union. This offensive, Operation Barbarossa, differed from German operations in the west not only in the length and cost of the campaign, but it also represented a complete departure from the style of warfare that was conducted against nations like France and Belgium, for example. The element of warfare that exemplifies this departure is the Einsatzgruppen, a notorious association of mobile units that operated alongside, and at times in conjunction with, the German army (also known as the Wehrmacht).

The Einsatzgruppen are distinguished from the Wehrmacht, which was an arm of the state. While the Wehrmacht sought to attain the military goal of territorial conquest, the Einsatzgruppen operated as an extension of the Nazi Party, a political force that based its very existence on the idea of racial conflict. The Nazi Party, upon its ascension in 1933, began the systematic implementation of racially-motivated policies, which led to the persecution, and eventual destruction, of millions of human beings

who were deemed “inferior” by the body politic. The incrementally harsh nature of this persecution focused on the Jewish population, but other groups, such as Roma, Communists, homosexuals, the mentally or physically disabled, and indeed any supposed opposition, were targeted as well. The instrument of this oppression was the Schutzstaffel, or the SS. This organization gave rise to the infamous Gestapo, among other security arms, including the Einsatzgruppen. A detailed analysis of the entire SS organization is a complex endeavor, but it will suffice to say that the SS absorbed almost all police and security duties in Nazi Germany. The focus here is that members of the SS were loyal to Hitler and his ideology, not to the state of Germany. This loyalty to Hitler, a loyalty that cannot be separated from an ideology of hate and extermination, resulted in the formation of the Einsatzgruppen, which

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*A man being methodically executed by an Einsatzgruppen member.
(US Holocaust Memorial Museum)*

served to manifest Hitler's goal of eliminating the Jewish "race" from the face of the earth. Loyalty to the Führer helped to make the SS a powerful contributor to the implementation of Hitler's "Final Solution."

In the interest of brevity, the command structure of the SS (as it relates to the Einsatzgruppen) can be understood as follows. The Einsatzgruppen were responsible to Reinhard Heydrich, who was head of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA). The RSHA was nominally responsible to Heinrich Himmler, who was head of the SS. Himmler, in turn, was directly responsible to Hitler, a relationship that allowed the SS and its subsidiaries to operate outside the constraints of German law. This is a cursory explanation, but most importantly, Einsatzgruppen, as a part of the SS, operated as mobile killing units that were preemptively absolved of any responsibility for their murderous actions by the insistence that the war in the east was a war to eliminate the supposed influence of Jewish-Bolshevism that was seen as a threat to Nazi hegemony. The following examination will detail the structure of the Einsatzgruppen themselves, as far as possible, and put their actions in the context of the Soviet theatre; a war defined by genocide inspired by Nazi hatred of Jews and other supposedly inferior peoples. Furthermore, the communications that related the progress

of this genocidal campaign will bolster the argument that this war was indeed one of racial extermination, in which the Einsatzgruppen played an integral part, rather than simply a conventional war between German and Soviet armed forces.

Effects of Top-Down Pressure

First of all, a brief overview of Einsatzgruppen leadership and structure is necessary. Einsatzgruppe A, headed by Franz Stahlecker, was to operate with Army Group North in the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia; Einsatzgruppe B, under Arthur Nebe, would accompany Army Group Center into Byelorussia; Einsatzgruppe C, commanded by Otto Rasch, was attached to Army Group South operating in northern Ukraine; and Einsatzgruppe D followed the Eleventh Army through southern Ukraine and the Crimea under the command of Otto Ohlendorf.¹ These Einsatzgruppen were further divided into sub-units that totaled sixteen Einsatzkommandos and Sonderkommandos (and their sub-units, called Teilkommandos) that constituted the real operational units of these larger formations, though these sub-units were not evenly divided between the four Einsatzgruppen.²

If the command structure were mapped out on paper, with the various SK (Sonderkommando) and EK

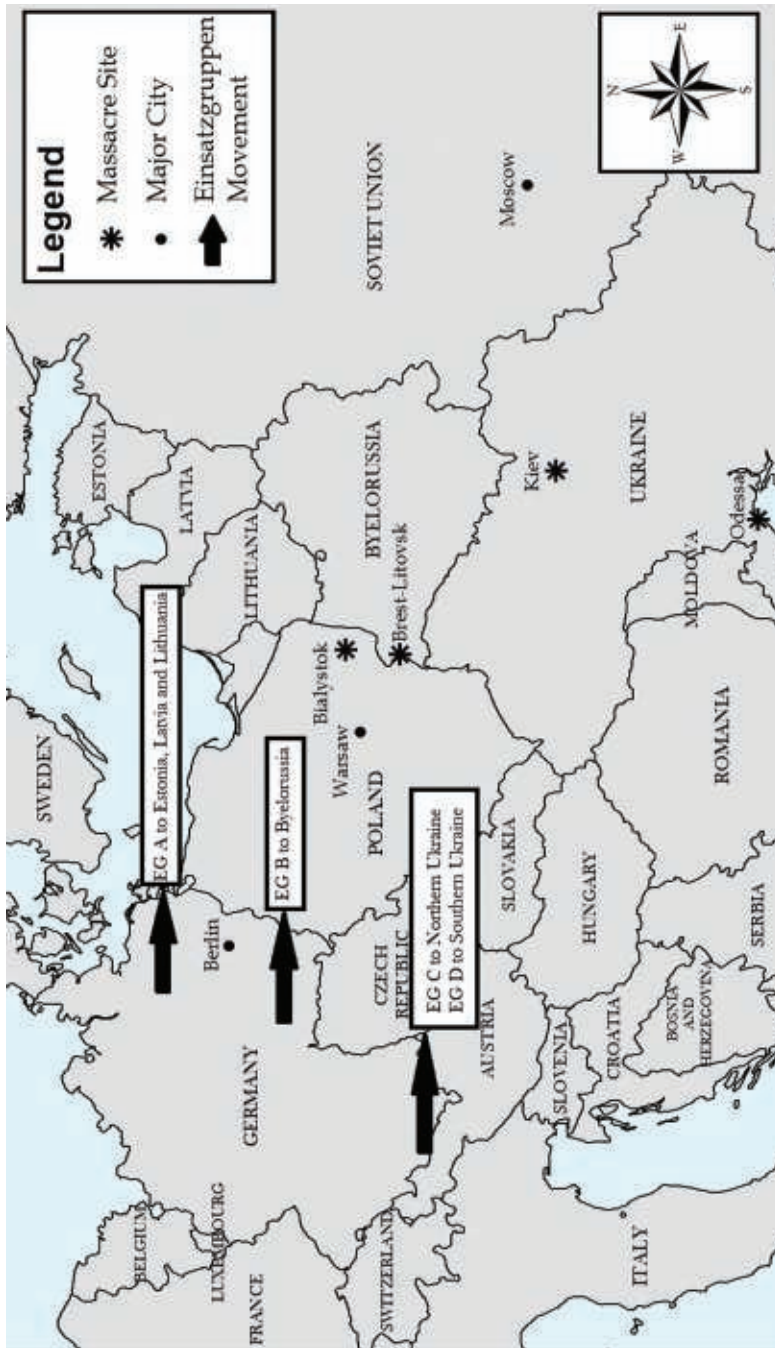
(Einsatzkommando) units at the bottom feeding lines up to their respective Einsatzgruppen, which in turn fed lines into oversight groups of Higher SS and Police Leaders, and subsequently up to Himmler and Heydrich, eventually Hitler alone would stand atop the pinnacle of this vast pyramid. It is important to remember that, despite the convoluted nature of these disparate operational ground units, the men who carried out these mass executions had either tacit or explicit approval from the ultimate authority in Nazi Germany. To detail the exact operational relationships between these components would be superfluous, since the purpose here is more to highlight the subordination of conventional war to one of racial extermination in this invasion. Operation Barbarossa was no mere military conquest, but a conquest undertaken with the purpose of realizing Hitler's "Final Solution:" namely the extermination of the Jewish population in every area touched by the German invasion.

To marry these two concepts together (a military invasion and a campaign of large-scale civilian executions) German propaganda addressed the invasion of the Soviet Union as a war not on the nation itself, but on a Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy. As the historian Yitzhak Arad notes, this was communicated to the German public over the radio on the morning of the invasion, June 22, 1941:

"The hour has come when it is necessary to take a stand against the conspiracy of warmongering Jews and...the Jewish rulers of the Bolshevist center in Moscow."³ This kind of propaganda allowed the Einsatzgruppen the freedom to ignore the rules of war governing, among other things, the treatment of citizens under occupation. By identifying any Jew with Bolshevism and ostensibly labeling every Jew as "partisan," the wholesale slaughter of entire populations of Jews was carried out by the embodiment of this deception, the Einsatzgruppen.

The Einsatzgruppen, however, were not unique to Barbarossa. The invasion of Poland, in 1939, was also witness to Einsatzgruppen activity, though in this early stage the units were charged with "decapitation," which meant the elimination of local intelligentsia and established, as well as potential, opposition leaders in the community.⁴ The theme of encouraging local anti-Semitic elements in carrying out the execution of both non-political as well as non-military Jewish citizens would be carried over to Operation Barbarossa.

When the invasion of the Soviet occupied territories got under way in 1941, a complex social relationship between existing populations was exploited by the Einsatzgruppen in an effort to encourage so-called "spontaneous" local pogroms that were meant to appear as if indigenous violence resulted in the mass



Operation Barbarossa captured huge swathes of Soviet territory east of Poland, bringing millions of Jews within the reach of Einsatzgruppen units. (Map by Molly Freeman)

killings of area Jews. In fact, Stahlecker communicated to Himmler in October 1941 that “Beyond our directing of the first spontaneous actions of self-cleansing...care had to be taken that reliable people were put to the cleansing job and that they were appointed auxiliary members of the Security Police.”⁵ Euphemisms abound throughout Nazi communications about “pacification,” “liquidation,” “resettlement,” “cleansing,” and “free of Jews,” all of which refer to the killing of local Jews and “partisans.” The obfuscation of intent in Nazi reports indicates the German desire for secrecy, and yet the results of engendering anti-Semitic pogroms via the local population did not satisfy Hitler’s requirements for the number of Jews killed.

As early as July 1941, a meeting of SS leaders resulted in orders to the Einsatzgruppen stressing that more Jews needed to be rounded up, which, as Edward B. Westermann asserts, directly resulted in the heretofore unprecedented massacres in Bialystok and Brest-Litovsk.⁶ This directive is illustrative of ever-increasing pressure from above on the Einsatzgruppen to increase their effectiveness in this genocidal campaign. The result was to ramp up the killing operations as more territory, and more Jews, were absorbed under the scope of Nazi military and administrative responsibility. In a work that focuses on the Einsatzgruppen and what were called

Operational Situation Reports, Ronald Headland cites a particular EK report, detailing the number of Jews killed, that reflects the response to this pressure; in July 1941 EK 3 (within Einsatzgruppe A) killed 4,400 Jews, while in the following August and September the unit killed just under 90,000 Jews.⁷ The Einsatzgruppen could not have achieved appalling numbers like these without help, however. The relationship of Einsatzgruppen and police (both security police and uniformed police) battalions made mass killings more efficient, yet the stage was set for these actions by the Wehrmacht. It is the Wehrmacht’s role in this racial war that deserves elaboration, for it made this genocide possible.

Wehrmacht Collaboration

While the Wehrmacht advanced and secured the frontline areas, Einsatzgruppen would follow their designated army groups and carry out executions of the civilian population. There is then the clear distinction between military and civilian objectives as they pertain to German occupation. Furthermore, it seems obvious that Einsatzgruppen activity was contingent on Wehrmacht success to bring victims into the grasp of these killing units. Yet, while the forces tasked with civilian “administration” were nominally subordinate to the military, a rivalry developed between military

and SS forces over autonomy and allocation of resources, not to mention Einsatzgruppen directives to liquidate as many Jews as possible and the effect this had on Wehrmacht needs for slave labor. The Higher SS and Police Leaders (HSSPL), along with the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), were dually charged with oversight of the Einsatzgruppen, headed by Himmler and Heydrich, respectively. The Wehrmacht, responsible to the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (OKW) under Wilhelm Keitel, was not officially tasked with active participation in the killings, despite occurrences in this capacity.⁸ The result was an ambiguity in areas of responsibility, as the Wehrmacht was aware of the racial (or more specifically, civilian) aim of the eastern war.⁹

On the surface, the Wehrmacht had no authority over matters involving civilians due to their role as the military arm of the state, which buffered that force from a direct link to Hitler's ideology. As has been shown, the SS, and, by definition, the RSHA and Einsatzgruppen, were the incarnation of Hitler's racial philosophy. In reality, Nazi ideology had infiltrated every aspect of German armed forces, regardless of where authority was derived. The nature of Barbarossa blurred the lines of jurisdiction due to SS eagerness to maximize effectiveness, which necessitated that Einsatzgruppen accompany the Wehrmacht into a

captured city to prevent potential civilian escape attempts.¹⁰ This relationship made it common for the Wehrmacht and SS killing units to engage in communication and cooperation, in which the army would screen and hold civilians for execution by EK and SK units.¹¹

Unfortunately for many civilians, the army's cooperation did not end there. Due to the huge expanse of territory coming under German control, Einsatzgruppen were simply unable to locate and kill every Jewish citizen in the occupied territories, which would eventually total around 4.7 million.¹² Therefore, Arad claims, "In certain places...where the Jewish populations were too small for the Einsatzgruppen and police units to reach them, the murders were carried out by the army."¹³ Wehrmacht cooperation with, and participation in, atrocities that were ostensibly under the purview of the HSSPL and RSHA are well documented, disproving many postwar claims of ignorance by Wehrmacht officials and soldiers alike. In just one example of such documentation, a report in October 1941 by Sonderkommando 4a related the success of operations that "was mainly due to the 'energetic help' of the Wehrmacht authorities."¹⁴ However, the essence of this campaign of mass extermination is personified by the SS arms of the Einsatzgruppen and Order Police battalions, despite the close working relationship of these with the army.

Escalation of Einsatzgruppen Methods and Consequences

While there was certainly cooperation between SS and Wehrmacht forces, the former was initiated as a militant police force loyal only to the Nazi Party, and, hence, Hitler. The political allegiance of the SS defined the character of the Einsatzgruppen, and made it arguably the most malevolent collection of Barbarossa participants. As mentioned previously, the identification of Jews with a Bolshevik conspiracy allowed the perpetrators of mass murder a perfunctory justification that Jews, Communists, and Roma (or indeed any group Hitler slated for extermination) all constituted a military threat under the label of “partisan.” In the efforts of the Einsatzgruppen, Yitzhak Arad has identified three major stages in the process of annihilation: 1) June 1941 through winter 1941-42 most Jews in the areas of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, east Byelorussia, east Ukraine, and occupied Russian territories murdered; 2) spring 1942 through winter 1942-43 most Jews in west Byelorussia, west Ukraine, and southern Russia murdered; and 3) spring 1943 through summer 1944 as the Germans retreated and either murdered or evacuated the remaining Jews under their control.¹⁵

Initially, however, the Einsatzgruppen were given a trial run in the invasion of Poland. This early effort was less

structured than the relatively formalized configuration of units that participated in Barbarossa, but it was in Poland that the Einsatzgruppen had proven effective in what would be Hitler’s “Final Solution.” The earliest composition of the Einsatzgruppen consisted primarily of men from the ranks of the vast SS-Police complex, tasked with the elimination of the Polish nobility and intelligentsia, as well as Communists and Jews.¹⁶ At this point, apprehension over public perception of blatant mass murder by German forces in the east resulted in the provocation of the “spontaneous” local pogroms

At the outset of Operation Barbarossa, however, Richard Rhodes points to an unwitting boon to the acceleration of the “Final Solution” contained within an address to the Soviet people on July 3, 1941, in which Stalin called for “diversionist groups for fighting enemy units, for spreading the partisan war everywhere.”¹⁷ To Hitler, this statement legitimized his call to execute all partisans, foremost among them the alleged architects of the Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy, meaning every last Jewish man, woman, and child. This development, in late July-early August 1941, was a departure from previous Einsatzgruppen practices in which only Jewish men were shot. Some point to this as the beginning of the implementation of Hitler’s “Final Solution.”

To carry out this unconscionable agenda, Einsatzgruppen relied on German military and civil administration, as well as local government, to locate and register all Jews; among the nefarious tactics employed were the posting of flyers requiring Jews to report for work detail, whereby they would be transported to the killing site and summarily shot into a natural ravine or a pit prepared by either Soviet POWs or their Jewish brethren.¹⁸ As the numbers of intended victims increased with the German advance, the logistical problems of carrying out mass murder on this scale began to manifest themselves in difficulties with transporting Jews from the ghettos to the killing sites, and new tactics were experimented with.

Einsatzgruppen B commander Arthur Nebe, a participant in the RSHA Operation Euthanasia, brought with him the use of gas vans in late August 1941.¹⁹ Although gas vans were used sparingly in the Baltic States and the Ukraine by the Einsatzgruppen, their appearance as a part of the war machine would portend their widespread use during Operation Reinhardt, which was the codename for the liquidation of Jews within the GeneralGouvernement (Nazi-occupied Poland). During the winter of 1941-42, as the Wehrmacht began to slow as a result of the harsh Russian winter, Einsatzgruppen death tolls began to drop due to the increasing tendency for EK

and SK units to keep up with the front lines, therefore slowing the rate at which Kommando units could execute local Jewish populations under occupation.²⁰

Additionally, the need for slave labor in supplying the demands of the German advance served to spare Jewish lives, if only for a short time. This development marks the end of Arad's first phase of the Holocaust in the East, in which the Einsatzgruppen played a significant role. Soviet counter-offensives limited the effect of the Kommando units, though the killing would by no means stop. In December 1941, Germany declared war on the United States, eliminating German concern for public opinion there, and the January 1942 declaration at the Wannsee Conference officially endorsing the wholesale slaughter of all European Jewry marked the evolution of mass murder that would proceed with abandon in the GeneralGouvernement and the shifting lines in the Soviet campaign. Einsatzgruppen killings would continue through 1942-43, murdering another 1.5 million souls alongside the Wehrmacht, adding to the body count that in the first phase of Barbarossa reached nearly 750,000.²¹

Racial Warfare Distilled

In July 1941, shortly after Stalin gave his speech endorsing partisan warfare everywhere, Himmler arrived in the

eastern theatre to promote the escalation of mass killings to HSSPL and Einsatzgruppen leaders.²² This occurred when German optimism about a speedy conclusion to Operation Barbarossa was still high. Beginning in mid-1942, the German war effort was seeing signs of collapse. With the German sphere of domination closing, Einsatzgruppen were increasingly used in combat duty and new SK units were deployed, such as the infamous Sonderkommando Dirlewanger, which joined Einsatzgruppen B in Byelorussia in continuing the pursuit of the “Final Solution.”²³ This stage of the Holocaust was pursued with even more fervor than the initial stages of Barbarossa, and the result was the naked pursuit of Jewish extermination through concerted efforts by Einsatzgruppen, some under new leadership, the Wehrmacht, and SS Police battalions, not to mention the increasing urgency at the killing centers of Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, and Auschwitz. This frenzied assault on European Jewry can be boiled down to the most villainous *Aktionen* of the war in the east. The earliest Einsatzgruppen large-scale *Aktion*, in the area of Kamanets-Podolski, was the first time a death toll reached into the five figure range.²⁴ In the Kamanets-Podolski massacre, refugees from several countries, including Germany and Austria, were expelled from Hungary by its regent, Nicholas Horthy, and given to SS forces

under the command of Friedrich Jeckeln, who oversaw the killing; an Einsatzgruppen report informed leaders that in September 1941 “23,600 Jews were shot in three days” by a commando of the HSSPL.²⁵

Similarly, Einsatzgruppen killings at Babi Yar in Kiev resulted in the deaths of around 36,000 Jews over the course of three days, though this huge ravine would eventually be used to inter over 70,000 Jewish men, women, and children from September 1941 to September 1942, making it the largest SS single mass grave.²⁶ The Nazi SS organization strove to maintain murder on this scale up until the fall of Berlin. The disintegration of the German war machine only inspired greater violence against the Jews, and, when defeat became inevitable, the SS deployed SK units like Sonderkommando 1005 in an effort to incinerate, and hide from the world, the bodies that left no doubt as to the level of brutality with which they conducted this single-minded war of racial extermination in the east.

In terms of sheer volume, the largest mass execution by the Einsatzgruppen took place in Odessa over the course of the winter 1941-42; murder of Jews in this region of the southern Ukraine totaled between 75,000-80,000 victims, perpetrated by Rumanian soldiers and Einsatzkommandos.²⁷ Simultaneous to these unimaginable operations, the Reich

was deporting Jews from Western Europe to their concentration camp system in the GeneralGouvernement, amassing a death toll that reached into the millions. Apart from the actions of the Einsatzgruppen, whose furious pace rivaled that of the camp systems, the Wehrmacht killed additional millions of Red Army POW's through the privation of hundreds of thousands at a time. It was not until Allied forces were literally on the horizon that the Nazi war machine surrendered its genocidal agenda.

When looking at the German war effort as a whole, the enterprise can become overwhelming in its scope; but when events like Babi Yar are inspected closely, the physical manifestation of Nazi hate propaganda, in the form of the Einsatzgruppen, can be clearly and unequivocally marked as the very definition of racial war. In a terrifyingly meticulous report that has become the epitome of Einsatzgruppen documentation of genocide, EK 3 commander Karl Jager detailed the number of murdered Jews from July – December 1941; in that five month period, one EK unit from Einsatzgruppe A murdered 131,494 Jews, using clear language that identifies them only as Jews.²⁸ Jager felt no compulsion to conceal the true motivation of his death squad behind euphemisms like “partisan.” The unmitigated revulsion felt by these German subordinates toward Jews in particular allowed what may have

been otherwise ordinary men to commit the worst crimes humanity has ever been witness to. An ideology of hate was crystallized by Hitler's Nazi propaganda, and, by violent personal and national aggrandizement, was embraced to the point that allowed the outright murder of millions of innocents.

In conclusion, the brutal practices of the Einsatzgruppen cannot be fully understood, but rather studied as a dire warning of the awful potential for the suppression of human compassion under the guise of nationalism. Hitler's virulent hatred of the blood he may well have feared coursed through his own veins found a widespread audience in the wounded pride of a people that were willing to accept an ethos of cruelty and oppression, so long as there was a scapegoat against which the majority could unite. The eradication of a “race” that evolved from legal discrimination to social isolation to violent antagonism became the popular will of a nation, and the institutions that resulted are unequalled human history. Germany's experience in World War I and subsequent inferior status gave rise to a culture of desperation; citizens were desperate for the stability and order that comes with self-determination and Adolf Hitler sold Germans the illusion that military strength and cultural strength were synonymous. Everything was subordinated to economic and cultural stabil-

ity, no matter the cost.

In retrospect, it is easy to condemn the everyday citizen for the collective actions of a national culture, and yet the affront to human sensibilities that is Nazism is nearly impossible to comprehend. The fact remains that it was merely everyday citizens with ambition that made up the Einsatzgruppen. These death squads obliged members to carry out a policy of extermination based on a worldview resting on the fundamental assumption of racial conflict as an engine for modern national health. The most that can ever be said of National Socialist ideology is that it was predictable, and there is no shortage of human beings who want nothing more than assurance from the government that tomorrow will be no worse than today. Unfortunately, passive acceptance of a national agenda of violent advancement will ultimately bring to power only those elements that can suppress human emotion and espouse hate as a *raison d'état*. Ultimately, when one looks at the Einsatzgruppen and the culture that spawned them, it is not strength and power that is evident in Nazi machinations, but rather weakness and incapacity seem to be the defining characteristics of these groups of men that capitulate to directives of mass murder. These mobile killing units suffer from the same disease as the national culture that embraced violence and the persecution of its own citizens. The Ein-

satzgruppen and their breed are the most frightening force of all – disciplined, obedient, unthinking, unfeeling, and unwilling to acknowledge the truth of human nature when they are confronted with it. These groups were not a collection of crazed individuals that implemented genocide on a continental scale for their own fulfillment; rather, they were the manifestation of Adolf Hitler's destructive propaganda of hate.

NOTES

- 1 Richard Rhodes, *Masters of Death: The SS-Einsatzgruppen and the Invention of the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 12.
- 2 Rhodes, *Masters of Death*, 12.
- 3 Yitzhak Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 67.
- 4 Rhodes, *Masters of Death*, 54.
- 5 Ronald Headland, *Messages of Murder: A Study of the Reports of the Einsatzgruppen of the Security Police and the Security Service 1941-1943* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1992), 122.
- 6 Edward B Westermann, *Hitler's Police Battalions: Enforcing Racial War in the East* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 176.
- 7 Headland, *Messages of Murder*, 157.
- 8 Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 212.
- 9 Headland, *Messages of Murder*, 139.
- 10 Headland, *Messages of Murder*, 140.
- 11 Headland, *Messages of Murder*, 141.
- 12 Donald M McKale, *Hitler's Shadow War: The Holocaust and World War II* (Lanham: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2006), 188.
- 13 Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 221.
- 14 Headland, *Messages of Murder*, 140-141.
- 15 Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 125.
- 16 Westermann, *Hitler's Police Battalions*, 128.
- 17 Rhodes, *Masters of Death*, 105.
- 18 Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 133.
- 19 Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 137.
- 20 Headland, *Messages of Murder*, 84.
- 21 McKale, *Hitler's Shadow War*, 148.
- 22 Rhodes, *Masters of Death*, 110.
- 23 Rhodes, *Masters of Death*, 250.
- 24 Rhodes, *Masters of Death*, 130.
- 25 Rhodes, *Masters of Death*, 130.
- 26 Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 347-349.
- 27 Headland, *Messages of Murder*, 61.
- 28 Headland, *Messages of Murder*, 157.

Book Review:

The Israel-Palestine Conflict

by Beth Wesley

James L. Gelvin offers *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) as an introductory textbook delving into the root causes of the trouble in the Middle East. Gelvin, a member of the history faculty at the University of California at Los Angeles, specializes in the history of the Middle East. He has published numerous articles in periodicals such as *History Today* and *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Gelvin has written other books, including *The Modern Middle East: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2004) and *The Arab Uprisings: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford University Press, 2012). In *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, he approaches the relatively recent history of the region from a global perspective. His stated purpose is to provide a concise background summary “for students and general readers,” treating both sides of the conflict in a fair and even-handed manner.¹

Beginning with a brief lesson in the geography of Palestine, Gelvin explains the importance of certain landmarks and

the relationships between the countries surrounding the disputed territory, including Jordan, Egypt, and Syria, which he terms “outside powers.”² He clarifies the involvement of these outside powers and world powers such as the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. Tracing numerous diplomatic efforts and failures, Gelvin states that “... the path leading to peace has been littered with the remains of failed attempts to bring about a settlement.”³

In his discussion of nationalism, Gelvin takes a skeptic’s point of view, declaring that “...it is the role of the historian to treat the self-aggrandizing claims of any and all nationalist movements with skepticism.”⁴ Additionally, he attempts to debunk myths imbedded within both the Israeli and the Palestinian cultures, especially pertaining to their nationalistic accounts. For Israel, the archeological site of the ruins of Masada near the Dead Sea has been used to build

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a heroic tradition. Gelvin claims that the nationalist “rendition of the story of Masada....does not stand up to scrutiny,” revealing that skeptics suggest the Masadans may not actually have been Jewish in origin.⁵ As for the Palestinians, Gelvin points out that in its claim of Philistine heritage, “the Palestinian national myth contains its own....historically doubtful assertions.”⁶

The main argument advanced is that the Arab versus Israeli controversy is “...simply put, a dispute over real estate.”⁷ Gelvin continues, “The struggle for control over some or all of the territory of Palestine pits two nationalist movements against each other.”⁸ His premise is that the two nationalist movements, no matter how compelling their narratives, are quite recent historical developments and that both have been at least partially conceived to justify a squabble over the land.

Tracing the development of both national identities through the past century, Gelvin delves into the effect that the two World Wars had on

Palestine and analyzes the 1948 and 1967 conflicts, as well as the first and second intifadas, ending with an insightful discourse on international diplomacy regarding the region. Throughout the text Gelvin explains terms and introduces people of interest, identifying historical figures and key players on both sides of the conflict. He fleshes out these

personalities with brief biographical sketches, and with well-placed quotes, he gives them voice. Occasionally, there are insertions of poetry, and Gelvin frequently provides excerpts from primary sources, such as personal journals and letters. Particularly interesting is the exchange of letters between Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat and

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin in 1993, leading into the Oslo Accord.⁹ Gelvin’s description of the evolution of Arafat and the PLO, as compared to the origin of Hamas, and his explanation of the political party squabbles within Israel are highly instructive. Also useful are his concise analyses of the attitudes of the United



States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union toward the dispute. Additionally, Gelvin carefully lays out the process and philosophy of Israeli settlement in the West Bank, which is truly edifying, especially when he explains the Palestinian reactions to the settlements. He effectively illuminates what he calls the “inner logic” of the two sides and achieves his goal of being unbiased toward both.¹⁰

The construction of the chapters provides a satisfying movement back and forth between the Israeli point of view and the Palestinian. Sprinkled throughout are pertinent maps and black and white illustrations or photographs. The book is facile reading, with a logical organization and a pleasant flow of commentary. However, sometimes Gelvin jumps chronologically, which causes moments of confusion. Occasionally, he travels down a tangent, leaving the reader puzzled as to his point, particularly where he devotes a sizable portion of his treatment of Israel to a discussion of the Jewish Palestine pavilion design for the 1939 New York World’s Fair. Likewise, in Chapter 7, “Zionist and Palestinian Nationalism: A Closer Look,” Gelvin gets sidetracked examining poetry, assumedly to aid in cultural awareness. More effective are his inclusions of such texts as diary entries of the early Zionist leader Theodore Herzl, and a leaflet distributed on the streets of Damascus in 1920 which delineated “The Decision

of the Palestinian General Congress.”¹¹ Especially helpful are such documents as the 1917 notice printed in *The Times* of London, which became known as the “Balfour Declaration,” and the official pronouncement of the United Nations Resolution 242 in 1967.

The book jacket is engaging, with a thought-provoking photograph of an Israeli and a Palestinian standing back-to-back. As a textbook it is quite sound, with extensive suggested readings at the end of each chapter, but citations are almost nonexistent, leaving the serious reader desirous of more directly cited references. Further, perhaps in hopes of engaging the interest of his students, Gelvin intermittently indulges in the use of slang phrases, which dilute the gravitas of the work. Such colloquialisms as “it ain’t over until it’s over” and “it’s a small world after all” are jarring in the context of such a serious international discussion, and, as such, are distracting and unnecessary flaws. Overall, this is a good foundational study for those interested in gaining a basic understanding of what Gelvin suggests “might be regarded as the quintessential struggle of the modern age.”¹²

Notes

- 1 James L. Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War*, (Cambridge University Press, 2007), ix.
- 2 Gelvin, 229.
- 3 Gelvin, 229.
- 4 Gelvin, x.
- 5 Gelvin, 7-9.
- 6 Gelvin, 12.
- 7 Gelvin, 2-3.
- 8 Gelvin, 5.
- 9 Gelvin, 233-234.
- 10 Gelvin, ix.
- 11 Gelvin, 98-99.
- 12 Gelvin, ix.

Additional Contributors

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A junior majoring in history with a minor in sociology, Ryan M. Blocker is a part time student and a full time employee of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, where she works as a museum collections assistant. Specializing in eighteenth and nineteenth century clothing, Ryan's fascination with clothing and textiles began when she was a child. Her study of clothing has led to more and more historical investigations.

Katie Kidd is co-editor of the *AUM Historical Review* and a junior majoring in history with a fine arts minor. After spending significant time traveling with her military family, Katie developed a love of history as the thread that ties all people together. She studies history with a particular interest in finding these common threads among groups.

Amber Hall

Amber Hall created the interior design for this year's issue. Amber is a graphic design and studio painting major with a minor in English literature. She is currently in her senior year at AUM and is already an accomplished artist having had her work displayed in exhibits across Alabama. Amber chose an art major in order to explore the character of our natural and man-made environments. She was Chancellor's Scholar for the Fine Arts Department, and recently received the Moore Wealth Management Award given by the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts during their fortieth annual Montgomery Art Guild Exhibition.

Katie Kidd

Alex Trott

This edition's cover was designed by Alex Trott, a graphic design major in his junior year. Alex is from Buffalo, New York and chooses graphic design because he feels that it is the primary art form of our era and he is fascinated by its massive potential for expression and communication to today's society. Alex is the president of the University Honors Assembly, an Advancement Ambassador, and Omicron Delta Kappa's 2013 Sophomore Student Leader of the Year.

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