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# THE ALEXANDRIAN

Troy University Department of History  
& Phi Alpha Theta-Iota Mu

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*In Remembrance of Professor Nathan Alexander*

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*Alexandrian* Submission Guidelines

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*The Alexandrian* accepts manuscripts pertaining to the subjects of history and philosophy. Accepted forms include book reviews, historiographic essays, and full-length articles.

Format: All submissions should be in Microsoft Word. They should adhere to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Please include footnotes instead of endnotes and refrain from using headers.

Abstract: Any article submission must include an abstract of no more than 200 words. This is not necessary for submissions of book reviews or essays.

Please send submissions to Dr. Karen Ross at [kdross@troy.edu](mailto:kdross@troy.edu).

Cover: Photograph of a storefront with American Jewish Veterans' sign. In 1933 the Nazi party of Germany announced an economic boycott of Jewish owned businesses and Jewish professionals. In response, anti-Nazi organizations in the North America and Europe held their own boycotts. For more on the 1933 boycotts, see Brandon Stewart's article in this issue.

# THE ALEXANDRIAN

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## Introduction to the Tenth Annual Volume

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This year marks the tenth issue of the *Alexandrian*, the journal for student research in history and philosophy at Troy University. Yes, it was ten years ago that history major Doug Allen returned from a Phi Alpha Theta (PAT) conference with the idea to edit and publish a journal to exhibit the research and writing talents of the department's finest students. PAT faculty advisor Dr. Karen Ross and Doug invited students with a scholarly bent to experience writing and editing individual papers as well as compiling and publishing the magazine. The first volume, published in 2012, contained four articles and a book review. Four faculty associate editors and four student assistant editors supported co-editors, Dr. Ross and Doug Allen, plus technological editor, Tim Winters.<sup>1</sup>

Now, at the time I thought this was a very commendable project, and I fully expected that like so many similar efforts produced by so many university departments across the nation, this one, too, would result a single worthy publication, and that would be that. But then, in 2013 Dr. Ross and students began work on a second issue. Volume two appeared, followed by volume three, and then volume four, and so on. With publication of a tenth volume, it stands to reason that the *Alexandrian* has become a testament to the enduring nature of inquisitiveness, inquiry, and exposition that our department's students consistently demonstrate. The *Alexandrian* also symbolizes the lastingness of commitment that our department's faculty invests towards the academic and professional success of our students. *The Alexandrian* embodies Troy University's motto and mission, "to educate the mind to think, the heart to feel, the body to act."

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<sup>1</sup> For more on former editor and Troy graduate, Doug Allen, see page 55.

Unquestionably, the continuance of this student journal is to be credited to the person at the helm, Dr. Karen Ross, who yearly provides students with a golden opportunity to publish, and who yearly reminds faculty of their promises to read and reread and edit. I and all the faculty gratefully acknowledge Karen for her enduring dedication to this ongoing enterprise. Also significant to successive volumes of the *Alexandrian* has been the unwavering support of Sandra and Steve Alexander, parents of Professor Nathan Alexander, for whom this series is named. I and the faculty sincerely appreciate the generous donations and the accompanying heartfelt letters Sandra and Steve have provided throughout the past decade to sustain this endeavor. There is much grace in their loving tribute to their son.

Finally, in addition to Karen and the Alexanders and others' involvements, I strongly suspect there is an ethereal element to the journal's persistence. As mentioned, the *Alexandrian's* namesake is Nathan Alexander, Troy University history professor who died in May 2009 not two months after his forty-first birthday. Nathan was not only a historian, but a polymath. He read voraciously and broadly. Whenever one spoke with him, no matter the topic, he usually suggested a book he had read that one ought to consider looking at. Nathan would have had something meaningful to contribute for each of this journal's authors to better understand the subject of the article they were writing. Indeed, I like to think that Nathan has been dropping hints all along to the students and professors contributing to this work. Nathan was a nuanced thinker; he possessed the rare ability to reasonably consider many sides of any matter that was up for debate. Those of us who had the honor to know him delighted in the occasional, wonderful quirkiness of Nathan's interests. (Once he proudly presented me a book about Brigitte Bardot!) At the same time we appreciated, and still do, his liberality and wisdom. Although he is no longer physically here, Nathan's loving spirit remains present as

evidenced by the latest edition of the *Alexandrian*. His was a passion for knowledge so bountiful, death cannot erase it.

Congratulations to every individual who has contributed to ten years of the *Alexandrian*!

Sincerely,

Allen E. Jones

Professor and Chair

Department of History and Philosophy, Troy University

## Dedication

This tenth volume of the Troy University Department of History and Philosophy's *Alexandrian* is dedicated in loving memory of Sandra Alexander, mother of Nathan Alexander.

## Effects of Postmillennialism during the Second Great Awakening

Noah Hendrix

The Second Great Awakening (SGA) was an important social movement and milestone in American religious history. Starting at the beginning of the nineteenth century, with its height during the 1820s and '30s in New England, its defining trait was a new emphasis on evangelism and reform, regardless of sect. These reforms took various shapes, including legal, cultural and historical. This new, nonsectarian reform contrasted sharply with religion in Colonial America, where religious conflict was relatively common and the modern idea of religious tolerance--that all sects of all religions should be treated equally under any government--was much less common. This changed following the revolution, and religious tolerance reached a new high along with secularism, but these violent struggles between Protestants did not emerge again during the SGA, even as religiosity became more important. Many reasons for this change are plausible, but the more widespread beliefs in postmillennial eschatology likely played a role in helping Protestants see each other as allies. Also of great importance was those who would pose a threat to the Protestant millennium, primarily Catholics. The anti-Catholic sentiment was more powerful because of this reform movement during the SGA and the perceived threat Catholics posed to an established Protestant America. While other religious groups would have been suspected as well, Catholics were the largest religious minority and the most politically active. The spread of postmillennial thought during the Second Great Awakening made Protestants become more tolerant of



different Protestant sects and drove reform efforts, while simultaneously increasing hostility to Catholics and increasing nativism.

Postmillennialism is the central reason for the many reform movements of the SGA. Postmillennialism is an eschatology that states before the end-times and return of Christ, there would be an era of a Christian golden age of ethics on Earth. This time would be called a *millennium*.<sup>1</sup> There are at least three different parts to common Christian eschatology: one is the millennia as already explained, another is the second coming of Christ, and finally there is the last judgment. For Postmillennialists, both the Second Coming and the Final Judgement came after the millennium and would be “triggered” after the earth reached a certain state of piety in the millennium. *Millennium* used in this context simply refers to a really long time, not actually one thousand years, as one might think. This was the dominant view of Protestants during the SGA, even though it originated in America before then. Jonathan Edwards is commonly thought to have popularized postmillennialism during the First Great Awakening, but it was not as common then as it was during the SGA.<sup>2</sup> This ideology promotes activity, such as converting others and better living their faith, because not converting people will lengthen the time until Christ returns. This theology is why revivals and evangelism were central to the SGA. Revivals in this context were events to attempt to persuade through mass conversion. They could be in churches or rural areas, whatever the terrain allowed. The seeking of the millennium is also partially why Protestants no longer felt they were competing with one another; they had a common goal to make America a more pious place and they could better do that if they were unified. Postmillennialism promoted evangelism, evangelism promoted reforms to promote Christianity and

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<sup>1</sup>James H. Moorhead, “Between Progress and Apocalypse: A Reassessment of Millennialism in American Religious Thought, 1800-1880,” *The Journal of American History* 71, no. 3 (1984): 524.

<sup>2</sup>Moorhead, “Between Progress and Apocalypse,” 527.

limit social problems like drinking, and reforms promoted unity to those that agreed with the reform and distrust of those that did not.

Leading figures of the SGA and the spreading of Postmillennial thought included Charles Finney, who is now called the father of modern revivalism, and Lyman Beecher, father of the more famous abolitionist, Harriet Beecher Stowe. These are just the two national faces put on the movement. Postmillennial thought had a way of breaking down old ideas, especially for the Calvinist Presbyterians. Going out and actively converting people is antithetical to traditional Calvinist theology, because it presupposes that men can be saved by other men as opposed to being predestined to be saved, which is a fundamental doctrine of Calvinism. This is not to suggest there was no pushback from the older traditional religious establishment. In fact, Beecher and Finney had public arguments about evangelism. Beecher in 1827 called Finney's revival tactics excessive and unwarranted.<sup>3</sup> Beecher seemed to support the idea of revivals overall, however, and he did meet with Finney to try and come to a consensus on how revivals ought to be run.<sup>4</sup> Beecher never fully conceded to Finney's idea about how revivals should be run, but Finney's methods were more effective and won out in the end. Finney had a particular way of preaching which historian Ray Allen Billington called the "New Measure."<sup>5</sup> Billington argued Finney's new measure preaching style included a certain veneration of exclusive Protestantism not present before, and this fed into the reform movement and, later, the anti-Catholicism as immigration ramped up a decade later. The problem here is not that Finney himself attacked Catholicism. He did not. It is that other

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<sup>3</sup> Gary Hiebsch. "A Turning Point in American Revivalism? The Influence of Charles G. Finney's "Memoirs" on Historical Accounts of the New Lebanon Convention" *The Journal of Presbyterian History* 76, no. 2 (1998): 139.

<sup>4</sup> Hiebsch, "A Turning Point," 139.

<sup>5</sup> Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860 a Study of the Origins of American Nativism* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle, 1964), 41-42.

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.214564/page/n55/mode/2up>

groups and citizens took his preaching about sin and the need to reform, and they used it to push an anti-Catholic narrative. Finney's goals were primarily positive; he wanted to save souls through emotional persuasion and bring about Christ's return.

The eschatological ideas put forward at the beginning of the SGA had a profound impact on some long-standing intra-Protestant feuds within the United States. Social movements like the SGA only exist in comparison to the previous culture, so understanding the time before it is crucial. In colonial Virginia there had long been conflict between the Anglican Church and other religious sects present in the state, most prominently Baptists. Between 1768 and 1775 at least forty Baptists were jailed for failing to get licenses to preach or for disturbing the peace, while other Baptists were frequently harassed by mobs supported by local leadership.<sup>6</sup> This Anglican establishment included getting tax dollars and their ministers having exclusive rights to baptism and consecrating marriages. Basically, the non-established sects used the leverage provided to them by the American Revolution to spring for disestablishment, with notable figures like Jefferson and Madison being champions of this cause. Virginia was not the only state with an established religion. Congregationalists, more commonly known as Puritans, were the dominant force in Massachusetts. There, the established religious system was less harsh on the non-established sects than the one found in Virginia, as plenty of exemptions from paying taxes to Congregationalist churches were present if you were of a different sect. But the overall public view in Massachusetts remained: public support of a church with tax dollars was necessary. Congregationalists' roots in the state went back to the founding, but even here we find dissenters wanting to be free of their tax burden. To summarize a very complex situation concisely, Massachusetts forced its

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<sup>6</sup> John A. Ragosta, "Fighting for Freedom: Virginia Dissenters' Struggle for Religious Liberty During the American Revolution" *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 116, no.3 (2008): 126.

citizens to support a church with tax money. That tax money could go to a church of your choosing as long as you file for it, but sometimes the application was rejected.<sup>7</sup> For example, in 1784, John Murry, a Universalist minister, was hauled before a county court of common pleas and fined for every marriage ceremony he performed. This was because they had rejected his independent church the previous year and thus he had no license and was not a legally ordained minister.<sup>8</sup> Murry was forced to appeal the decision and, in the next argument, the bias against the new Universalist faction finally showed itself when the prosecutor said that the independent church teaching was denying divine retribution after death and therefore was opposed to morality.<sup>9</sup> This rivalry with the Universalist church persisted during the SGA, but the reason for this was their ideas were directly counter to postmillennialism. Universalists believe that all people will be saved regardless of earthly action. This put them as outcast not because they were a different sect, but because the theological test for who was an acceptable member of society shifted due to the SGA.

Virginia disestablishment in 1786 served as a model for what was to come in American religious freedom. One could argue that the trend toward disestablishment started even before the SGA, and while that might be true, there is an important caveat. At the time of the American Revolution, religion was at a low point in the United States and particularly among national leaders. Obviously, Anglicans dropped in numbers due to the revolution, but even on a larger scale, religion was less important than it was previously in society which is evident by looking at the emerging national government and its founders. Between 1700 and 1740, for example, it is estimated that around 75-80 percent of the

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<sup>7</sup> John D. Cushing, "Notes on Disestablishment in Massachusetts, 1780-1833" *The William and Mary Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (1969).

<sup>8</sup> Cushing, "Notes," 174.

<sup>9</sup> Cushing, "Notes," 175.

population were attending churches.<sup>10</sup> Even though church records are limited, it is thought that church attendance would have been at an all-time low during the revolution, probably due to disruption of the revolution. To be clear, it is not a matter of if a majority of people in the United States were Christian at the time; they were. It is a matter of how much public ritualistic religion people practiced and what religion was endorsed by the state. It does not mean religion was not practiced from home in great sincerity or that people stopped believing in God altogether, though Deism was prevalent among the founding fathers. From everything we can gather from comparing it to its colonial past, religion was less important publicly and legally during the American Revolution. This matters because the comradery provided by postmillennial feeling during the SGA built off the backs of religious freedom forged in this more secular period, but also expanded upon it.

During and following the American Revolution, it was acknowledged by many that America had not been founded under any religious establishment, including general Christianity. According to historian Steven Green, though clergy during the American revolution did say God was on their side during the conflict, they rejected the idea that the new nation was founded under any particular religious principles.<sup>11</sup> For another example, the American Constitution is a remarkably secular document for its time, and if it had been written two decades in either direction, it likely would have contained much more acknowledgment of the Christian God and Christian law than it currently does. Even the jump from the Declaration of Independence mentioning a deist God as the foundation of human rights, to almost no positive mentions of God in the American Constitution is evidence that, at least in major political documents,

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<sup>10</sup> “Religion and the Founding of the American Republic: Religion in 18th Century America.” The Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel02.html>.

<sup>11</sup> Steven K. Green, *The Second Disestablishment: Church and State in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 22.

Christianity was less important to Americans. There is also Thomas Paine's pamphlet "Common Sense" that was widely distributed throughout the colonies and made a primarily secular argument about the need for breaking with Great Britain. One of the times Christianity was referenced heavily is in the Treaty of Paris in 1783, but for one thing, that document was not solely drafted by Americans, and, for another, these mentions probably helped ease international diplomacy and were common among treaties like this. The Treaty of Paris in 1763 contained the same references. This secular founding of the national government is confirmed by some of the founders later. For example, in 1797 John Adams said in the Treaty of Tripoli "As the Government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion, — as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquility, of Mussulmen.<sup>12</sup>"<sup>13</sup> Some Christians were dissatisfied with this, and wanted an acknowledgment of the Christian God in founding documents. Reverend John Mason, for example, said, "And yet, that very Constitution which the singular Goodness of God enables us to establish, does not even recognize his being."<sup>14</sup> Whether it was seen as good or bad in the aftermath of the revolution, the secular nature of the founding was not in doubt.

The general way of looking at this secularization is since religion was less important than it previously was, religious differences did not matter as much. So even though this idea of Protestant religious tolerance started before the SGA in a more secular period, one would think it would reverse itself along with higher rates of religious thought. It did not. Even though religion was more important during the SGA than the time immediately after the American Revolution, there was a new trend of religious freedom for all Protestants, including who one had to support with their money. It

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<sup>12</sup>Both Mohammedan and Mussulmen were other names for Muslims.

<sup>13</sup>Treaty of Tripoli. November 4, 1796.

[https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/bar1796t.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/bar1796t.asp).

<sup>14</sup>Green, *The Second Disestablishment*, 85.

is usually assumed that the First Amendment and its guarantee of religious freedom provided a model that states could adhere to. This is true to some degree; however, there is more nuance here. Three states held out long after the revolution: Connecticut, New Hampshire, and the aforementioned Massachusetts were disestablished in 1818, 1819 and 1833 respectively.<sup>15</sup> The final nail in the coffin for their religious establishments came from something else. The same problem exists for those who argue the new national identity helped unify people and disestablish the church. While this helped, it was not enough on its own to get all states to treat all Protestant sects equally. There is an argument that the legal system is sometimes slow and these state establishments were not as bad as some of the others and therefore was less pressing, and that is a fine argument. However, there was a real mindset of evangelical reform rising in the culture at around the same time these three states were being disestablished. This, too, could be a plausible explanation that would influence the disestablishment in these areas.

During the SGA, the reforms were common and driven by new postmillennialism theology. Reform-minded Christians wanted the world to become a more godly place. These reforms took multiple forms and in some cases were made into law by states. Some were based on social issues, like temperance. Charles Finney, a leading evangelist at the time, had very strong words for alcohol and those who drink it, saying, "...while things absolutely harmful and poisonous, such as alcohol and the like, are often obtained only by torturing nature and making use of a kind of infernal sorcery to procure death-dealing abominations."<sup>16</sup> Lyman Beecher in 1827 said, "All denominations of Christians in the nation, may with great ease be united in the effort to exclude and use the commerce in

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<sup>15</sup> Green, *The Second Disestablishment*, 120.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Finney, "What a Revival of Religion Is" 1835.

ardent spirits.”<sup>17</sup> These quotes demonstrate the nonsectarian nature of the reform movement. Reformers viewed drinking as bad, those who drank alcohol were sinning, and they must reform society to where it is less acceptable to drink.

In the spirit of evangelism, there were also several organizations founded to spread the gospel. The American Bible Society (ABS) was founded in 1816 and wanted to make the King James Bible (KJB) as accessible as possible by making as many copies as they could. Though statistics on their publication are not easily available, an advertisement in the *Scientific American* in 1847 claimed that they had 300 people working on making Bibles daily, and they consumed eight tons of paper per week.<sup>18</sup> The numbers would have been lower during the height of the SGA simply because they were a newer organization, but it seems likely that this society had a relevant impact on the availability of the KJB. Similarly minded evangelical organizations like the American Tract Society (ATS) and the American Sunday School Union (ASSU) were founded in 1825 and 1824 respectively, though the ASSU has roots that predate that. The ATS was focused on the dissemination of important Protestant Christian literature, not just the Bible, while the ASSU encouraged church attendance.

There was also a shift in the religious optimism of the secular founding of the United States. People like John Mansons promoted a pessimism in the late eighteenth century that gave way to a sense that America did indeed promote Protestant Christianity as its primary religion.<sup>19</sup> After Thomas Jefferson, a symbol of irreligious America, and the War of 1812, that shift is thought to have begun. Those evangelical

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<sup>17</sup> Lyman Beecher, “Temperance Sermon” 1827. <https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/women-and-the-temperance-movement/sources/1774>

<sup>18</sup> *Scientific American* 2, no. 51: (1847).

<sup>19</sup> Green, *The Second Disestablishment*, 120.



societies mentioned earlier-- ABS, ATS, and ASSU --were all symbols of this new Christian America on a societal level. In addition, clergy were more likely than before to suggest democratic principles were tied specifically to Christianity and claimed civil government was a “Divine Ordinance” -- something president Jefferson would have not appreciated.<sup>20</sup> Another example of this shift can be found in the Bible Riots in Philadelphia in 1844. Though specifics about the riots will be covered later, during a Fourth of July celebration preceding them, illustrations of open Bibles in the hands of George Washington were numerous.<sup>21</sup> Washington was certainly not an atheist, but he was not known as one of the more religious founding fathers either. This shift in historical religious identity was not a conscious effort by people at the time, but, even still, this new framework fits in perfectly with the refocusing of Postmillennialism theology.

The idea of reform and a more general Protestant establishment also made its way into the legal system. Certain laws were both based on and upheld the idea they were of a Christian reform mindset. Blasphemy laws were laws that prohibited vigorously insulting Christianity in public. The first recorded case of a high profile blasphemy conviction was in the New York case, *People v. Ruggles*.<sup>22</sup> Ruggles was sentenced to three months in prison for violating a blasphemy law, and, upon rejecting his appeal to overturn the decision, Judge Kent gave some clue about his motives by saying, “Though the Constitution has discarded religious establishments, it does not forbid judicial cognizance of those offenses against religion and morality which have no reference to any such establishment, or to any particular form of government, but are punishable because they strike at

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<sup>20</sup> Green, *The Second Disestablishment*, 96.

<sup>21</sup> Katie Oxx. *Critical Moments in American History, The Nativist Movement in America: Religious Conflict in Nineteenth Century America*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 72.

<sup>22</sup> The inciting incident was John Ruggles, who was probably drunk, loudly shouting in a tavern that Jesus Christ was a bastard and his mother was a whore. See footnote 23.

the root of moral obligation, and weaken the security of the social ties.”<sup>23</sup> New York was not the only state with this type of conviction. In *Updegraph v. Commonwealth* in 1824, another blasphemy law was upheld, and in the official ruling the court: “Christianity, general Christianity, is, and always has been, a part of the common law of Pennsylvania.”<sup>24</sup> That is exactly the point of Postmillennialist reform: to make the earth a more righteous place regardless of the Protestant religious belief. Generally speaking, the more local the laws, the more Christian reform-minded they became. Even though the stated goal of this ruling was not because of postmillennialism, the influence of the postmillennial reform movement on Judge Kent's thinking is self-evident.

Legal and social reform also included Sabbath laws. Laws limiting commerce and work on Sunday had been around for as long as the American colonies; however, the legal affirmation in the new nation can be traced back to 1816 *Pearce v Atwood*, a case in the Massachusetts Supreme Court, which affirmed the sacredness of keeping the Sabbath and strengthened the law.<sup>25</sup> A similar affirmation happened the following year in Pennsylvania, upholding the right to fine a Jew for working on Sunday, in *Commonwealth v. Wolf*.<sup>26</sup> Sabbath laws in the colonial period were certainly present, but enforcement varied widely and the intensity for keeping it had eroded over the centuries, particularly during the American revolution for reasons already mentioned.<sup>27</sup> Now was the time to try and reinforce Sunday closure for business and even some government agencies. For example, Beecher and his newly founded organization, The General Union for Promoting the Observance of the Christian Sabbath,

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<sup>23</sup> *People v. Ruggles*, 8 Johns. 290 (1811). <https://www.nycourts.gov/history/legal-history-new-york/legal-history-eras-02/history-new-york-legal-eras-people-ruggles.html>.

<sup>24</sup> *Updegraph v. Commonwealth*, 11 Serg & Rawles 394. (1824). [http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/amendI\\_speechs30.html](http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/amendI_speechs30.html).

<sup>25</sup> Green, *The Second Disestablishment*, 184.

<sup>26</sup> Green, *The Second Disestablishment*, 185.

<sup>27</sup> Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 112.

tried to repeal a law passed in 1810 that forced postmasters to work on Sundays.<sup>28</sup> In Rochester, New York, a town recently commercialized due to the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, evangelicals advocated for economic boycotts to try and get business to enforce the Christian Sabbath. The mastermind of these boycotts was a businessman himself, Josiah Bissell.<sup>29</sup> Even capitalism was not immune to what historian Robert Abzug referred to as “religious virtuosos.”

Protestants during the SGA were driven together by reform and culture, but this new tolerance did not extend to Catholics or other non-Protestant Christians. If trying to achieve the millennium brought Protestants together, it also drove a further wedge into the already troubled historical relationship with Catholics. Catholic immigration was relatively small until the middle of the 1840s.<sup>30</sup> Before then, there was evidence of tremendous anti-Catholic sentiment enhanced by nativism, and Protestant reform efforts. In 1834 for example, the Charlestown Convent of Massachusetts was burned after years of rumors and suspicion surrounding it. The convent was founded in 1820, the beginning of the highpoint of the SGA, and, even before its attack, it had experienced various forms of violence.<sup>31</sup> A shot dog, a burned stable, vandalized nearby Catholic homes, and the torching of Catholic business were all just some of the terrible experiences in the years before the burning.<sup>32</sup> Days before the main attack, one of the nuns ran away from the convent but was followed and persuaded to come back. The years of rumors and speculation about the treatment of women in the convent were seemingly confirmed to the locals. This event whipped the townsmen into a frenzy, and they proceeded to sack the convent. The damage was immense.

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<sup>28</sup> Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling*, 114.

<sup>29</sup> Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling*, 115.

<sup>30</sup> Charles Hambrick-Stowe. “Charles G. Finney and Evangelical Anti-Catholicism” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 14, no 4 (1996): 39.

<sup>31</sup> Oxx, *Critical Moments in American History*, 32.

<sup>32</sup> Oxx, *Critical Moments in American History*, 32.

Mother Superior at the time said that nothing was saved, even important banknotes and records. According to Katie Oxx, a key driver of the public distrust was the belief that the convent was subverting traditional roles and the natural order of things. Women were not supposed to be forever unmarried and in a closed-off subgroup. That was unnatural to Protestant Americans at the time, and that led to suspicion and distrust. Catholic practices were not acceptable to Protestants in America, so even though Protestants themselves had grown closer together, their religious tolerance was still limited.

Suspicion of Catholics in the U.S. was not limited to this one incident, however: it was broader than that. Lyman Beecher in particular was extremely critical of Catholics in America. In a book he wrote in 1835, *A Plea for the West*, he questioned whether or not Catholics were compatible with a republican form of government and likened them to a trojan horse.<sup>33</sup> Even the name of the book has a ring of nativist sentiment. The thinking goes that Catholics are always one hundred percent loyal to the Pope in Rome and could not be trusted to be loyal to any other country. Barring Jesuits, this is not how most Catholics lived. Given the previous evidence, it seems like the strongest prejudice against Catholics would have been located in the Northeast where the SGA was at its strongest. It might be the case since the number of Catholics would have been greater in numbers in the Northeast; southerners did not have as many opportunities to express their prejudices against Catholics.

By the 1840s, the nativist movement against Catholics had ramped up even further. In New York, Archbishop John Hughes and Father John Power both sought funds for their congregation's education because of the

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<sup>33</sup> Lyman Beecher. *A Plea for the West*.

[https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/fdscontent/uscompanion/us/static/companion.websites/9780199751358/instructor/chapter\\_5/lymanbeecher.pdf](https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/fdscontent/uscompanion/us/static/companion.websites/9780199751358/instructor/chapter_5/lymanbeecher.pdf)

tremendous Protestant bias in the current education system.<sup>34</sup> It should be noted that it was not that postmillennialism was the primary cause of nativism, but rather it was part of an overall Protestant mindset that influenced the way they viewed their relationship with Catholicism. Racism and nativism are distinct forces that influence history, but they are often influenced by other types of culture, including religious culture.

Philadelphia experienced among the worst examples of anti-Catholic discrimination with the two Bible Riots in 1844. The same Bible societies so crucial for helping religion become influential actually caused tensions that helped lead to riots in Philadelphia. The increase in Catholic immigrants was especially present in the city of Philadelphia, leading to tension. Pennsylvania is also unique in that the state historically was one of the states with the least amount of conflict amongst the sects, even before the revolution, though they did have religious requirements to hold public office. So the nativism produced as a byproduct of the SGA would not be expected to be as bad here. As stated previously, it would be naive to suggest that it was simply religion that drove this nativism in this case, as there was also a healthy amount of racism against the Irish involved, but no doubt that evangelical reform made nativism worse. In the buildup to the conflicts in 1834, Pennsylvania passed the Free School Act, which required the use of the KJB in schools as a textbook. There was also a follow-up from the school board saying that all Bibles in school must be free of notes or comments.<sup>35</sup> Catholic agitators were enraged by this and fought for their holy books to be used for their children. In 1843, the school board did let them use non-KJB, but held the rule that they must be free of notes or comments. This solved nothing. It is also noteworthy that there was an economic depression in 1837 that further agitated the working class

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<sup>34</sup> Oxx, *Critical Moments in American History*, 56-57.

<sup>35</sup> Oxx, *Critical Moments in American History*, 57-58.

and brought out the worst side of people.<sup>36</sup> As with all historical events, nuance is key. It is thought that, likely due to anti-Catholic stereotypes, some Protestants in the area mistakenly thought that Catholics were trying to take the Bible out of school altogether. Prominent Catholic leaders were seeking removal of some texts that actively criticized the Pope, but they too thought that Bible use was crucial in schools. There was enough unrest and mistrust that built up over the following year in Protestant communities to warrant protest against Catholic changes.

The first violent outburst was May 1844, with a nativist protest turning into a riot after some chaos and the death of eighteen-year-old George Shiffler.<sup>37</sup> Massive rioting and a good deal of arson followed for a few days, and eventually the governor was forced to declare martial law to prevent further damage. May eighth is considered the most destructive day of the riot and caused the Pope to issue a harsh condemnation of the Bible societies that caused the riots. Regarding those societies, Pope Gregory XVI stated in a speech, "They are concerned primarily that the reader becomes accustomed to judging for himself the meaning of the books of Scripture, to scorning divine tradition preserved by the Catholic Church in the teaching of the Fathers, and to repudiating the very authority of the Church."<sup>38</sup> Both St. Michael's Church, and St. Augustine's Church were set aflame on May eighth. By May eleventh the riots had calmed down, but nativist sentiment would spark back up again in a few months. In case the nativist sentiment of the crowd was in doubt, the second riot happened around the Fourth of July. Nativist sentiment was on full display that day, and Catholics in the city were rightfully nervous, and, with the proper permission, they started acquiring arms.<sup>39</sup> Someone noticed and

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<sup>36</sup> Amanda Beyer-Purvis, "The Philadelphia Bible Riots of 1844: Contest Over the Rights of Citizens." *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 83, no. 3 (2016): 366-93.

<sup>37</sup> Oxx, *Critical Moments in American History*, 65.

<sup>38</sup> Pope Gregory XVI, "Inter Praecipuas." May 8, 1844.

<sup>39</sup> Oxx, *Critical Moments in American History*, 73.

tipped off the crowd, and they demanded to be given the weapons. A crowd appeared outside the church with the stockpile, and the makeshift militia fired shots to try and disperse the crowd. On July 6, the church was assaulted with battering rams, and a tense standoff ensued, though the governor eventually amassed enough troops to disperse the crowd and restore order.<sup>40</sup>

The SGA marked a remarkable coming together for Protestants because of a common eschatological goal, which helped expand their idea of religious tolerance. Conversely, this new common goal actively hindered the assimilation of other religious groups, such as Catholics, and in some cases led to violence against them. With the spreading of Postmillennialism, America became a place where non-sectarian Protestant reform was considered progress, and this brought sects that had conflict in the past, together. As this process took place, a nativist sentiment against other religious groups grew. Everyone has an internal idea about which groups are to be trusted and which groups are suspect, and this was an expansion of that in the minds of most Protestants. In the mid-1830s and 1840s, a unified Protestant establishment had developed in the culture and the law that actively fought against full equality for Catholics. This establishment was brought about by reform movements in the SGA, and it probably worsened the tension. The SGA, while it does not initially seem like a major event of American history, in reality helped shape the country for decades and gave rise to reform movements that continued after the Civil War.

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<sup>40</sup> Oxx, *Critical Moments in American History*, 73.

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# The Sino-Soviet Split and the New Communist Movement

Sofia Rivera

The Sino-Soviet Split – the antagonization and breaking down of relations between China and the Soviet Union in the 1960s – had major reverberations throughout the global communist movement. While most of the effects of the Split were found in Asia and Europe, the United States’ communist movement also was profoundly impacted by these ideological trends as they trickled into the dying mass movements of the 1960s. The Sino-Soviet Split revitalized a nascent Marxist Left in the United States under the banner of the New Communist Movement – however, it ultimately killed the very trends it enlivened via increasing sectarianism within the movement.

The Sino-Soviet Split has its roots pre-dating the Chinese Civil War but was catalyzed in Nikita Khrushchev’s speech to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in February 1956. In this document, First Secretary Khrushchev denounced the crimes and cult of personality attributed to his predecessor, Joseph Stalin. Quoting Marx, Engels, and Lenin, Khrushchev provided examples and precedent of the Marxist-Leninist tradition rejecting such individualist authority. He also used historical examples to showcase the evident ineptitude of

Stalin's leadership and policies regarding foreign intervention and the purging of CPSU members.<sup>1</sup>

This speech shocked the international communist movement and caused a great deal of unrest and instability throughout the socialist sphere as well as within the USSR itself. As Andrew M. Smith's thesis, *Which East Is Red?*, indicates, a number of Soviet and Eastern Bloc radicals opposed what Khrushchev's de-Stalinization stood for:

Small gatherings of protest began in Moscow, Leningrad, and Stalingrad, albeit with no major unrest. In one particular case, however, confusion and contempt turned to rage, and in early March of 1956 the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic—Stalin's birthplace—became a storm-center of pushback by common Soviet citizens against the earliest stages of Destalinization.<sup>2</sup>

One of the largest, and most influential, detractors of the Twentieth Congress speech outside of the Soviet Union was the Communist Party of China (CPC). Later that year, the CPC would issue a rebuttal to the speech, politely congratulating the Soviet Union for its efforts in self-critique and correcting past mistakes, while emphasizing the positive contributions Stalin presented to the international communist movement.<sup>3</sup> This would be closely followed by another statement, more firmly reiterating China's stance against Khrushchev's statements in light of the Hungarian and Polish revolts of 1956.<sup>4</sup> A long-budding contradiction between the two socialist powers was accelerated.

By 1963, this contradiction could no longer be resolved by non-antagonistic means. On July 14, 1963, an *Open Letter* published in the

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1 Nikita Khrushchev, "Speech to 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U." (speech, Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, February, 24-25 1956).

2 Andrew M. Smith, "Which East Is Red? The Maoist Presence in the Soviet Union and Soviet Bloc Europe 1956-1980" (MA thesis, Georgia State University, 2017), 12.

3 Editorial Department of *Renmin Ribao*, *On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (Peking: Foreign Language Press), 1959.

4 Editorial Department of *Renmin Ribao*, *On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (Peking: Foreign Language Press), 1959.

CPSU's official party newspaper, *Pravda*, crafted a polemic against China's critiques on the Soviet Union and the international communist movement.<sup>5</sup> The CPC responded with a series of unbridled attacks on Khrushchev and the CPSU, reiterating its defense of the legacy of Stalin, as well as berating Khrushchev's application of "peaceful coexistence" with capitalism, perceived collaboration with capitalist imperialism, and abandoning the dictatorship of the proletariat by re-establishing the bourgeois line within the CPSU.<sup>678</sup> This culminated in an all-out polemic on Khrushchev instituting a revisionist line of "phony communism."<sup>9</sup> While Khrushchev was removed later that year, the relations between China and the Soviet Union remained damaged, culminating in a militarized border clash in 1969.

In Europe, the Sino-Soviet split had a significant impact on socialist geopolitics, not only within the socialist sphere but in communist parties across the continent. Literature has been written on the Sino-Soviet split's impact on Western Europe. For example, in Italy and France, where mass communist parties existed in a real political fashion, popular fronts were the rule of the day. The Communist Party of Italy was veering rightwards as a result of its own internal revisionism and only sided with Soviet interests in vague rhetorical gestures, whereas the Communist Party of

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5 *Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, "Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU to All Party Organizations, to All Communists of the Soviet Union," in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press), 1965, 526-86.

6 Editorial Department of *Renmin Ribao* and *Hongqi*, "On the Question of Stalin," in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press), 1965, 115-138.

7 Editorial Department of *Renmin Ribao* and *Hongqi*, "Peaceful Coexistence — Two Diametrically Opposed Policies," in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press), 1965, 259-301.

8 Editorial Department of *Renmin Ribao* and *Hongqi*, "Apologists of Neo-Colonialism," in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press), 1965, 185-219.

9 Editorial Departments of *Renmin Ribao* and *Hongqi*, *On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press), 1964.

France was staunchly adherent to Moscow's ideological line while maintaining the popular front at home. Support for China and the Maoists was mainly found in isolated intellectual circles and in struggling communist sects throughout the rest of Western Europe, where socialism was floundering amid perceived capitalist prosperity.<sup>10</sup>

Very little literature, however, has been written on the Sino-Soviet split's effects on the American left. Khrushchev's secret speech also had a profound impact on the communist movement in the United States of America. The Communist Party USA (CPUSA) was already dealing with the dual-crisis of McCarthyism and Browderism—a tendency within the party characterized by a peaceful reformist transition to socialism and collaboration between classes championed by ex-General Secretary Earl Browder. In the wake of re-constitution in 1944 after being dissolved into a political action group by Browder, several factions arose within the CPUSA accusing party members, particularly within the national leadership, of revisionism. Principal among these early critics within the party leadership was William Z. Foster, long-time rival of Browder and successor to the position of General Secretary.<sup>11</sup>

Another notable, and more radical, critic of CPUSA leadership and Browderist revisionism was Harry Haywood. Haywood was a proponent and author of the Black Belt self-determination thesis, which posited that Black Americans within the Black Belt South, where they constituted the majority of the population, had the right to self-determination, up to and including secession from the United States.<sup>12</sup> The CPUSA adopted this

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10 William E. Griffith, "European Communism and the Sino-Soviet Rift," in *Communism in Europe: Continuity, Change, and the Sino-Soviet Dispute*, ed. William E. Griffith (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1964), 11-14.

11 William Z. Foster, "The Struggle Against Revisionism," in *Marxism-Leninism vs. Revisionism* by William Z. Foster, et al. (New York: New Century Publishers), 1946, 71.

12 The Communist International, "Extracts from an ECCI Resolution on the Negro Question," in *The Communist International: 1919-1943 Documents, Volume II: 1923-1928*, ed. by Jane Degras, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 554.

policy in 1926, but later rejected it in 1944 under Browder. Haywood was loyal to the party and to the Soviet Union, but fought an uphill battle to maintain his thesis after the party's reconstitution.

In his autobiography, *Black Bolshevik*, Haywood discusses the National Committee meeting of 1956. The right wing of the CPUSA, led by *Daily Worker* editor John Gates and taking inspiration from Khrushchev's 1956 speech, discussed abandoning Marxism-Leninism and Soviet allegiance, reorganizing the party, and reconsidering peaceful transition—effectively reviving Browderism.<sup>13</sup> Chairman Foster presided over the meeting, representing the center faction of the Party. This reaffirmed the Party's dedication to the principles of Marxism-Leninism while stressing unity overall and decrying “left sectarianism” among the more militant far-left factions of the party as the principal danger to establishing said unity.<sup>14</sup> This unity could not be maintained, however, due to the antagonism between the factions among the right-wing of the party, who wanted to reform it into something entirely different, and the left-wing, who would not condone revisionism and believed in the value of militant and potentially violent struggle against capitalism and imperialism.

As a result, a number of left and ultra-left anti-revisionists within the party, including Haywood, split from the CPUSA to form the Provisional Organizing Committee to Reconstitute a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (POC) in the United States in 1958.<sup>15</sup> Haywood was expelled from the POC in 1958, and the CPUSA the following year—however, the POC continued into the early 1960s. A secret FBI report from 1962 reveals that the POC had unconditionally aligned itself with China and against the

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13 Harry Haywood, *Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist* (Chicago: Liberator Press), 1978, 605-607.

14 Haywood, *Black Bolshevik*, 608.

15 *Ibid.*, 622-623.

Soviet Union, alongside the most militant anti-revisionist segments of the Sino-Soviet Split:

[Chairman Armando Roman] reiterated the POC stand that Premier KHRUSHCHEV's policy proposes revisionism and that the people of the U.S.S.R. are being taken for a ride by the wrong party down the wrong road. He said that the POC stands one hundred per cent for the policy stated and followed by Albania and Communist China.<sup>16</sup>

Despite dissolving due to isolationism and internal sectarian strife, the POC laid an important foundation for the anti-revisionist communist movement within the United States, taking inspiration from the lessons of the Chinese revolution and leveraging Maoist critiques of revisionism toward both the Soviet bloc and the CPUSA.

The seeds of what would become the outspoken, anti-revisionist, and openly Maoist New Communist Movement (NCM) lay in the death throes of the New Left in the late 1960s—specifically, in the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). In 1969, a highly radicalized SDS National Convention in Chicago ushered in a dramatic split in the organization that ultimately killed it. In an attempt to maintain a solid and cohesive ideological line, the SDS purged itself of influence from the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and its SDS Caucus, the Worker-Student Alliance. With pressure from the eminent Black Panther Party, which criticized the PLP for revisionism, a growing number of SDS members supported the expulsion of PLP membership. Opposing the PLP was the Revolutionary Youth Movement faction, which was itself divided into the Weatherman—made up primarily of the Ohio-Michigan and Columbia collectives—and the Revolutionary Youth Movement II (RYM II), led by Michael Klonsky and Bob Avakian. Important to note is that the Ohio-Michigan collective, while enacting their tirade on the PLP during the first day of the National

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16 Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Provisional Organizing Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Party (POC)*, by Special Agent Robert M. Jackson. NY 100-136078, 1962. <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/1956-1960/fbi-poc.pdf>.

Convention, “began to chant ‘Mao, Mao, Mao tse-Tung’ and waved their little red books.”<sup>17</sup> Mao, China, and the discourse of the Sino-Soviet Split became the centerpiece of the anti-revisionist fervor that would characterize the NCM.

The Weathermen, who would later be known as the Weather Underground, eventually took control of the national seat of the SDS, but the position mattered little, as the influence of the SDS was in steep decline.<sup>18</sup> The RYM II emerged as the most energized faction and attempted to form a short-lived national organization. Emerging from the RYM II were the Bay Area Revolutionary Union (RU), led by Bob Avakian, and the October League (OL), led by Klonsky. Both factions engaged in tactical unity and struggle with one another, but gradually drifted in separate political directions.

Another organization arose to become just as influential as the RYM II organizations and became involved in the NCM milieu, though not intentionally—the Communist League (CL). The CL arose out of expelled members of the POC in the 1960s.<sup>19</sup> Coming out of the CPUSA struggle itself, as opposed to the New Left student movement that spawned the October League and Revolutionary Union, the Communist League held them in disdain. The CL held a critical stance toward both organizations’ RYM II legacies, critiquing their allegiance to the youth movement by saying that “[t]hey made no distinction between the great Soviet proletariat and the handful of revisionists who have seized power in the USSR. Within the USNA [United States of North America], they denied all the glorious history and struggles of the CPUSA. And in general, they ignored

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17 “SDS Convention Split: Three Factions Emerge,” *The Heights*, July 3, 1969, 1. <https://newspapers.bc.edu/cgi-bin/imageserver.pl?oid=bcheights19690703&getpdf=true>.

18 “RYM-2 Meets,” *Guardian*, September 17, 1969.

<https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-1/rym2-meets.htm>

19 Communist League, “The Dialectics of the Development of the Communist League,” 1972. <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-1/ccl-dialectics.htm>.



the history and struggles of the world's proletarian fighters.”<sup>20</sup> By entering this debate and maintaining relevancy and legitimacy within the Marxist-Leninist movement within the US, they placed themselves squarely within the confines of NCM discourse.

Bill Epton, civil rights activist, ex-Chairman of the PLP, and editor of *Proletarian Cause* – a limited-release single-issue Maoist journal – described the budding NCM as “petty bourgeois ex-students who were at one time active in various anti-[PLP] factions within SDS, students formerly associated with SNCC [Student National Coordinating Committee]... various off-shoots from the Black Panther Party and, not a few, broke from the PLP... A more recent development is the new unaffiliated Marxist-Leninist forces that are entering the arena.”<sup>21</sup> In addition to being an accurate description of the revolutionary current forming, it is a stunning example of the level of criticism and revolutionary optimism characterized by the NCM.

As the NCM grew and developed, a number of groups inspired by the energy of the depleted mass movements of the 1960s exploded into the fray; however, the OL, RU, and CL remained at the forefront of the movement. Each group was actively involved in party-building campaigns, in the hopes of establishing a vanguard party within the United States that could replace the CPUSA and adequately handle building a Marxist-Leninist revolution.

The Revolutionary Union (RU) began with the establishment of the National Liaison Committee, a pre-party formation between the RU, the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization, the Black Workers Congress, and the Asian-American radical group I Wor Kuen. The

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20 Communist League, “On the ‘Young Communist Movement’, Part 1,” *People’s Tribune*, August 1973. <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-1/cl-replies-2.htm>.

21 Bill Epton, “Unite Theory with Practice To Build A Communist Party!” in *Proletarian Cause: Journal of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought*, edited by Bill Epton, 1972.

organization was short-lived. The RU denounced its detractors from the other organizations of the National Liaison Committee, comparing their nationalism to the Jewish Bundists who were opposed by Lenin in the October Revolution.<sup>22</sup> I Wor Kuen, however, responded with a rebuttal explaining why they left the National Liaison Committee and reaffirming the revisionism and white chauvinism upheld by the RU. It is important to note that I Wor Kuen mentioned that “the RU spread the rumor that we had a secret member of the Venceremos organization in our central committee and that we were very close to the Communist League.”<sup>23</sup> This indicates the disunity and antagonism brewing between the major players of the NCM. Indeed, the OL also spared no time in issuing a polemic against its rival: “The RU in fact is liquidating the just struggle of the Black masses for their full national rights. ‘A nation of a new type’<sup>24</sup> means that the principles of Marxism-Leninism are thrown out of the window.”<sup>25</sup> Once again, the issue of national self-determination of racial minorities was the central point on which the struggle against revisionism stood.

This sectarian bickering only increased in the late 1970s, as Chinese foreign policy began to shift. Mao’s death led to the rise in influence of Hua Guofeng and the hunting down of the Gang of Four; China openly endorsed the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola and National Liberation Front of Angola against the Soviet-supporting

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22 Revolutionary Union, “National Bulletin #13: Build the Leading Role of the Working Class, Merge the National and Class Struggles,” in *Red Papers 6: Build the Leadership of the Proletariat and its Party*, ed. Revolutionary Union (San Francisco: Revolutionary Union Press, 1974). Transcribed by Paul Saba.

<https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/periodicals/red-papers/red-papers-6/section3.htm>.

23 I Wor Kuen, “On the National Liaison Committee of the RU, BWC, PRRWO and IWK,” *IWK Journal* 1, no. 1 (August 1974). Transcribed by Paul Saba.

<https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/periodicals/iwk-journal/iwk-letters.htm>.

24 “A nation of a new type,” as proposed by the RU, was a thesis that posited that Black people within the US still constituted a nation, but that their dispersal from their historical centralization in the Black Belt South limited their ability to practice self-determination.

25 October League (M-L), *Revolutionary Union: Opportunism in a “Super-Revolutionary” Disguise* (San Francisco: The Call, 1974). Transcribed by Paul Saba.

<https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-2/ol-on-ru/part3.htm>.

People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola in the Angolan Civil War as application of Mao's "Three Worlds Theory." As a result of this ideological shift in China, crisis split among the loosely unified and antagonized NCM.

The October League, which had evolved into the Communist Party - Marxist-Leninist (CPML) by 1978, showed support for China. The CPML openly endorsed Hua Guofeng against the Gang of Four.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, they launched a polemic against the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), the successor party to the RU, for supporting the Gang of Four: "The RCP, while claiming to be a 'Marxist-Leninist party,' is actually opposing the Marxist-Leninists in the world today and particularly the great Communist Party of China."<sup>27</sup> Additionally, the CPML established a line that the "main blow" should be directed at the Soviet Union as the greater imperialist threat, rather than toward the United States.<sup>28</sup> This caused the RCP to respond with a polemic addressing that "the two superpowers are equally enemies of the international proletariat... together they comprise the main target of the international united front against imperialism in this period."<sup>29</sup> Arguing amongst themselves, these two organizations, now calling themselves vanguard parties, focused primarily on theoretical disputes on political situations overseas rather than on organizing workers.

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26 Communist Party – Marxist-Leninist, "World communists denounce 'gang of four'," *The Call*, November 27, 1976. <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-5/call-gang.htm>.

27 Communist Party – Marxist-Leninist, "Supporting Revisionism: RCP Takes Stand with 'Gang'," *The Call*, January 17, 1977. <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-5/ol-rcp-gang.htm>.

28 Communist Party – Marxist-Leninist, "Lesson of strategy and tactics: The Direction of the Main Blow," *The Call*, November 22, 1976.

<https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-5/main-blow.htm>.

29 Revolutionary Communist Party, "Two Superpowers: Equally Enemies of World's People," *Revolution*, August 1977. <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-5/rcp-2-superpowers.pdf>.

By this time the CL had quietly evolved into the Communist Labor Party and had focused elsewhere than on inter-party polemics in the NCM.

As the 1970s pressed on into the deeply conservative 1980s, the NCM lost what little constitution it had left. The CPML dissolved into bickering factions and the Communist Labor Party faded into obscurity. While some groups managed to eke out of the wreckage, such as the RCP, Freedom Road Socialist Organization, and Ray O. Light Organization, all of which still exist today, their relevance has been eclipsed by decades of stagnation. Deeply rooted in the Chinese ideological trends in the Sino-Soviet split and manifested in opposition to the revisionism manifested in the CPUSA, the NCM bounded into American left-wing political discourse. Ultimately the same energy that brought the movement to life with revolutionary fervor ultimately brought about its demise from schismatic sectarianism and an inability to appeal to the broad working class.

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# The Nazi Boycott of Jewish Businesses of April 1, 1933: Prelude to Annihilation

Brandon Allen Stewart

With Hitler's ascension to Chancellorship on January 30, 1933, the Nazi regime immediately began persecution of its domestic enemies with rising antisemitic violence. Jewish German shopkeepers and Eastern Jewish immigrants were the first targets of antisemitic violence. Under the Nazi regime, their paramilitary harassed and attacked Jewish owned businesses and professionals throughout the month of March. International media and Jewish organizations condemned the attacks and summoned an international boycott of German goods. In response, the Nazi regime initiated a nation-wide boycott of Jewish businesses on April 1, 1933. This boycott became the first state-sponsored attack on Jews within Germany and was the first step of state-sponsored persecution that ultimately led to the destruction of two-thirds of Europe's Jews.

The Nazi boycott of Jewish businesses, which started as a reactionary development, advanced antisemitic policies and escalated international tensions against Germany. The outcome of the Nazi boycott of Jewish businesses did more harm than good for the Nazi Party by marginalizing support for Nazi antisemitism domestically and brought diplomatic consequences from the West. This article argues that despite heightened antisemitism, the Jews of Germany as well as American news media underestimated Nazi antisemitic violence by thinking it only to be a phase in Germany's unstable political climate. This underestimation from the American news sources could have likely influenced mixed perceptions among the American public concerning the severity of Nazi intentions as well as questioning Franklin D. Roosevelt's foreign policy. To arrive at

this assertion, I examine a brief socioeconomic history accompanied by historiography, oral histories to survey the Jewish perspective, and news sources from the Associated Press and local papers from Eastern Tennessee revealing that both Jewish Germans and non-Jewish Germans received the violence unfavorably. To understand how and why the social-economic turmoil of the boycott transpired, an explanation of its historical context is deserving.

### Narrative and Historiography

The roots of economic strife between Germans and Jews preceded a century before the Nazi Party rose to power. Legislation liberated Jews in occupational fields in the early nineteenth century where Jews climbed the socio-economic ladder from cattle drivers, tailors, shoemakers, and blacksmiths to bankers, doctors, lawyers, industrialists, and department store owners. This economic advancement displaced many small shopkeepers and artisans with Jewish-owned department store monopolies in retail as well as the banking and commerce industry. During Napoleon's blockade, Jewish bankers gained wealth in commerce within the European continental markets. Jewish bankers became integral to the German economy and financed the capital necessary for the industrial growth of Germany to surpass Great Britain as the industrial giant of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, frequent crashes in the German economy every few decades caused farmers to face high tariffs and rising costs of loans, and, consequently, struggling German farmers were forced into foreclosure to banks run by both Jewish and non-Jewish Germans. The causes of these economic crashes were broadly the result of mismanagement by German finance ministers, including indemnity payments from the Franco-Prussian war, malpractice by elite

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<sup>1</sup> William Brustein, *Roots of Hate: Anti-Semitism in Europe Before the Holocaust*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 207-208.

Jewish and non-Jewish bankers, and especially the economic crises of the 1920s exacerbated specifically to Germany by the terms of reparations from the Treaty of Versailles.

Despite being just one percent of the population, Jews made up eighteen percent of bank owners in Germany and one-third of bank owners in Berlin. By 1910 Jews held top positions in one third of Germany's largest companies. Just as Jews were overrepresented in the upper and middle class, they were underrepresented in the laboring class of agricultural and steel workers. The socioeconomic disparities of Germany's modernization resulted in a German populace that felt marginalized by a Jewish minority that were seen as overrepresented in the banking, legal, academic, media and medical fields. Provocateurs such as Otto Boeckel spread an antisemitic rhetoric that rallied a disgruntled German proletariat.<sup>2</sup>

In *The Hitler Myth*, Ian Kershaw states that the boycott was the first course of action perpetrated by the Nazi Party concerning the "Jewish Question." Antisemitism was not the major point of the Nazi Party platform that drew in support in the early 1930s. Hitler's speeches prior to 1930 rarely reflected antisemitic propaganda and especially curtailed his antisemitic rhetoric in front of upper-middle class audiences. Even by 1932 Hitler's antisemitism remained a minor point in his prominent speeches such as the New Year exhortation to the Nazi Party, his speech to the Dusseldorfer Industrieklub in January as well as his "Appeal to the Nation" in July. Kershaw claims that the "Jewish Question" had minimal effect on the growing appeal of Hitler and the Nazi Party.<sup>3</sup>

Avraham Barkai states that the boycott of April 1, 1933, was not an abrupt occurrence and describes that the prelude to the boycott consisted

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<sup>2</sup> Brustein, *Roots of Hate*, 185-186, 209-212.

<sup>3</sup> Ian Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth': Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 233-234.

of gradual increases in antisemitic propaganda and violence. Prior to the Nazi rise to power, small scale protests and street violence only occurred infrequently with little difference when compared to Nazi attacks against other political opponents such as Communists. However, from the burning of the Reichstag and with Hitler's appointment as Chancellor at the end of January in 1933, antisemitism became a government policy. Local police who previously made half-hearted attempts to stop antisemitic violence became auxiliaries of the Nazi paramilitary. Throughout March antisemitic violence escalated to unprecedented levels.<sup>4</sup>

On March 28, 1933, an appeal signed by the Nazi Party leadership addressed all functionaries of the Nazi Party urging them to enact a nationwide boycott of Jewish businesses, goods, and professionals. In order to keep his political appeal to all non-Jewish Germans, Hitler refrained from being directly involved in antisemitic actions of the Nazi Party. This tactic was intended to keep the popular support of the majority of German citizens and to appease members of the Reichstag. Despite a presence of antisemitism in the Reichstag, their hatred existed primarily in rhetoric and not physical violence.<sup>5</sup>

William Brustein suggests that the German populace had nuanced receptions of the boycott despite economic disparities. Jewish overrepresentation in the business and professional class is one factor that had fueled economic antisemitism. Brustein notes that in the state of Prussia, Jews represented over 49% of workers in commerce, 18% of doctors, 15% of dentists, and 25% of lawyers by 1925. Nationally, Jews represented over 16% of lawyers and over 10% of all physicians by 1933. However, he further states that despite economic self-interest and

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<sup>4</sup> Avraham Barkai, *From Boycott to Annihilation: The Economic Struggle of German Jews 1933-1943*, (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1989), 13-14.

<sup>5</sup> Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth'*, 234-235.



opportunism, many Germans saw the boycott as unfavorable because they were an “inconvenient and impeded choice” and were unable to shop at Jewish stores and employ their services.<sup>6</sup>

The primary victims of the boycott were middle-class German Jews and *Ostjuden*. The *Ostjuden*, emigrant Jews from Eastern Europe, were easily targeted due to their traditional dress and lack of acculturation compared to German Jews. They often made their living as street peddlers, petty tradesmen, and employees in Jewish shops. Their lack of acculturation to German society and visible public presence made them easy targets in the streets. In the middle of March, violence against the professional class of doctors and lawyers became institutional when the League of National Socialist Lawyers called to purge the legal system of Jews and the League of National Socialist German Physicians called to boycott Jewish doctors. Despite overrepresentation in the professional class and financial industries, the groups who suffered the most fell to the middle-class shopkeepers and immigrants.<sup>7</sup>

Barkai asserts that according to the Nazis, the boycott represented a “defensive measure” reactionary to the international criticism against the rise of antisemitic violence in March. He quotes a sudden change of environment from a Jewish German on the day of the boycott, that “suddenly even the street seemed to me strange and alien. Yes, the entire city had become a strange and alien place.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Brustein, *Roots of Hate*, 209-223.

<sup>7</sup> Barkai, *From Boycott to Annihilation*, 15-17.

<sup>8</sup> Barkai, *From Boycott to Annihilation*, 17-21.

## Oral Histories

Lisl Nussbaum was a young Jewish woman living in Bavaria whose course in life took an abrupt turn due to the boycott. She mentioned that Jewish popular opinion of Hitler and the antisemitism representative of the Nazi Party would only be a phase. She recalled to her interviewer that “the Jewish people just did not want to believe that Hitler could make it.” She further suggests that the people were in denial, until the Nazis began distributing propaganda flyers in her hometown of Fruet, outside of Nuremberg, calling for Jews to die in the streets. This event in November, she states, was the beginning.<sup>9</sup>

Despite claiming to have a normal childhood, her wedding, planned for April 2, 1933, came to a disastrous ruin. On April 1, “all over Germany... anything owned by a Jew, store, whatever, two Nazis were standing in front and said, ‘don’t go in, this is a Jew.’” The boycott ruined her wedding plans by intimidating venues not to host Jewish weddings. Nussbaum resorted to reducing the number of guests to their immediate families and held the wedding at a private villa. She further stated that she had to hide her wedding dress and proclaimed, “we could not let a word out that there will be a wedding, you didn’t know what they had in mind... especially a day after the boycott.”<sup>10</sup>

Nussbaum further detailed the Jewish perspective of Hitler after the boycott, explaining that many were still assured that his time would not last. While she recalled her personal fear of what was happening, “people said ‘oh don’t worry about it, Hitler won’t stay long, let him be on now and the people will see what he is, and he will be out...’ That was the mistake.” She further illustrated her last years in Germany, that after just

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<sup>9</sup> Lisl Nussbaum, interview by Merle Gross, *USC Shoah Foundation*, February 27, 1996, accessed September 28, 2020, <https://vha-usc.edu/libproxy.troy.edu/viewingPage?testimonyID=12531&returnIndex=0>.

<sup>10</sup> Nussbaum, *USC Shoah Foundation*.

two years her husband was thrown out of law practice for not being a World War I veteran. Her husband received calls from Nazis, threatening that if he continued to work at his law office after they banned Jews from legal practices, then there would be consequences. Lissl Nussbaum and her husband migrated to Palestine briefly before obtaining visas to the United States.<sup>11</sup> Nussbaum and her husband were fortunate to leave Germany before the Nazi policies banned emigration for Jews. Many would not have their same opportunity.

Jacob Frost was a young man who worked with his father at a Jewish-owned department store at the time of the boycott in the town of Gera, near Leipzig. He described that as a youth he was treated well being the only Jew in his most of his classes. As he entered secondary school he was introduced to antisemitism from his teachers and classmates, some of which joined the Hitler Youth. He commented that his German friends would often defend him against antisemitic attacks from classmates and teachers. After secondary school, he worked in apprenticeships in clerical and accounting work until working with his father at a Jewish department store. He described the Nazi policies that initiated antisemitic policies. During the boycott Nazi paramilitary stood outside his employer's shop with signs stating, "do not buy from Jews." He remembers that they did not rob or steal the merchandise but broke many windows of the store. He recalled days after the April boycott, a brownshirt gave him a one-way ticket to Palestine, but he refused to go.<sup>12</sup>

Joseph Sachs was born and raised in Wurzburg, as was his father who was a World War I veteran and owned a shop that employed roughly fifty people. His father's business survived the Depression by taking out a loan

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<sup>11</sup> Nussbaum, *USC Shoah Foundation*.

<sup>12</sup> Jacob Frost, interview by Alex Churney, *USC Shoah Foundation*, April 10, 1995, accessed October 1, 2020, <https://vha-usc-edu.libproxy.troy.edu/viewingPage?testimonyID=57433&returnIndex=0>.

from a large bank. His father passed away when Sachs was sixteen years old in 1929, and he was urged by his mother to go into business. He then entered an apprenticeship under his uncles and extended family. While an apprentice, he first became aware of the Nazi perpetrated antisemitism growing around him. He recalls in 1933 that he and his family “did not want to realize it” and did not believe it to be “a permanent danger” until propaganda depicted hateful threats such as “when the blood from the Jews drip from our knives” and “the Aryan race would be debased by the Jews.” He then recalls the boycott which was on the Sabbath and his factory was closed. He remembers laughing with his family because they did not plan to open anyway. He was later arrested by the Gestapo, marched to the factory under suspicion of illegal activity, and was released. Sachs emigrated from Germany to the United States with many of his family and has lived there since. However, many of his extended family did not survive the Nazi regime.<sup>13</sup>

Max Walldorf was the son of a World War I veteran and finishing secondary school at the time of Hitler’s accession to power. Walldorf adds to the perspective of Jewish-Germans on behalf of his father as a shopkeeper. Throughout his youth, Walldorf proclaims that the Nazis never gave him trouble. He further described the political climate of the time: “with every election, one of the party’s majority changed, and when the Nazis came to power the expectation was, they won’t be in power very long, they’ll soon get kicked out in the next election.” However, he admitted that “nobody thought there would not be a next election.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Joseph Sachs, interview by Hanna Riselsheimer, *USC Shoah Foundation*, January 30, 1997, accessed October 1, 2020, <https://vha-usc-edu.libproxy.troy.edu/viewingPage?testimonyID=28000&returnIndex=0>.

<sup>14</sup> Max Walldorf, interviewed by Evan Robins, *USC Shoah Foundation*, February 25, 1996, accessed September 28, 2020, <https://vha-usc-edu.libproxy.troy.edu/viewingPage?testimonyID=12333&returnIndex=0>.

Walldorf recalls the events of the Nazi Boycott through his experiences as a young man. He remembers how many of his German classmates were attracted to the Nazi paramilitary's uniforms. Several incidents reign in his memory. The first act of aggression against his father came from a local farmer's son who was also one of his customers. He retold his father's story. When he came home one night, "the son of one of the farmers, a really good friend to him, put a dog on him and chased him out of the farmyard. This was the first act of aggression against my father." In early 1933, five or six young men in uniforms blocked his father's shop where he stood his ground and argued with them until they left. He recalled how the boycott further changed the social climate against his family afterwards, when he continued to buy beer from the pub for his father. A customer scolded the bar owner, "are you still serving those Jews!?" The owner told his father to stop bringing his children to fetch the beer as he warned him, "you're only getting me into trouble."<sup>15</sup>

The oral histories of the survivors reveal how unaware Jewish Germans were of the extremism building against them. The Jewish consensus regarded it as typical of the Weimar politics to have strife between parties, and that as soon as one fringe group entered, they would be replaced just as quickly. This was an unfortunate false perception that underestimated Nazi antisemitism and the policies enacted against the Jewish population.

### The U.S. News Media and the Boycott

The United States news media had nuanced interpretations of German antisemitism leading to the boycott of April 1, 1933. The articles provided accounts from German Jews that expressed their loyalty and solidarity to the German state rather than Jews who had emigrated, "defamed" Germany, and lobbied for an international boycott. The narratives

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<sup>15</sup> Walldorf, *USC Shoah Foundation*.

presented not only reveal how German Jews were unaware of how the Nazi Party would receive their appeals, and also the lack of empathy from the conservatives in the German government.

The *Chattanooga Daily Times* provided a transparent representation of how the leaders of the Jewish community in Germany initially reacted to the boycott. Members of the general council of German Jews and the board of Berlin's Jewish community signed an appeal addressed to President von Hindenburg, Chancellor Hitler, cabinet members, and the president of the Berlin police. The appeal expressed confidence that the German government would protect their "rights and means of existence." The appeal continued as a defense against the accusations that they were responsible as provocateurs of the international boycott against Germany. The appeal expressed its solidarity to the German nation, "Because of the fault of a very few for whom we never have nor ever will assume responsibility, economic ruin is being prepared for German Jews who feel they are united to the German fatherland in heart and soul," further expressing solidarity with Germany, the appeal stated that 12,000 of Germany's 500,000 Jews died fighting in World War I.<sup>16</sup>

The same article offered a narrative of how preparations for the boycott were already set in place. On the day of authorship, March 29, 1933, the article noted that across Germany antisemitic protests erupted over the presence of Jews in the judicial system. Over one thousand Germans protested outside of the Goerlitz courthouse demanding the deposition of Jewish judges and lawyers. "Nazi Storm troopers occupied the building, and thirty-five Jews were placed under protective arrest." In Muenster Nazis occupied the court and barred Jews from entering, also confiscating knives used for Jewish butchering rites. The Berlin municipal government ordered that commencing on April 1, "all supplies for

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<sup>16</sup> "Jews of Germany Appeal for Rights," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 30, 1933, accessed September 30, 2020, <https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/604399946/>.

municipal projects and offices must be purchased from nationalist merchants.” This order caused forty-eight Jewish shops which had already been picketed by Nazis to immediately close. At the University of Westphalia, Jewish professors were blocked from entering their classrooms. In addition to several Jewish lawyers, Professor Hugo Sinzheimer, a Jewish academic and reporter for the war guilt commission as well as the German Peace society, were all arrested.<sup>17</sup>

The protests that led to the arrests developed into hooliganism and vandalism perpetrated by the Nazis and police auxiliaries. Twenty-four Jewish shops had their windows shattered in the city of Emden, and in Goettingen every Jewish shop received the same destruction. However, the article noted that the Silesian Chamber of Commerce ruled against the boycott as they saw it to be an “inexpedient movement.” The ruling caused a halt in antisemitic propaganda for the following days. Nazi Storm troopers forced the closure of Jewish businesses in the cities of Zittau and Eberswalde, where the shops had tar smothered over the buildings and cinema houses destroyed. Despite the carnage, the local Nazi chapter in Silesia disapproved the violence and withdrew responsibility for its destruction according to the article.<sup>18</sup>

In the same paper, March 30, 1933, other articles demonstrated how problematically the consequences were felt in Central Europe. The vandalism permeated from German to Austrian cities. In Vienna, the Austrian Nazi newspaper *Deutsche-Oesterreichische Tageszeitung* warned against resistance to the boycott and those members of the government would be risking their lives to resist the Nazi boycott. Furthermore, they warned that any agreements made between the

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<sup>17</sup> “Jews of Germany Appeal for Rights,” *Chattanooga Daily Times*.

<sup>18</sup> “Jews of Germany Appeal for Rights,” *Chattanooga Daily Times*

chancellor and assembly would be disregarded by the local Nazis.<sup>19</sup> Another article warned that the boycott would bring economic consequences to Germany, stating “German insurance companies, rather than Jewish shopkeepers, are the chief sufferers from anti-Jewish demonstrations...” Consequently, it suggested that “German national wealth is being deliberately destroyed.”<sup>20</sup>

The *Chattanooga Daily Times* reported promptly on the events of April 1, highlighting its antisemitic attack on Anglo-American Jews, as well as Albert Einstein and Lion Feuchtwanger. Reporting from its correspondent in Berlin a day prior, the article described the order signed by Minister of Propaganda Dr. Joseph Goebbels as a response to U.S. and British reporting on German antisemitism, or as Goebbels described, anti-German propaganda. The article also stated that it was issued by the Nazi Party and not the German government. The order mandated that if anti-German propaganda did not cease by that next Wednesday, then the boycott would resume “with full force and vehemence which until now had been undreamed of.” The article described the organization of the boycott’s order designed by Goebbels, that the Jews were responsible for the boycott of German goods prior and had “taken bread from German workers by agitating an international anti-German boycott.” Albert Einstein fled Germany due to antisemitic violence insisting he would not return until the violence ceased. Lion Feuchtwanger published many articles condemning the Nazi Party for its antisemitic violence. Goebbels stated that “German Jews can thank the wandering Einstein and

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<sup>19</sup> “Austrian Chief Warned He Risked Life by Nazis,” *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 30, 1933, accessed September 30, 2020, <https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/604399946/>.

<sup>20</sup> “Jews’ Windows Insured; Teutons Pay for Bricks,” *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 30, 1933, 2, accessed September 30, 2020, <https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/604399946/>.



Feuchtwanger.”<sup>21</sup> This tactic held Jewish Germans as hostages for a ransom of international compliance.

On April 5, 1933, the *Chattanooga Daily Times* followed the boycott with a revealing yet ambiguous narrative. An article written one day prior on the fourth described the events and relations with the U.S. embassy. It noted that Chancellor Adolf Hitler’s cabinet stepped in to halt the boycott until “the cessation of foreign protests and reports concerning anti-Jewish atrocities in Germany.” The Nazi controlled Pan-German Press suggested that the U.S. and Polish embassies were collecting accusation accounts by Eastern Jews in Germany against Nazi violence. The U.S. embassy indeed collected reports from Americans on Nazi violence as confirmation of the state-sponsored violence. The Jewish quarter in East Berlin had been raided by a “large force of police assisted by Nazi auxiliaries” searching for weapons and propaganda.<sup>22</sup> Following the boycott, the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* published an array of articles from German sources questioning the strategy of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s foreign policy. Citing the *Berliner Morning Post*, the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* echoed its criticism that Roosevelt was leading the United States into an inevitable war. It accused Roosevelt of “first passively and then actively support[ing] the Jewish boycott since 1933 which is undermining mutually beneficial commerce between both countries.” The article further depicted Germany as the leader against western imperialism, that “one gets the idea of the pharisaical quality of this message when one sees that Roosevelt wants German and Italian guarantees in Iran in the face of English terror against

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<sup>21</sup> “Nazis’ Boycott Against Jewry Cut to One Day,” *Chattanooga Daily Times*, April 1, 1933, accessed September 29, 2020,

<https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/604394265/?terms=nazi%2Bboycott&pqsid=UXLNpAGdoYNjzMtXdO17MA%3A177000%3A322595401>.

<sup>22</sup> “Nazis Order Halt in Jewish Boycott,” *Chattanooga Daily Times*, April 5, 1933, accessed September 19, 2020,

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/604395364/?terms=nazi%2Bboycott>.

the freedom of the fighting Arabs...”<sup>23</sup> A reprinted article from German sources would be liable to stir isolationist sentiment and American antisemitism among lay readers by empowering antisemitic fervor abroad.

## Conclusion

The antisemitic violence that transpired throughout the days surrounding the boycott were not unprecedented, but many within Germany and abroad found them unexpected, underestimating the extent that Nazi antisemitism would entail. The consensus of Jewish Germans held that the rise in antisemitic propaganda and violence would only be a phase and the Nazi Party would be voted out of office after the consensus realized their belligerence. Many of the Jews within Germany were hopeful that conservatives and even Nazi Party officials in the government would be open to hearing their appeal of solidarity to Germany through military service and patriotic fidelity. Neither Jews within Germany or the Germans were monolithic in how they received the boycott and economic destruction of Jewish Germans. Even in Silesia the Nazi Party Chapter disapproved the violence, while elsewhere the local Nazi Party Chapters were instigators and perpetrators. German municipal districts found the boycott unfavorable, such as Silesia which foresaw that it would only bring destruction and hurt their local economy. This also reveals that localities had their own agency to resist the boycott. In this perspective, Jewish Germans as well as other Germans indifferent to the Nazi Party, underestimated its antisemitic belligerence.

From the oral histories, the consensus of German Jews was that the rise in antisemitism was a phase that would pass. The Jewish survivors

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<sup>23</sup> “Raps Nazi Boycott,” *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, April 16, 1933, accessed October 1, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/596561587/?terms=nazi%2Bboycott>.

interviewed had normal-seeming childhoods until they came of age during the Nazi era and were exposed to antisemitism. The instability of the Weimar Republic normalized an atmosphere of political violence, blinding them to what was coming. Even with Hitler's ascension to Chancellor, the consensus remained that it was just a temporary storm that would soon pass.

As many historians have stated, the newspapers and media not only provide a narrative of events, but the way it is presented influences how the populace interprets the events. Regardless of whether Hitler signed the documents to initiate the boycott, the news stated that Hitler stepped in to restore order. This can be interpreted in several diverse ways. One, it could give a false perception that it was the Nazi Party behind the boycott and not Hitler at all. Or, it could depict Hitler as being in complete control with the elements of destruction at his fingertips, predicating his move on international compliance. Yet, it could be interpreted as a combination of both, while Hitler made the move to step in as a strategy of enhancing his own image of power and projecting a cult of personality in his own narcissistic fashion. It could also be argued that this was the first step in his move towards testing international reactions. Reprinting articles from German media exposed American readers to German sentiment. However, this had to be done cautiously, as it could have very well stirred up isolationist opinions and criticism of Franklin D. Roosevelt's foreign policy. This could have easily been a trap set by German propaganda media with the intent to spread antisemitism abroad.

The socioeconomic mobility of Jewish Germans in modernity became a pillar of Germany's success in advancing its industrialization, but also left non-Jewish Germans marginalized. Antisemitic violence against the Jewish population was not unprecedented, yet oral histories of Jewish Germans and news sources reveal that both the Jewish and non-Jewish German populace underestimated the severity of Nazi extremism.

The boycott of April 1, 1933, became the first state-sponsored attempt to destroy Germany's Jewish population. Gravely unfortunate to the fate of European Jews, it was only the beginning.

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## Former *Alexandrian* Authors - ...

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Beginning with this volume, the *Alexandrian* will include updates on past contributors and student editors. Each year we will highlight a handful of alumni whose work appeared in the *Alexandrian* to find out what they have been up to since graduation. In this first installment, we begin with Doug Allen, the *Alexandrian*'s first editor.

### Doug Allen, PhD



Doug not only edited and wrote for the first volume of the *Alexandrian* – he was the driving force behind the whole idea. His article, “From ‘Excellent Officer’ to ‘Little Consequence’: The Deterioration of Gates and Arnold’s Relationship at Saratoga,” appeared in the 2012 inaugural issue.

From Doug:

It is hard to believe it has been a decade since the beginning of *The Alexandrian* and since I graduated from Troy University’s history department. It sounds, and often is, cliché to say that everything someone

has done since a milestone moment like undergraduate graduation was made possible by that time, but for me it feels specifically true. My education and Troy University broadly and within the History Department specifically prepared me for the rigor of graduate school as well as provided me a passion for engaging in the world. As a first-generation college student, I don't think attending a different university, particularly a larger research university would have been able to prepare me the way Troy University did. The care with which professors mentored me inspired me, gave me confidence, and (as I say to anyone that will listen) gave me a better hands-on education than many students being taught at research universities. I went to graduate school much better prepared to read critically and write effectively because of my history education at Troy University, and history awakened in me a passion for seeking ways to engage responsibly in the world.

Since graduating I've been able to teach US history in high school (an experience that really taught me the value of well-thought pedagogy), graduate with a Master's of History in Race, Ethnicity, and Society from Columbus State University and a doctorate in Geography from Florida State University, and travel to Belize (beginning a life-long fascination with this beautiful country). Though I have steadily shifted further from the discipline of history, my education and historical training remain vital to me research and teaching as a professor in the social sciences. I use historical examples and historical documents in my classroom to contextualize ongoing events and to explain why and how a place comes to look the way it does. My background as a historian has made the current moment easier to understand (if not necessarily to stomach) and is a constant touchstone for my academic and social life as I try to understand the world and engage as a responsible global citizen. History and history education has always been vital, but it seems even more so in the past decade. It teaches people how current events are not spontaneous but develop, how context matters, and how to sift and critically evaluate the massive (and at times simply false) amounts of information that bombards our daily life.



My hope with the *Alexandrian* at the time was to provide students with a way of sharing their hard work. It quickly became a way to honor Dr. Nathan Alexander and uphold his belief in students and academic engagement. Ten years on (thank you to the professors and students that have kept this going, by the way – especially Dr. Ross) my experience as a professor and as an active citizen makes me hope that this journal has played at least a small part in providing back to history students after me the benefits history and Troy University gave to me. I hope that it inspires them to engage in research to learn about the world, gives them confidence to engage in the world academically as well as socially and politically, and I hope that it encourages them to continue learning and growing.

## Theo M. Moore, II, MS



Theo M. Moore, II, completed his bachelor’s degree in history in 2012 and began teaching high school. It was just after graduation that his article, “Accepting the End of my Existence: Why the Tutsis Did Not Respond More Forcefully during the Rwandan Genocide,” appeared in the 2013 *Alexandrian*.

His interest in historical inquiry, however, drove him to return to Troy for his master’s in post-secondary education, with a concentration in history, graduating 2017. Since then, Theo has been the collections manager and educator at Tuskegee University’s Legacy Museum. “I remember reading the job description, which included taking care of collections, African diaspora, and all-around African-American history.

It was at that moment that I realized the job had all of my passions rolled into one — I knew this was more than a job, it was my future career.”<sup>1</sup>

At the museum, located in the National Center for Bioethics in Research and Health Care, Theo manages collections pertaining to the United States Public Health Service Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male (1932-1972), as well as exhibits on the contributions of Tuskegee University in medicine and science, a current exhibit on health disparities in relation to the coronavirus, and a sizable collection of African, African American, American, European, and Oceanic art.

Theo is also the founder and Executive Director of Hiztorical Vision Productions (HVP). At HVP Theo and his team create short-film documentaries highlighting African American history and especially to preserve local histories. “I am the type of person that when I learn new information, I want to share it with all who will listen.”<sup>2</sup> In 2018, HVP released *Crown the County of Lowndes*, about the founding of the Calhoun Colored School, the *Southern Courier*, and the role of Lowndes County in the Civil Rights movement. This film was followed by *Hobson City: From Peril to Promise*. Hobson City, Alabama, was the first incorporated Black municipality in the state. Theo has a passion to tell the stories not often told and in danger of being forgotten. In addition, HVP works with local communities, empowering them to tell their own stories. “The films and projects we usually see of African Americans are from the victimization standpoint rather than a focus on the success stories of those who were civically engaged or made contributions to this country.”<sup>3</sup>

Through his work at Tuskegee University, both as an educator and museum professional, and as an innovative film-maker, Theo brings history to life for new generations.

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<sup>1</sup> From Tuskegee Spotlight, 2019, <https://www.tuskegee.edu/news/skegee-spotlight-theo-moore>

<sup>2</sup> Hiztorical Vision Productions, <https://hiztoricalvp.org/about/>

<sup>3</sup> Hiztorical Vision Productions, <https://hiztoricalvp.org/about/>

Nikki Woodburn, JD



Nikki helped with the inaugural issue of the *Alexandrian* in 2012 as a Student Assistant Editor and was Co-Editor with the second issue. Her work on both volumes was of tremendous help to establish the *Alexandrian* and to keep it going!

She graduated from Troy University with an English major and History minor in 2013. After graduating from Troy, she attended law school at the Jones School of Law in Montgomery, Alabama. Jones offered her excellent opportunities to intern with the Alabama Board of Nursing and the Alabama Administrative Office of Court, and she clerked with

Marzulla Law. Since graduating in 2016, she has worked for the Isaak Law Firm as a family law attorney.

When asked how her experience with *The Alexandrian* and Troy's history department helped her after her undergraduate years, she stated: "Legal research built on the research I learned in the history department and my role at the *Alexandrian* later helped me get a position on the law review. I use these research, formatting, and editing skills daily in my profession."

As a lawyer, Nikki continues to use the skills she developed at Troy University. "Before I went to Troy, a judge told me that an English and History degree would greatly benefit me in law school. Beyond preparing me for my legal research and writing courses, my English Major and History Minor developed my analytical skills. It helped me succeed in law school, but it has also helped me in my professional capacity today. I am able to make better arguments and prove these arguments quickly because of the skills I developed at Troy."

## **Department News 2020-2021**

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The Department of History and Philosophy would like to congratulate our undergraduate and faculty award winners of 2021, recently honored at the Troy University Honors Convocation:

G. Ray Mathis Memorial Award – Alyssa Allen, junior

Nathan Alexander Memorial Phi Alpha Theta Scholastic Award – Daniel McCray, senior

Norma Taylor Mitchell American History Award – Rachel Bethea

Trapp History Education Award – Alphonso Johnson, senior

And we are especially proud of Department member Dr. Kathryn Tucker who won the Robert Kruckeberg Faculty Senate Excellence Award. This award was renamed to honor our own Dr. Robert Kruckeberg, who we lost in December this past year.

### Faculty News:

Jay Valentine was tenured and promoted to associate professor. Congratulations, Jay!

Marty Olliff won the 2020 Marvin Y. Whiting Award “for significant contributions to the preservation and dissemination of local history in Alabama” from the Society of Alabama Archivists.

Chair Allen Jones has published a new book in 2020, *Death and Afterlife in the Pages of Gregory of Tours: Religion and Society in Late Antique Gaul* (Amsterdam University Press).

Joungbin Lim's recent article, "In Defense of Physicalist Christology," was published in March in the journal *Sophia: International Journal of Philosophy and Traditions*, vol. 60, issue 1.

Aaron Hagler has been awarded sabbatical for the fall of 2021, when he will be a Visiting Researcher at Hebrew Union College and the University of Southern California.

David Carlson has been named the Book Review Editor of H-Net's Civil War network.

Karen Ross continues as editor of the *Journal of the Southern Association for the History of Medicine and Science*.

We would like to conclude our Department News with Andy Ellis's memorial to Rob. He was a wonderful colleague, scholar, teacher, friend, husband, and father. Kruck – we miss you.

Dr. Robert "Kruck" Dale Kruckeberg, Jr. is being remembered by his colleagues not only for the value he brought to students in Troy University classrooms, but also for the meaning and laughter he brought to so many lives.

Kruckeberg passed away at his home, surrounded by family, on December 27, after a courageous bout with cancer. He was 43.

"I was profoundly saddened to hear of Dr. Kruckeberg's death," said Dr. Steven Taylor, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "Rob was a valued member of the History faculty and a truly wonderful person. He will be missed and my heart goes out to his family. I know his colleagues throughout the College feel the same."

An Associate Professor of History, Kruckeberg had been a member of the TROY faculty since fall 2012. He was known as a passionate scholar,

but even more than that, Kruckeberg was known as a trusted colleague and friend, who was armed with a tremendous sense of humor and a laugh that was contagious.

## Dr. Robert Dale Kruckeberg





## Gratitude

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*This year's gratitude is written by co-editor, Rebecca Johnson. Becky graduated from Troy with her BS and MA in History. She works fulltime at the Center for Student Success on the Dothan Campus and adjuncts with the Department of History and Philosophy. (Karen Ross)*

Since the last issue, the world is still dealing with the pandemic but something great that came out of it is we came together and built the tenth volume of *The Alexandrian*—what a milestone! I remember as a graduate student thinking how great it was that the History & Philosophy department gave students a way to publish their research in remembrance of Dr. Alexander. It provided me this opportunity in 2013, as my first publication experience. My writing grew stronger as my faculty editor and I sent my paper back and forth at least a million times. I'm extremely appreciative for being published in the second issue and still being able to contribute years later as Co-Editor.

Thank you to everyone who helped put our tenth volume together. Dr. Ross and I are grateful to the faculty for working one-on-one with the student-authors editing and critiquing their submissions. Student-authors, thank you for your hard work and dedication to your revisions. The editing process can be grueling at times but it makes us stronger writers and historians.

A big thanks to Dr. Ross for helping keep this journal alive for ten years. Every year you dedicate your time and hard work to publishing *The Alexandrian*. You have inspired past and current students for a whole decade to be researchers, writers, and editors and we are eternally grateful.

I would especially like to thank the Alexander family: Sandra, Steve, Rachel, Sarah, Andrew, and Elise, for their continued support over the years. I've never met him but this journal keeps his memory alive. I read

the Remembered section in the first volume, and I felt like I knew him based on all the kind words from the department and his family. *The Alexandrian* is a beautiful memorial to Dr. Alexander and I'm happy that this allows him to still inspire students.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Johnson

**Phi Alpha Theta Inductees, Fall & Spring 2020-2021**

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ΦΑΘ

Daniel McCray  
Carson Barnett