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Swaying Switzerland:

The Use of British Propaganda in Switzerland, 1943-1945

Lisa Olszewski

In December 1944, Winston Churchill stated in a letter to his foreign minister, “Of all the neutrals, Switzerland has the greatest right to distinction.”¹ Indeed, Switzerland had managed to stay neutral throughout the entire course of the war, but this statement distorts British views towards Swiss neutrality. While British leaders approved of Switzerland’s democratic government attempting to stand firm against the Nazis, they also tried to influence the Swiss to become more sympathetic to their cause of defeating the Germans in the war. The British needed the Swiss to continue its ward off of Nazi involvement in economics and politics, as well as become more receptive to British actions involving Switzerland. Accordingly, throughout World War II, the relationship between Switzerland and Great Britain vacillated alongside the ups and downs of the war, with the British attempting to gain assistance from the Swiss, and Switzerland pursuing its best interests within its loose definition of neutrality. Although a policy of neutrality extends deep into Swiss history, it was not immune to influence from other governments, and that is what the British sought to exploit. In an effort to sway Swiss opinion in their favor, the British government created a program of propaganda. Here, I argue that it was through the use of propaganda set up by the British Overseas Planning Committee that the British were able to successfully change Swiss actions, ease tensions between the Swiss and the British, and direct Swiss neutrality to become more favorable to the British during World War II.

The British Overseas Planning Committee (OPC) came up with several “Plans of Propaganda” for use in Switzerland throughout the war. The first complete “Plan of Propaganda” was circulated in July 1943, with two additional revisions circulating in March 1944 and January 1945. Each of these plans laid out several issues that Britain needed to address with the Swiss. While many of the plan objectives consisted of the British simply convincing the Swiss to resist German pressure, the British also used the plan as an aid to ease specific points of tension between the British and the Swiss. Even in 1943-1945, when Britain and its Allies started to win the war, the British still awarded a prominent position to propaganda in Switzerland. Since the British revised the “Plan of Propaganda” twice after its initial circulation, it is clear that new solutions were needed for the latest problems to properly influence the Swiss during the dynamic latter years of the war. It was vital for the British to use propaganda in order to ease tensions and resolve conflicts so that the Swiss would remain open to and become increasingly receptive to British interests.

In the course of 1943, the Allies had victories in North Africa and the Atlantic, and knocked Italy out of the war.² In addition to these successes, Germany was defeated by the Red Army at Stalingrad in February and was kept in retreat on the Eastern Front for the remainder of the war.³ Despite

¹ Churchill cited in Georges-André Chevallaz, *The Challenge of Neutrality: Diplomacy and Defense of Switzerland*, trans. Harvey Fergusson II (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2001), 245.

² Robert Cole, *Britain and the War of Words in Neutral Europe, 1939-45: The Art of the Possible*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), 124.

³ Cole, *Britain and the War of Words*, 124.

these successes, the British government needed to continue its propaganda campaign in Switzerland in order to sway its flexible neutrality in favor of Britain. The Swiss were not going to automatically start supporting the British simply because they had won a few battles. After all, the Germans still surrounded Switzerland and had a large impact on their economy. The purpose of British propaganda in 1943 was to give the Swiss more reasons to invest their faith in the Allies and to begin to sever relations with Germany.⁴ The biggest conflicts between the British and Swiss at this point in the war were economic in nature, and the British were able to make small changes to Swiss policy and opinion by following their “Plan of Propaganda.”

Perhaps the biggest conflict between Britain and Switzerland evident in the 1943 “Plan of Propaganda” concerned the War-Trade Agreement. The War-Trade Agreement between the two countries failed in December of 1942 because the Swiss would not agree to limit exports of arms and machinery to the Axis.⁵ The Swiss were dependent on the Germans for essential raw materials and exported finished goods to them in return. The Swiss were afraid of the ramifications they would endure from the Germans if they agreed to reduce exports to Germany. The British used propaganda to try and persuade the Swiss to change their stance on this issue on the grounds that the Swiss were helping an enemy who would never support democracy and that trading with the Germans was harmful to the British war effort. In addition to simply trying to convince the Swiss government to revise its opinion, the British also had a blockade in place that stopped navicerts from getting supplies to Switzerland. With this blockade, the British aimed to increase the need of the Swiss to receive supplies, and to lead them to negotiate with the British and concede to British demands.⁶ In fact, the only way for the Swiss to receive imports or exports to and from the Allies was through the Compensation Deal agreed upon by Britain and Switzerland in December 1942 after the failure of the War-Trade Agreement.⁷ While the Compensation Deal was much less of a success for Britain than the War-Trade Agreement would have been, it was a small step in pushing the Swiss to trade with the British instead of the Germans. The Compensation Deal allowed Switzerland to trade with the Allies by obtaining permits from Germany that allowed Switzerland to transfer goods that had been previously refused by the Axis.⁸ Essentially, the deal created a hole in the “fence” that Germany had put up around Switzerland, allowing goods to be transferred through.⁹ This hole led to a minor breakdown in the German-Swiss Trade Agreement and was the first time that the Allies were successful in influencing the Swiss to challenge Germany’s authority.¹⁰ By threatening to stop trading openly with Switzerland

⁴ Cole, *Britain and the War of Words*, 145.

⁵ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda to Switzerland” (21 July 1943), Conditions and Politics in Occupied Western Europe, 1940-1945, Gale Group Databases, accessed 22 October 2011, 4.

⁶ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1943), 4.

⁷ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1943), 5.

⁸ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1943), 4.

⁹ Neville Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland, and the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 147.

¹⁰ Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland*, 99.

and using economic propaganda, the British attempted to show the Swiss how trading with the Germans was ultimately not in their best interest.

However, convincing the Swiss of this was easier said than done in 1943. The British recognized that many Swiss industrialists were simply looking out for themselves by trying to obtain the best deal possible. In fact, the British knew that many politicians and industrialists were not quite convinced that the Allies were going to defeat the Axis as of July 1943.¹¹ Many Swiss liked the British but continued to deal economically with Germany. As a popular joke during the war said, “the Swiss work six days for Germany and on the seventh day they pray for England.”¹² However, some industrialists were perfectly content both working and hoping for German victory as long as it meant prosperity for them. Since they were not convinced of an ultimate Allied victory, they wanted to maintain relations with the winning side and trade with assumed victors.¹³ While this was harmful to the plans of the British, it made sense from a Swiss point of view to continue trading with whichever power looks more likely to win the war at the time. In 1943 the tide had just begun to turn for the Allies in the war, so the Swiss were cautious and did not yet change their support to Britain. It was up to the British to use propaganda to convince the Swiss that they were in fact gaining ground and Germany was beginning to lose. The propaganda in 1943 became more useful and effective as the war continued and the Allies became more successful against the Axis. The British had to stress to the Swiss that the Allies would not stop fighting until Germany surrendered unconditionally, meaning no peace compromise would be enacted by any Allied power.¹⁴ If the Swiss were trading with whomever they thought was going to win the war at the time, the OPC decided it was important to propagate the idea that Britain would be the ultimate victor and that maintaining good relations with Germany was unnecessary because the German government and markets would be completely destroyed after the war. The propaganda had to convince the Swiss that in the long run, it was not in their best interest to trade with Germany. The OPC needed to start propagating Swiss economic relations with the British rather than the Germans in 1943 in order to have more influence over the Swiss later in the war.

Throughout 1944 the Allies effectively altered the course of the war. They forced the Germans out of Italy, and after the invasion of Normandy, they forced the Germans to retreat from several occupied countries.¹⁵ During this time, not only did Allied confidence grow, but so too did the neutrals’ opinions of the Allies.¹⁶ However, that is not to say that everyone in neutral countries was convinced immediately to support the Allied cause. In reality, 1944 was a very critical time for British propaganda in Switzerland. Tensions still remained between Britain and Switzerland that Britain needed to

¹¹ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1943), 7.

¹² Chevallaz, *The Challenge of Neutrality*, 151.

¹³ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1943), 7.

¹⁴ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1943), 8.

¹⁵ Cole, *Britain and the War of Words*, 147.

¹⁶ Cole, *Britain and the War of Words*, 147.

manage. These points of tension, that the OPC felt was necessary to deal with in order to gain Swiss support, ranged from Swiss complaints about Britain violating Swiss airspace, to Swiss trade with Germany, to Swiss concerns about Britain's will to fight until the Germans had surrendered.

The first major point of conflict between the Swiss and British in 1944 was the issue of Allied flights through Swiss airspace. Throughout the war, the British Royal Air Force (RAF) repeatedly flew through Swiss airspace en route to bomb German cities.¹⁷ This was a direct violation of Swiss neutrality. The British needed propaganda to calm the Swiss Government and convince them that the flight violations were not intentional and that the British still respected their neutral airspace.¹⁸ While the violations occurred many times, the British simply maintained that the flights were crucial and that Swiss airspace was never targeted to be flown through. The Swiss grudgingly accepted the British apologies every time, without taking much action against them other than threatening to shoot the planes down.¹⁹ Propaganda was also used to shift the blame onto American aviators by telling the Swiss that the RAF was much more accurate in their navigation than the Americans when flying near Swiss airspace.²⁰ The British were able to claim this because in 1943, the number of American planes in Europe significantly increased, as did the number of flight violations throughout both 1943 and 1944.²¹ The British wanted to keep their good relations with the Swiss, so they placed the blame on the Americans, who did violate airspace, especially in the few months preceding the invasion of Normandy.²² While these flights were violations of Swiss neutrality, the British claimed that they were not intentional. However, just because they were not intentional does not mean that propaganda was not needed to subdue Swiss concerns. The propaganda used on the Swiss can be deemed successful in this case because the Swiss complaints never manifested into any major action against the British.

In addition to violations of their airspace in 1944, the Swiss also had concerns about the effect of the war on their foreign trade markets.²³ The Swiss wanted to ensure that their foreign trade was secure both during and after the war to prevent a collapse in their economy. When the Allies announced a new Anglo-American Trade Agreement with Switzerland early in 1944, there was still the issue of some industrialists in Switzerland preferring to trade with Germany instead of Britain, because it allowed for Switzerland to become more economically prosperous.²⁴ The German-Swiss Trade Agreement of 1941 had been renewed several times during the war and was going through negotiations again while the second revision of the "Plan of

¹⁷ Overseas Planning Committee, "Plan of Propaganda to Switzerland," (3 March 1944), Conditions and Politics in Occupied Western Europe, 1940-1945, Gale Group Databases, accessed 22 October 2011, 9.

¹⁸ Overseas Planning Committee, "Plan of Propaganda" (1944), 9.

¹⁹ Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland*, 213.

²⁰ Overseas Planning Committee, "Propaganda for Switzerland," (23 January 1945), Conditions and Politics in Occupied Western Europe, 1940-1945, Gale Group Databases, accessed 23 October 2011, 6.

²¹ Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland*, 217.

²² Overseas Planning Committee, "Propaganda for Switzerland" (1945), 6.

²³ Overseas Planning Committee, "Plan of Propaganda" (1944), 6.

²⁴ Overseas Planning Committee, "Plan of Propaganda" (1944), 6.

Propaganda” was being written in March of 1944.²⁵ The German-Swiss Trade Agreement established the exchange of raw materials from Germany to Switzerland for manufactured materials from Switzerland to Germany during the war.²⁶ In the new revision, Germany tried to demand more goods from Switzerland in exchange for the raw materials.²⁷ The British wanted to steer the Swiss away from dealing with the Germans and stop the renewal of the agreement. The British felt that their propaganda was useful because the Swiss were negotiating with the Germans far less than before.²⁸

However, it must be noted that it could have been very detrimental to the Swiss if they had entirely heeded the messages of British propaganda. If Switzerland would have agreed to stop exporting to Germany, it could have caused unemployment, material shortages, and potential military conflict with Germany.²⁹ By standing up to British propaganda and threats, the Swiss were able to avoid this potentially dangerous situation. Although the British failed at obtaining a trade agreement and preventing the Swiss from maintaining their trade agreement with the Germans in 1944, which does not mean that they did not continue to add to their pressure on the Swiss to eventually submit to their influence by the end of the war. However, the British still succeeded in 1944 because the British propaganda caused the Swiss to stand up against the increase in German demands. While the Swiss were still trading with Germany, they were also listening to British propaganda and refusing to increase the number of materials given to Germany.

The British also used a Black List policy to try to reduce the number of Swiss firms dealing directly with the Germans in 1944. Any company that Britain felt was giving Germany an advantage in the war was blacklisted by the Allies and was not to be traded with. The British felt that the Black List policy was fairly successful due to the number of firms that ceased to deal with Germany and it suggested that the Swiss were becoming more confident in an Allied victory over Germany.³⁰ British promotion of the Black List policy was able to have a significant effect in Switzerland. The Black List Policy not only punished those firms who did trade with Germany, but by using propaganda and the threat of blacklisting, firms were dissuaded from even attempting to begin or continue trading with Germany during the war. However, despite the blacklisting and threats from Britain, some still chose to negotiate with Germany. Further, they refused to give in to threats from either side easily. Many Swiss claimed that if they had simply gone along with the Allies, it would have been detrimental to the integrity of Swiss neutrality.³¹ In contrast to this, however, is the fact that many in the Swiss government were not opposed to the blacklisting policy, but they had to fight against it in

²⁵ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1944), 6.

²⁶ Chevallaz, *The Challenge of Neutrality*, 150.

²⁷ Chevallaz, *The Challenge of Neutrality*, 150.

²⁸ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1944), 6.

²⁹ Chevallaz, *The Challenge of Neutrality*, 160.

³⁰ Overseas Planning Committee, “Plan of Propaganda” (1944), 6.

³¹ Chevallaz, *The Challenge of Neutrality*, 160.

order to appear more neutral. For example, according to the British minister in Bern, Marcel Pilet-Golaz, the Swiss Foreign Minister from 1940-1944, would often chuckle at the firms he was required to defend when they were blacklisted.³² He found the situation comical because he, along with many others in the Swiss government, thought that the firms trading with Germany deserved to be blacklisted by the British, and he defended them only because it was his job, which he did without sympathy. While the Swiss government may have agreed with the British blacklisting of certain firms, the Swiss had to act like they were not simply giving in to British threats. It was essential for the Swiss to maintain their public stance of neutrality. However, based on the hidden support by the Swiss government of the blacklisting policy and the number of firms who ceased to trade with Germany, it can be determined that it was a successful British policy. Still, in order to achieve success, the British had to constantly alter their propaganda plans to sway the Swiss without penetrating too far into neutrality that the Swiss fought so hard to preserve.³³

The Swiss continued to trade with Germany because many still believed a peace compromise was possible as of 1944. This was a major point of conflict between the British and the Swiss since in January 1943, the British and the other Allies had committed themselves to continue the war until Germany surrendered unconditionally.³⁴ The Swiss, on the other hand, were neutral and only wanted the war to end. Additionally, many Swiss politicians and industrialists wanted Germany to remain in a position where it would be able to continue to be Switzerland's main market for foreign trade.³⁵ The Allies' complete defeat of Germany would destroy important industrial markets. It would also mean the complete takeover of Germany and cause political and economic relationships that had been maintained throughout the war to become useless. However, the British needed to use propaganda to change this attitude and convince the Swiss that the Allies' complete defeat of Germany was the only way to end the war. In order to do this, they pointed out that the Swiss should be well aware of and recognize the oppression and manipulation Germany used to get what it wanted.³⁶ The British had to stress that German methods went against Swiss beliefs, and regardless of any material gain that the Swiss might acquire through a peace compromise between the Allies and Germany, the Germans were not worth supporting because Germany did not support the core Swiss belief of democracy. Although the British were able to successfully use propaganda to lower the amount of trade between Switzerland and Germany, they were not able to completely abolish it in 1944. However, the fact that the British were able to influence Swiss economics at all, in spite of their resistance against the British, and ease tensions between the two countries shows that the second revision of the "Plan of Propaganda" was successful.

³² Neville Wylie, "Pilet-Golaz and the Making of Swiss Foreign Policy: Some Remarks," in *Switzerland and the Second World War*, ed. Georg Kreis (Portland OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), 162

³³ Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland*, 28.

³⁴ Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland*, 102.

³⁵ Overseas Planning Committee, "Plan of Propaganda" (1944), 8.

³⁶ Overseas Planning Committee, "Plan of Propaganda" (1944), 8.

By January 1945, with the release of the third revision of the “Plan of Propaganda,” the war was not yet over, but the Allies were well on their way to winning. They had begun to liberate occupied territories such as Northern Italy, France, Poland, and many others, and each day they were closer to liberating all of Europe from its Nazi occupiers.³⁷ By this point, Switzerland could not deny that the Allies were going to be victorious. However, while the Swiss did show their preference for the Allies more openly at this time, the Swiss-British relationship was still strained and required Britain to continue to use propaganda in Switzerland. Specifically, the Swiss were still not satisfied with the rate the British were moving towards winning the war and the British were still upset about the Swiss continuing to trade with Germany. These crucial tensions were central for Britain to address in order to make a successful transition to the post-war era.

First, although the Swiss were supportive of the Allies in 1945, they were also very anxious for the war to be over. This led them to criticize any occurrence that would hinder the Allies from achieving that final goal.³⁸ The Swiss also became more critical of the British because there was no longer a substantial German threat to either the Swiss or the British.³⁹ The Swiss were no longer afraid of German invasion, and at the same time they also downplayed the German threat to the British. They believed that the war was all but over, which led them to think that the British were more capable of finishing the war than they actually were.⁴⁰ Thus, in early 1945, the British needed to continue their “Plan of Propaganda in Switzerland” in order to show the Swiss that a great deal more work had to be done in order to defeat the Germans and begin the long road of post-war recovery.

While the Swiss were criticizing Britain’s war progress in early 1945, the British were criticizing Swiss economic policy with Germany. In particular, on October 1, 1944, the Swiss Government agreed to prohibit war material exports to belligerent countries, including Germany.⁴¹ However, as of January 1945, Switzerland was still supplying Germany with war materials, and the Americans were especially critical of this fact as they believed that Switzerland should not be supporting an enemy of democracy.⁴² The British had to ease tensions between the Americans and Swiss by showing the Swiss they were more sympathetic towards Swiss neutrality than were the Americans. As a result, the Swiss negotiated more with the British to avoid conflict with the Americans. It was not until after negotiations in March 1945 that the Allies forced the Swiss to cease almost all economic relations with Germany.⁴³ Up until this point, the British followed what was laid out in the January 1945 “Plan of Propaganda.” The plan had the British maintain their

³⁷ Cole, *Britain and the War of Words*, 167.

³⁸ Overseas Planning Committee, “Propaganda for Switzerland” (1945), 5.

³⁹ Overseas Planning Committee, “Propaganda for Switzerland” (1945), 5.

⁴⁰ Cole, *Britain and the War of Words*, 147.

⁴¹ Overseas Planning Committee, “Propaganda for Switzerland” (1945), 4.

⁴² Overseas Planning Committee, “Propaganda for Switzerland” (1945), 4.

⁴³ Neville Wylie, “Switzerland: A Neutral of Distinction?” in *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents during the Second World War*, ed. Neville Wylie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 343.

current economic propaganda and pressure in order to quell the Swiss' unease about economic criticism, but at the same time make sure the pressure did not escalate into anything that would harm relations with Switzerland. They especially did not wish to endanger escaped Allied prisoners of war who sought refuge in Switzerland.⁴⁴ While Britain's goal was still to gain Swiss support, the British recognized that Germany was no longer a substantial threat to Switzerland. So the British needed to focus on relations between the Swiss and the British rather than convincing the Swiss to stay away from the Germans. They succeeded by March 1945 when Switzerland officially stopped trading with Germany. This change was due to two factors: the German economy collapsing and the constant pressure of the British propaganda. While it took a long time for the Swiss to finally heed to British will, one cannot ignore the fact that British propaganda did make a difference in Swiss policy.

Propaganda was also essential in Switzerland in 1945 to make the Swiss understand that the world was changing, and the Swiss needed to adapt. For instance, according to the third revision of the "Plan of Propaganda" of 1945, "the Swiss tend to cling to pre-war standards and to under-estimate the difficulties with which we are faced by the changed conditions in Europe."⁴⁵ The British felt the need to use propaganda in order to explain how Europe had changed throughout the war and how it was not going to be the same as it was before the war. Specifically, according to the British, the Swiss still thought in terms of pre-war standards because they had not been invaded.⁴⁶ Countries that were being liberated from Nazi control had had their governments, economies, and infrastructures damaged or even destroyed, while Switzerland remained relatively untouched throughout the war. The British needed the Swiss to be as cooperative as possible in order to make the transition of Europe into the post-war period more manageable, since the Swiss still had a functioning state. In fact, even Swiss Foreign Minister Marcel Pilet-Golaz was aware of this fact when he resigned in December 1944. He believed that the Swiss needed to realize that their help was going to be required to deal with the reconstruction that post-war Europe would face.⁴⁷ The British did not manage to convince the Swiss to abandon their neutrality and isolationism in order to rebuild Europe, but the British did persuade the Swiss to remain an active neutral and to "provide succor for Europe's dispossessed."⁴⁸ The Swiss provided both financial and Red Cross services to assist in the rebuilding effort, which was helpful to the British after the war and can be deemed a positive response to British propaganda.

Despite the fact that Britain and the Allies were successful on the battlefield during the years 1943-1945, the British still needed to use propaganda in Switzerland. Swiss beliefs were never quite synchronized with

⁴⁴ Overseas Planning Committee, "Propaganda for Switzerland" (1945), 4.

⁴⁵ Overseas Planning Committee, "Propaganda for Switzerland" (1945), 8.

⁴⁶ Overseas Planning Committee, "Propaganda for Switzerland" (1945), 8.

⁴⁷ Clifford Norton, "Report on Switzerland 1941-1944," (1 March 1945), Conditions and Politics in Occupied Western Europe, 1940-1945, Gale Group Databases, accessed 23 October 2011, 6.

⁴⁸ Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland*, 115.

the beliefs of the British about the war, no matter how much the British wanted them to. Despite their democratic position, the Swiss were always a challenge to deal with for the British, which is why propaganda became so important. Although every goal established in the three British “Plans of Propaganda” was not fully accomplished, each of the plans led to changes in the Anglo-Swiss relationship. Eventually, the Swiss became more receptive to British pleas to stop trading with Germany. Over time they allowed their neutrality to be bent towards the British, and they learned how they needed to help establish a unified post-war Europe. The British used propaganda to ease the tensions between them and Switzerland, and they succeeded in this effort. Even though British use of propaganda may not have always persuaded the Swiss to fully see their point of view and assist them, it did cause the Swiss to increase interactions with the British and decrease exchanges with the Germans. Therefore, the “Plan of Propaganda” created by the British Overseas Planning Committee can be deemed a successful program during World War II.

Taxation and Tyranny:

The Economic Inspiration of the American Revolution

Lynch Bennett

Introduction

As the tensions between the colonists and British soldiers mounted, skirmishes and episodes of violence between the two sides occurred more frequently. On March 5, 1770, one such incident occurred when a group of belligerent colonists began antagonizing a soldier stationed on guard duty outside of a Boston customs building. The soldier sensed the crowd's hostility and retreated up the steps of the customs house, trapped against the building's locked front door. From down the street, Captain Thomas Preston of the 29th Regiment saw that this soldier's life was threatened by the enraged mob. Preston quickly sent twelve soldiers and a non-commissioned officer to relieve the soldier, himself soon following as well. According to Preston, the mob grew violent and began to taunt and feign attack against the soldiers. Preston maintained that he, being down range from his soldiers, never ordered the men to fire. He maintained that in the chaos as the mob attacked, some person did shout, "fire!" and the soldiers obeyed. The crowd soon fled, leaving behind three men who died immediately.⁴⁹ This altercation was quickly sensationalized as the Boston Massacre, and came to symbolize British oppression in the colonies.

Much as the Boston Massacre took on this symbolism in the colonies, so the phrase, "No taxation without representation!" came to represent British financial oppression. Though often used to capture the essence of the motives behind the American Revolution, this phrase does not explain the totality of causation for a rebellion against British rule in the American colonies. Further examination reveals a far more complicated story. The path to independence wound its way not only through war, but also recession, instability, fear, and confusion. In 1783, Thomas Paine trumpeted, "The times that tried men's souls are over-and the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, gloriously and happily accomplished."⁵⁰ Events would soon prove Paine's declaration wrong. Though the revolutionary war was over, the trying times had only begun. Motivated by circumstances and sentiments eerily reminiscent of those which prompted the American Revolution, within three years of the American victory Daniel Shays led a rebellion against the new government. The parallels between the revolution and Shays' Rebellion are striking. In the 1770s American colonists cried out over the lack of representation in Parliament, as the farmers in Shays' Rebellion claimed improper representation in the Massachusetts Legislature. Both the rebels and the colonists pursued their personal financial interests through militant action.

As the tensions in the colonies reached the violent levels of the Boston Massacre, the colonists claimed to be opposed to taxation, yet a repeal of the offending taxes did not assuage their anger. Though important, taxation was not the primary issue. Throughout the years leading up to the American Revolutionary War, colonists sought to maintain control over their own financial interests. In order to do this, they needed control over the economic

⁴⁹ *London Evening Post*, "Case of Capt. Thomas Preston of the 29th Regiment," April 26, 1770.

⁵⁰ Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis* (Raleigh, N.C: Alex Catalogue, 1990).

legislation governing their markets, which would require proper representation in the governing legislative body, Parliament. Because the British system of virtual representation did not allow the colonists the control they desired, they were left with little recourse but to seize this control by force in the American Revolutionary War.

The Road to Revolution

Many of the issues that sparked the Revolutionary War find their roots in the events and aftermath of the French and Indian War. Even into the 1750's most American colonists were quite content with the status quo, and had no quarrel with being subjects of the British crown.⁵¹ The British Prime Minister and his cabinet believed that the best way to rule the colonies was with a loose grip, lest tight control should interrupt the trade and commerce so important to the empire's wellbeing. With very little regulation, the British officials in the colonies did little to control local affairs. Governors often attained their positions through bribery, and were rarely qualified to fill such an important position. Similarly, customs officials often accepted their position but desired to remain in England, instead hiring deputies to carry out their duties for them in the colonies. Often times, these deputies were not opposed to accepting bribes from merchants, who used this underhanded practice to bypass trade regulations.⁵² Under this decentralized imperial control, the colonial legislative assemblies took many matters of governance into their own hands, and were able to dictate their markets and the logistics of their trade unimpeded by the British government. The assemblies became accustomed to levying taxes, making governmental appointments, and passing legislation without involving British authority. These decades of relative independence and decentralized British control fostered a sense of autonomy in the colonies.⁵³ The events of the 1750's, however, marked an abrupt change in the way the colonies were ruled. As a new proxy war between France and Britain played out in North America, the political situation in the American colonies irrevocably changed.

The outbreak of the French and Indian War in 1754 was the tipping point for the colonial revolutionary movement. During the first phase of the war, the colonists did their best to defend themselves from the alliance that the French government and Native Americans had forged against them. In 1756, the Seven Years War began in Europe, and this seemingly insignificant conflict in the Americas became part of a larger, global war.⁵⁴ *The London Daily Advisor*, prior to the outbreak of the Seven Years War wrote, "Let us not, then, suffer a Ship to rest in our Harbors, nor a Gun to lie in our Arsenals, till the French are entirely driven out of North-America."⁵⁵ The British Prime Minister, William Pitt, saw that the American colonies, beset by

⁵¹ *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*. vol. 6, 1754-1769, ed. John Russell Bartlett, (Providence: Knowles, Anthony, & Co., State Printers, 1861), 419.

⁵² Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause* (New York: Oxford university press, 2005), 67.

⁵³ *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*. vol. 6, 1754-1769, ed. John Russell Bartlett, (Providence: Knowles, Anthony, & Co., State Printers, 1861), 420.

⁵⁴ *The Virginia Gazette*, "From the London Daily Advisor," January 9, 1756.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

the combined might of the French and Native Americans, would require British assistance to survive. Seeing the plight of Britain and the colonies, Pitt said, "I know that I can save this country and that no one else can."⁵⁶ It was at this point, in 1757, that the colonies lost any semblance of autonomy. William Pitt began to assume control of the American theater of the war, thus encroaching on the colonies' freedom. Soon impressments, British control of militia, and the commandeering of property became the order of the day.⁵⁷ The colonists, accustomed to freedom and independence, chafed under the close management and watchful eye of the British. As early as 1758, the relationship between the colonies and Britain became strained, and in an attempt to appease the angered colonists, William Pitt relaxed some of the imperial policies in order to make amends with subjects in the American colonies.⁵⁸

Despite Pitt's endeavor to patch relations with the colonies, the strife between the Americans and the crown continued into the aftermath of the French and Indian War. By facing a common foe in the French, the colonies gained a sense of unity, and saw a glimpse of the nation they could be if they were united. Additionally, when Pitt attempted to gain favor with them by restoring some of their freedoms, the colonists felt their anger was justified and began to doubt the legitimacy of British authority.⁵⁹ In 1760, King George III ascended the throne; his agenda to restore monarchical power further increased friction between Britain and the American colonies.

While political unrest was stirring in America, the high cost of the war on both sides of the Atlantic left the British government in dire financial straits. At the end of the Seven Years War, the British national debt exceeded £120 million, and was growing rapidly.⁶⁰ This debt became even more formidable when, in 1763, the citizens of Exeter protested the Cider Tax demonstrating to King George and Prime Minister Grenville that they would accept no further taxation.⁶¹ To complicate matters further, it seemed that the colonies in America would require full time military protection to defend against the constant threat of French, Spanish, and Native American attack. Grenville estimated that to maintain an army in the Americas would cost approximately £200,000 per year, and because the expensive troops stationed in the Americas were for the colonists' own protection, they should, at the minimum, pay the expenses of this protection. The relatively wealthy American colonies seemed an ideal place to acquire additional revenue. The tax plan Grenville proposed would extract only £78,000 a year from the colonists, leaving the remaining £122,000 to be funded by the rest of the

⁵⁶ *Memoirs of the Reign of King George II* vol. 3, ed. Horace Walpole, (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), 84.

⁵⁷ Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. Volume 1, To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 94.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁵⁹ Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. Volume 1, To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 97.

⁶⁰ Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause* (New York: Oxford university press, 2005), 61.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 61.

empire; in his mind the colonists were receiving a bargain.⁶² The colonists begged to differ.

The first of these attempts to exact revenue from the colonies came in the Sugar Act of 1764. Grenville did not intend for this act, or any of the subsequent revenue acts, to offend the colonists' sensibilities. As part of the Sugar Act, the duty on molasses would be decreased, and the duty on sugar would be increased. The increased cost of the sugar, however, was not what offended the colonists. Included in the law were trade regulations dictating where certain goods, such as lumber, could and could not be shipped, as well as new rules of prosecuting those who violated trade laws.⁶³ At first the colonists were not overly concerned about the new legislation. There had always been some regulation, but bribery and smuggling had allowed the merchants to bypass the laws and do as they pleased. Under the Grenville administration, however, the customs officials were better regulated and disinclined to engage in underhanded transactions. Moreover, Grenville passed laws mandating that those breaking the trade laws be tried in fair courts, where bribery or personal friendships with officials did not provide means of bypassing the legal system.⁶⁴ Consequently, the colonists, seeing a loss of control of trade and markets and therefore their financial bottom line, became outraged at the British legislation to which they were now held accountable. Furthermore, the decreased levels of post-war production had caused an economic depression throughout the empire. Although the economy fell to its lowest point in 1763, a year before the Sugar Act, colonists still blamed the act for the depression. In 1764, Parliament passed the Currency Act, and soon Britain was extracting ten times the amount of revenue from the American colonies that they had collected in 1763.⁶⁵ Fears of economic oppression and restriction mounted as the colonists began to see the effects of taxation and closed trade markets in their finances.

Those fears intensified when Parliament levied the infamous Stamp Act the following year. This act required all official documents and paper goods in the American colonies to be marked with a stamp, which indicated that a duty had been paid on the item. It was to be a self-enforcing act because only documents that bore the stamp would be valid in business transactions.⁶⁶ In this way, any colonist whose business required using paper would have to use paper bearing the stamp, thus paying the tax. Grenville implemented a similar tax in England a year earlier and believed that the colonists would not be opposed to paying a tax their cousins in England paid as well.⁶⁷ He did not foresee how the colonies would respond to this interference with their trade. In his sermon, *The Snare Broken*, given after the repeal of the Stamp Act,

⁶² Ibid, 62.

⁶³ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, "Philadelphia," Oct 6, 1763

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. Volume 1, To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 100.

⁶⁶ John Dickinson, *Letters from a Farmer: Letter II*.

⁶⁷ Michael L. Ross, "Does Taxation Lead to Representation?" *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 34, No. 2, (April 2004): 229-249, 264.

Jonathon Mayhew expressed his concern that the laws would ruin colonial trade. Mayhew also thought that the heavy taxation would cripple the colonies by removing currency from circulation as it was paid to Britain. The legislation, Mayhew believed, would destroy the colonies economically.⁶⁸ The legislation did raise British revenue, but the economic concern it caused also united American colonies against England under one common grievance.

For several weeks, the law went unnoticed in America, but in May of 1765, the Virginia House of Burgesses took up the call for freedom from oppression and approved resolutions that declared Parliament's new laws illegitimate on the grounds that the colonies were not represented in Parliament; that they were not subject taxation without representation. This legislation, known as the Virginia Resolves, spread throughout the colonies and other legislatures followed Virginia's example. In 1765, nine colonial assemblies gathered at New York and wrote to the king expressing their frustration with the new laws as well as their belief that Parliament had overstepped its bounds in regulating trade.⁶⁹ The assemblies echoed the cry of "no taxation without representation" by declaring that, "It is inseparably essential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted right of Englishmen that no taxes be imposed on them but with their own consent, given personally, or by their representatives."⁷⁰ By October, the colonial assemblies came together to discuss their mutual grievances in the Stamp Act Congress. This congress reiterated the same firm belief that because the colonies' interests were not represented in Parliament, Parliament had no right to levy taxes on them.⁷¹ At that point, the colonies became united under a common affliction, and they unanimously agreed that there was to be no taxation where there was no representation. By 1766, the colonists relied on mob rule to prevent the British from enforcing these "coercive" laws.

While the colonial assemblies discussed a plan of action for dealing with the Stamp Act, private citizens delivered moving speeches, sermons, and literature denouncing the British government and calling the citizens to cast off the burden that had been thrust upon them. John Allen, an incendiary New England preacher, wrote and spoke out against the tyranny of the British. In his work, "An Oration upon the Beauties of Liberty," written to the Earl of Dartmouth, Allen argued vehemently against the British impositions. He said that it was "the singular happiness of the Americans, according to their own laws, not to be in bondage to any power on earth."⁷² Allen went on to say that if the king were to try to force any law upon the colonies, that by doing so he destroyed his very right to rule them. He then called the colonies to take action against England, saying that it is not rebellion to oppose an oppressive leader. In his closing remark, he warned the colonies that, though

⁶⁸ Jonathon Mayhew, *The Snare Broken*, Boston, 1766.

⁶⁹ *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*. vol. 6, 1754-1769, ed. John Russell Bartlett, (Providence: Knowles, Anthony, & Co., State Printers, 1861), 466.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 465.

⁷¹ Michael L. Ross, "Does Taxation Lead to Representation?" *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 34, No. 2, (April 2004): 229-249, 232.

⁷² John Allen, *An Oration Upon the Beauties of Liberty*, New London, 1773.

the Stamp Act seemed egregious enough, the worst was yet to come; they “need only wait and see what other horrendous taxes Parliament had in store in its ‘mischievous design.’”⁷³ Works such as Allen’s publication fed colonists’ fears and sparked rumors of further British economic control and oppression, pushing the colonies ever closer to the brink of revolution.

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic in England, there was much debate as to how to handle the colonial dissension. There were some, such as Grenville, who believed that Parliament and the crown were sovereign in the colonies and could do as they pleased.⁷⁴ Others disagreed with this view, as seen in the pamphlet “Considerations,” which was circulated in England and then printed in *The Virginia Gazette* in 1766. This pamphlet argued that the colonists were actually justified in their outrage over the Stamp Act. Citizens of England carried the misconception that many, if not all, colonists were wealthy and could easily afford to shoulder some of the burden of imperial debt.⁷⁵ This belief was of course incorrect, but not entirely unfounded. Of all the colonists that were in the Americas, only the truly wealthy could afford to return to Europe, and those that did make the expensive journey made great show of their abundant wealth. This led the citizens of England to mistakenly believe that all colonists shared in this opulence.⁷⁶ Furthermore, the pamphlet made the point that decreased volume of currency in the colonies made the value of each shilling greater than it was in England. Therefore each colonist who was forced to part with a penny suffered more than a resident of England paying the same tax due to deflation in the colonies.⁷⁷ The arguments in “Considerations” were valid, yet Parliament did not heed that advice.

A large part of the colonists’ anger was founded in the belief that they were not properly represented in Parliament. Without the representation, the colonists had no control of trade or markets, and were therefore subject to the will of a distant government. The British concept of representation was not geographic, but rather class-based. Many of England’s various boroughs had no geographical representative, yet they believed their interests were still represented virtually because Parliament represented England as a whole.⁷⁸ William Pitt disagreed with this common view, however, and believed virtual representation for the colonies to be absurd because the colonists’ interests were completely different from England.⁷⁹ Grenville responded to Pitt by asserting that, because England provided for the defense of the colonies, the colonies were required to obey Parliament’s laws. Pitt agreed with Grenville on that account, but thought that this did not support any authority to levy

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, “Extracts of Sundry Letters from London,” March 27, 1766.

⁷⁵ *The Virginia Gazette*, “From a pamphlet lately published in London, entitled ‘Considerations’,” May 30, 1766.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. Volume 1, To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 106.

⁷⁹ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, “Extracts of Sundry Letters from London,” March 27, 1766.

taxes in the colonies. Pitt's words did little more than cause many members of Parliament to resent him.⁸⁰

Outside of Parliament, "Considerations" also addressed the issue of representation. Many in England supported this concept of virtual representation, and could not understand the colonists' strange idea of direct geographical representation. "Considerations," largely agreeing with Pitt, argued that virtual representation did work in England, where the interests of the representatives were concurrent to that of their constituents, but the interests of the colonies were different from those of their British cousins and were not represented in Parliament. It would be impractical, however, for the colonists to send representatives to Parliament because of the great distance between England and America. Therefore, "Considerations" argued, the colonies should be permitted to have relative autonomy as they once had. Even conquered nations were given the right to collect their own tribute to be sent back to the conquering nation; the colonies, made up of unconquered fellow British citizens, should be given the same courtesy.⁸¹

Many colonists read works such as "An Oration upon the Beauties of Liberty" and "Considerations," and became even more enraged at the British. Newport, Rhode Island became a hotbed of violence between enraged merchants and dutiful British customs officials. In June of 1764, Lieutenant Thomas Hill, the commanding officer of the H.M.S. *St. John* and acting customs officer in Newport, encountered the united resistance of the colonial merchants. Hill pursued a merchant ship that was trying to avoid customs, but when he finally apprehended the ship, a mob in Newport turned on him and wounded his men with stones and small arms fire.⁸² A year later in August of 1765, John Robinson, another Newport customs agent, encountered such violent resistance that he was forced to write the governor of Rhode Island, Samuel Ward, informing him that he was too fearful for his own safety to continue his duties.⁸³ Meanwhile, in Boston, the Sons of Liberty organized in protest of the Stamp Act, burning stamps and intimidating stamp agents. In the summer of 1765, these protestors attacked and vandalized the homes of several Boston officials, including that of Governor Thomas Hutchinson, who barely escaped with his life.⁸⁴ The colonies were rapidly approaching a state of open rebellion.

The volatile political state in the colonies reverberated back to England and prompted a series of discussions and a litany of suggestions to repair the situation. Some believed that Britain should simply cut ties with the colonies; they were more trouble than they were worth. Others adamantly held to the view that the American colonies belonged to the crown and should be forcibly brought under control. If Parliament were to maintain the status quo in the

⁸⁰ Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause* (New York: Oxford university press, 2005), 116.

⁸¹ *The Virginia Gazette*, "From a pamphlet lately published in London, entitled 'Considerations'," May 30, 1766.

⁸² *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*. vol. 6, 1754-1769, ed. John Russell Bartlett, (Providence: Knowles, Anthony, & Co., State Printers, 1861), 427-429.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 453.

⁸⁴ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, "New York, September 5, By the Hartford Post," September 12, 1765.

colonies, many feared that it would incite the colonists to all out war.⁸⁵ If Parliament were to repeal the acts, it was thought by some that the colonists would take a mile when given this inch and still rebel against the crown.⁸⁶ Yet another group maintained that by repealing the acts, the colonists would show appreciation and gratitude and return to a state of peace and loyalty. Only time would reveal how the colonies would react.

The debate in England sparked changes at home and abroad. The Marquis of Rockingham succeeded Grenville as Prime Minister and immediately sensed the pressure wrought by colonial boycotts. Rockingham subscribed to a carrot and stick theory, believing that the colonists would give up long term control for immediate relief. Thus he repealed the Stamp Act while at the same time passing the Declaratory Act.⁸⁷ This new law stated that Parliament had “full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies and people of America, subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, in all cases whatsoever.”⁸⁸ The repeal of the Stamp Act precipitated mixed feelings in the colonies. Some colonists felt that the repeal was an endorsement of their resistance. Others thought that the repeal was a valid peace offering, and now that the offense had been rescinded, loyalty to a benevolent king should be restored. Jonathon Mayhew, a New England minister, was a prominent advocate of resisting the Stamp Act, but upon its repeal, conceded that a union with Britain was in the colonies’ best financial interest.⁸⁹ Mayhew was certain that Britain was not interested in harming the colonies; on the contrary, “the king, his truly patriotic ministry and the Parliament have the interest, particularly the commercial interest of the colonies much at heart.”⁹⁰ Mayhew further asserted that the colonies had a right to complain when mistreated, and that the king would listen because Britain needed the colonies just as the colonies needed Britain.⁹¹ Many others shared Mayhew’s belief and reason, yet confusion and fear of taxation and economic oppression prevailed in the colonies.

Though the Stamp Act itself could be retracted, the effects of the act on the colonists could not. Lord Chatham succeeded the Marquis, but soon succumbed to mental illness allowing Charles Townshend to take control.⁹² Townshend resumed the policy of imposing legislation upon the colonies such as the Quartering Act and Mutiny Act, which did little more than fan the flames of rebellion. The colonists were not as upset about what they were being forced to do, as they were that Parliament was forcing them to do it. The New York Assembly refused to obey or enforce Parliaments’ latest decrees,

⁸⁵ *The Virginia Gazette*, “From a pamphlet lately published in London, entitled ‘Considerations’,” May 30, 1766.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *The Virginia Gazette*, “From a pamphlet lately published in London, entitled ‘Considerations’,” May 30, 1766.

⁸⁸ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, “A Bill for the Better Securing of His Majesty’s Dominions,” May 22, 1766.

⁸⁹ Jonathon Mayhew, *The Snare Broken*, Boston, 1766.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause* (New York: Oxford university press, 2005), 102.

and Townshend ordered their legislature disbanded.⁹³ The Prime Minister foolishly hoped that the other colonies would not be disturbed by this action, as it did not affect them, but nothing could be further from the truth. The colonists feared, as John Dickinson did, that Parliament had set a new precedent by dispensing with the New York Assembly, and the suspension of other assemblies was sure to follow.⁹⁴ When Parliament levied the Townshend Duties, a set of taxes limited to imported and exported goods, merchants in New York and Pennsylvania joined merchants in Boston to boycott British goods in protest of the new taxes.⁹⁵ The colonies were developing a sense of fraternity with one another, and realized that if they combined economic forces, they could more effectively retaliate against the oppressive British government and take control of their economic wellbeing. In 1770 the new Prime Minister of England, Lord North, recognized the fiscal damage being done to the empire by the colonial boycott and attempted to restore peace in the colonies and end the protest by repealing all of the Townshend Duties—except the tax on tea.

Parliament had blundered once again. If the colonists were truly only angry over the taxes they faced, a repeal should have soothed their angst. The repeal had no effect, however, because excessive imperial legislation had now convinced them that their liberty was in peril, and it would require more than merely a repeal to appease them. The ire of the citizens of Boston could not be assuaged by North's meager offering, and they continued to harass the remaining British officials. Sensing the growing hostility, England began to send troops to the colonies, and by 1769, there were 4,000 soldiers in the city of Boston amongst a civilian population of 15,000.⁹⁶ The people of Boston began to fear the military presence which exacerbated the strained relationship between civilians and soldiers. On March 5, 1770, British troops fired on a crowd they perceived as a threat, killing five people in what became known as the "Boston Massacre."⁹⁷ Fear and rumor in Massachusetts caused a rapid destabilization of peace.

In 1773, Lord North and Parliament passed the Tea Act, which was merely an attempt to save the British East India Company from financial ruin. The tax did nothing more than exempt British East India Company tea from the duty on tea. Lord North believed this would actually make the colonists happy since it would decrease the actual cost of tea. Once again, the British plan backfired. The disgust at the British interference in their economy trumped the reduced price of tea, and colonists perceived this measure as an adjustment to a tax that Parliament had no right to levy in the first place.⁹⁸ Furthermore, they saw it as an attempt to undercut the New England

⁹³ John Dickinson, *Letters from a Farmer: Letter I*.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. Volume 1, To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 103.

⁹⁶ *London Evening Post*, "Case of Capt. Thomas Preston of the 29th Regiment," April 26, 1770.

⁹⁷ Gordon S. Wood, *The American Revolution: A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2002), 34.

⁹⁸ Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. Volume 1, To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 108.

merchants by lowering British East India Company tea prices to levels they could not compete with. The outrage over the Tea Act culminated in the Boston Tea Party, which in turn caused Parliament to retaliate in the form of the “Coercive Acts” as a means to punish the rebellious Massachusetts colonists until they were “brought to a proper sense of their duty.”⁹⁹ These acts closed the port of Boston, reduced the powers of the Massachusetts government, allowed British officers to be tried for crimes in England where they would likely receive a more favorable verdict, and forced the colonists to quarter troops.¹⁰⁰ The other colonies, fearful that punitive measures would be imposed on them as well, perceived the Massachusetts government as a martyr. Rather than quelling revolt in one colony, the acts unified American colonies and ushered in a period of revolution in America.

With the signing of the Declaration of Independence in the summer of 1776, the colonies made their revolution official. The declaration reflects many of the fears and concerns of the colonists that prompted their rebellion, as well as the transition from an indictment of Parliament for unfair treatment of the colonies to an indictment of the king. The authors, appealing to Lockean political theory, asserted that people have the “inalienable rights” to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” and the king violated those rights through a host of crimes such as waging war against the colonies, depriving the colonists of opportunities to claim western land, sending “swarms of officers” to harass civilians, and others. It was the dream of economic independence and freedom from British tyranny that gave the colonists the drive to fight through eight difficult years of war.

A First Attempt at Building a Nation

When the American Revolutionary War ended, Americans began the onerous task of building a new nation. The first attempt at government came in the form of the Articles of Confederation, a document that very much reflected the fears and concerns over British legislation before the war. The Articles made the Continental Congress the source of national authority, yet it gave the congress only minimal powers to use this authority. Under the Articles, the Continental Congress could conduct wars, manage foreign relations, and issue currency, yet it could not regulate trade, draft troops, or levy taxes.¹⁰¹ The new national government had been given a race to run, yet had no legs to stand on. It could conduct a war, yet could not conscript troops to fight the war. It could issue currency, but it could not raise revenue to back its currency. For fear that the new central government would grow too powerful and become like the British government from which they had just escaped, power and sovereignty was left in the hands of the individual colonies. The weakness of the new government quickly became apparent. In 1784, John Adams attempted to negotiate with the English government concerning things such as slave reparations and removing the British military presence from American soil, but he made little progress because the British

⁹⁹ *The Virginia Gazette*, “London, March 17. Lord North Every Day Grows More Into Favor,” May 19, 1774.

¹⁰⁰ *The Virginia Gazette*, “London, March 17. Lord North Every Day Grows More Into Favor,” May 19, 1774.

¹⁰¹ *The Articles of Confederation*, Articles VII, VIII, IX, 1781.

could not understand if he was representing one or thirteen nations.¹⁰² As time went on, it became increasingly evident that a change in the government was necessary.

One of the greatest examples of Congressional weakness was exposed by Shays' Rebellion. In an attempt to fund its debt, and pay the Continental Congress' required quota, the Massachusetts legislature raised taxes and increased the interest on debts owed.¹⁰³ Farmers in western Massachusetts became overwhelmed by this debt. Unable to pay, approximately 1,200 farmers banded together and took up arms to protect their property from repossession behind Daniel Shays, a disgruntled former Continental Army captain.¹⁰⁴ Due to its limits under the Articles of Confederation, the Continental Congress could not raise a militia, leaving the suppression of the rebellion in the hands of Massachusetts. Realizing the task would be left up to them, the Massachusetts assembly called up a militia under the command of General Benjamin Lincoln to forcibly disband Shays' force. When the armies met, Shays' undisciplined force quickly descended into chaos. Shays ordered a retreat, and when Lincoln pursued him, he sent a letter to Shays informing him that if no one fired upon the Massachusetts militia, the privates in Shays' force would be released in three days time with "favorable recommendation" to the judge.¹⁰⁵ Shays' army did in fact disband, and Shays and his officers were sentenced to death.¹⁰⁶ The men were pardoned in 1787, however, because there were some such as Thomas Jefferson, who believed, "A little rebellion now and then is a good thing... God forbid that we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion."¹⁰⁷ Tactically, Shays' Rebellion had failed, but it did draw the attention of the Massachusetts legislative assembly to the financial plight of the farmers ultimately giving them partial tax relief.

During the rebellion, the Continental Congress was powerless to stop the dissidents. Without the ability to raise an army, the quelling of the rebellion was left to a state legislature. In addition to military impotence, Congress was able to obtain only one sixth of the revenue it required from the colonies.¹⁰⁸ It was clear that if a central government were going to be effective in any capacity, it would have to be endowed with increased power. Those that supported this strengthened central government, such as Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison, were known as Federalists. Those opposing strong central government, such as Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams, were known as Antifederalists and believed themselves the true defenders of the beliefs of the Revolution. Antifederalists feared that a strong

¹⁰² Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. Volume 1, To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 135.

¹⁰³ Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause* (New York: Oxford university press, 2005), 621.

¹⁰⁴ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, "Boston, Copy of a letter from the Honorable General Shepherd, to his Excellency the Governor, dated Springfield, January 26, 1787," February 14, 1787.

¹⁰⁵ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, "Boston, Copy of a letter from General Lincoln to Captain Shays, Copy of a letter from Captain Shays to the Honorable Major-General Lincoln," February 14, 1787.

¹⁰⁶ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, "Boston, March 29. On Wednesday Last the General Court Proceeded," April 16, 1788.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Jefferson, *Letter to John Adams*, January 30, 1787.

¹⁰⁸ Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. Volume 1, To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 138.

central government under a constitution would become as oppressive an entity as the British government they had struggled against. They feared that federalism would increase taxes, weaken the power of the individual states, give totalitarian powers to the central government, favor the wealthy over the commoner, and destroy the liberty of the individual. Federalists, like Madison, argued that a large republic would dilute power over a greater population and geographical area and therefore be less likely to produce tyranny than a smaller republic.¹⁰⁹ In the end, the Federalists won the debate, and by 1788 the states that had ratified the Constitution were prepared to take on the task of governing a nation.¹¹⁰ This new constitution gave the central government the power to levy taxes, regulate commerce, and raise an army to “execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions” amongst other things.¹¹¹ The United States government now had the authority and ability to act in its own preservation and defense.

Examining Events

The desire for economic control and the fear of economic oppression played a large role in driving the revolution that formed the United States, as well as the post-war insurrection that threatened it. The colonists rallied to the cry of “no taxation without representation,” yet further investigation shows that taxation may not have been the only issue at hand. Certainly, throughout the 1760s and 1770s, Parliament’s myriad legislation passed on the colonies played a major role in fanning the flames of revolution. Had there been no taxation or trade regulation, there would have been little to instill fear of greater taxes and further injustice. Nevertheless, by the time the revolution was under way, Parliament had repealed all offending taxes on the colonies except for the Tea Act, which actually made tea more affordable to the colonies. If taxation was the primary motive for revolution, the repeals should have alleviated this tension, yet the revolution survived.

Taxation aside, the remaining aspect of the colonial grievances was representation. Representation did not become an issue until Parliament began to pass direct revenue raising acts and trade regulations on the colonies. Political scientists theorize that taxes are the price one pays for democratic representation and thus representation should increase in proportion to taxation.¹¹² If taxation exceeds representation, revolution will result. This theory would hold true in the American Revolution, had the taxes not been repealed prior to the outbreak of violence; however, taxation was not the colonies only grievance. The colonists also strongly desired to be in control of their own finances and economies. In order to do this, they had to be in control of economic regulation, and therefore required a say in the passage of legislation. Without proper representation, they could not have the control they desired, and so they were left with little recourse but revolution.

¹⁰⁹ James Madison, *Federalist No. 10*, 1787.

¹¹⁰ Gordon S. Wood, *The American Revolution: A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2002), 164.

¹¹¹ *The Constitution of the United States*, Article 1, Section 8.

¹¹² Michael L. Ross, “Does Taxation Lead to Representation?” *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 34, No. 2, (April 2004): 229-249, 238.

Throughout the years leading up to the American Revolutionary War, the colonists' finances weighed heavily on their minds. With each passage of economic legislation, Parliament appropriated the colonies' ability to control trade and finances, thus pushing the colonial assemblies closer to a declaration of independence. Without proper representation in Parliament, the colonists were powerless to control their finances, trade, or markets, and so strove to gain control of their bottom line. These sentiments were soon encompassed by the phrase, "no taxation without representation," a battle cry that quickly rallied the colonists to the revolutionary cause. Though taxation alone may not have been the primary issue, Parliament's total interference in trade and economic regulation was an onerous thorn in the colonists' collective side. As the colonists' frustrations grew, they soon clashed with the British soldiers stationed throughout the colonies, much as the Sons of Liberty clashed with Captain Thomas Preston and his soldiers on a snowy winter's night in Boston, Massachusetts. As the grievances mounted, the colonists could suffer to have a foreign power control their economy no longer, the call to revolution was answered, and a new nation was born.

Interpreting British Neutrality:

James D. Bulloch and the Confederate Navy in Great Britain

Olivia Hagedorn

Building a navy solely within the Confederacy was an unrealistic if not impossible goal at the beginning of the Civil War, for the South's agrarian nature combined with its overall lack of infrastructure rendered the nation unfit to produce a naval fleet. The Confederate States of America would have to turn elsewhere; Europe seemed like the perfect place. Leading European nations, however, declared neutrality in the early summer of 1861, making Confederate naval procurement abroad an arduous task. James Dunwoody Bulloch, the chief Confederate naval agent in Great Britain, recounted this challenge in his memoirs:

At a very early period of the war it became a matter of common conjecture that ships were building in England for the service of the Confederacy.... To build or even buy ships suitable for either attack or defense, to get them out of English ports, and then to equip and arm them, were undertakings requiring utmost secrecy and reserve, the success of every effort depending upon the fidelity and discretion of many subordinate agents, and the precise correspondence of many complicated arrangements.¹¹³

Creating a navy in foreign shipyards for an unrecognized country was not a simple task; it was nearly impossible. Yet Confederate agents did procure ships in Europe. One must ask, then, how Confederate agents secured naval vessels despite the roadblocks.

In order to comprehend Confederate ship procurement abroad, one must understand how naval agents maneuvered within foreign neutrality laws. Confederate naval activity in Great Britain exemplified both the successes and failures of these maneuverings. Success often depended on whether or not an agent's interpretation of neutrality mirrored the British government's interpretation. Failure occurred when these interpretations differed. So long as the British interpretation was the same as the Confederate interpretation, Southern agents were able to secure naval vessels; however, when British interpretation shifted in 1863, Confederate naval agents encountered resistance and ultimately failure.

Confederate naval success depended on ship procurement abroad; thus, when Confederate naval agent James D. Bulloch arrived in Liverpool in June 1861, he understood the magnitude of the task at hand. Creating a navy for an unrecognized nation was difficult, but doing so within a neutral power's borders was even more ambitious. The success of Bulloch's entire mission depended on his ability to discern the meaning of British neutrality. The Queen's official declaration of neutrality was released on May 14.¹¹⁴ This declaration clarified Great Britain's stance in the war and sought to acquaint both the Union and the Confederacy with the basic tenets of British neutrality. In effect, the declaration prohibited belligerent recruitment of British subjects, forbade the arming or building of warships in British territorial waters, and banned belligerent powers from enhancing the "war-

¹¹³ James D. Bulloch, *The Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe, or How the Confederate Cruisers Were Equipped*, ed. by Philip Van Doren Stern. (1883; 2 vols., New York: Sagamore Press, 1959), 1: 23.

¹¹⁴ Warren F. Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe* (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1983), 17.

making power" of naval vessels within Britain's domain. Procedures for the declaration's enforcement were laid out by the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1819. The act reiterated the specifications cited in the May 14 declaration but further restricted belligerents' use of seaports and repair facilities. More importantly, however, the Foreign Enlistment Act specified that only British officials could enforce neutrality.¹¹⁵ These two laws thus explained the fundamental workings of British neutrality; combined, the laws offered a seemingly concrete wall blocking foreign ship procurement abroad. James Bulloch, however, resorted to finding loopholes within the laws. Confederate naval procurement in England relied on Bulloch's perspicacity.

James Bulloch recognized the importance of working within British neutrality, for if the laws were violated, ships would be seized and thus rendered useless to the Confederate cause. Bulloch consulted the expertise of a prominent Liverpool lawyer, F. S. Hull, to determine the limits of the two laws. Because both laws were untested at the start of the war, Hull had no legal precedent with which to work; he therefore submitted a hypothetical case in order to determine the government's interpretation of the two laws. The court's ruling interpreted the boundaries within which Confederate procurement agents could work: Building a vessel was not illegal, for "the offense was not the *building* but *equipping*."¹¹⁶ So long as ships were neither armed nor intended for Confederate war use, British neutrality laws would not be violated. This interpretation was contingent, however. Should British law change and specify warlike structure as reason for seizure, then Confederate procurement would be rendered impossible. Change was unlikely, however, for the embarrassment of parliamentary revision would likely to deter revision. Further, enforcement of neutrality had to remain within the law, for if the British government enforced neutral policy instead of neutral law, Confederate ships would undoubtedly be seized. The second specification was less certain and would eventually turn against the Confederacy.¹¹⁷ Bulloch thus depended on a narrow view of British neutrality. If the British government's interpretation mirrored Hull's interpretation, then Confederate naval procurement would be able to push forward; however, if either the law or its enforcement changed, then Confederate ship procurement would be halted.

With the boundaries of British neutrality interpreted, Bulloch and his fellow agents began their assigned missions. Mallory assigned specific missions to each agent, and Bulloch's task was to procure cruisers to sail against Northern merchant shipping. Mallory envisioned ships that were small, fast, and shallow-drafted.¹¹⁸ These characteristics would allow the cruisers to run the Union blockade while also enabling the vessels to make hit-and-run attacks against Northern merchant vessels. The attacks would

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 8-10.

¹¹⁶ Frank J. Merli, *Great Britain and the Confederate Navy, 1861-1865* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), 59-60.

¹¹⁷ Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, 9-10.

¹¹⁸ United States, Department of the Navy, *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of Rebellion*, 30 vols. and index, series II, 2:64, Mallory to Bulloch, 9 May 1861. [Hereafter cited as ORN with Roman numeral to indicate the series, followed by Arabic numerals to indicate the volume and then the page.]

theoretically force the Union to weaken its blockade in order to protect merchant shipping.¹¹⁹ Bulloch thus set about his mission and began searching for vessels that could potentially serve as Confederate cruisers. Bulloch wasted little time; by his second day in Liverpool, the agent had signed with the firm William C. Miller and Sons to adapt a Royal Navy wooden gunboat design that would meet Mallory's specifications. This vessel would be the future C.S.S. *Florida*. With the negotiations for the *Florida* still under way, Bulloch consulted with the William Laird and Sons Company to design and build a ship to specifically meet all of Mallory's standards. The contract for the C.S.S. *Alabama* was signed on 1 August, 1861.¹²⁰ In fewer than two months, Bulloch had achieved an incredible feat: He had contracted for the construction of two cruisers in a neutral nation's borders. The most difficult challenge lay ahead, however, for actually putting these vessels to sea involved acute attention to detail.

As the *Florida* and the *Alabama* neared completion in early 1862, several problems emerged that threatened the ships' safe release. However, these challenges did not arise from diplomatic issues; rather, lack of communication between Confederate agents and Secretary Mallory impeded Bulloch's mission. In addition to faulty communication, tensions between Bulloch and the other Confederate naval agent operating in Europe, James H. North, flared in October 1861 and continued to fester well into 1862; petty feuds concerning rank, money, and command threatened the two agents' effectiveness and almost cost the Confederacy two cruisers. The difficult release of the C.S.S. *Florida* demonstrated how a lethal combination of miscommunication and pettiness could jeopardize a vessel's safe release. Bulloch was originally assigned command of the *Florida*, and North was assigned command of the *Alabama*. When Bulloch was unable to leave Savannah due to the blockade, he asked Mallory to reverse the commands; however, lack of communication between Richmond and Liverpool left North unaware of the switch. Thus when the *Florida* neared completion in 1861, confusion emerged over who was to command the vessel. With Bulloch trapped in Savannah and North unaware of the command change, the *Florida* sat. The longer the vessel sat the more attention she drew. Union consul Thomas H. Dudley wasted little time and initiated an investigation into the ship's purpose and ultimate destination. The C.S.S. *Florida* was thus the first Confederate-built vessel to test the bounds of the Foreign Enlistment Act. Fortunately, the British interpretation of the Foreign Enlistment Act saved the cruiser from seizure. Officials refused to accept Dudley's claims based on the premise that the 1819 law did not specify structure as cause for seizure; because the *Florida* was unarmed, the vessel did not violate the 1819 act.¹²¹

When Bulloch returned to Liverpool in March 1862, he worked quickly to put the vessel to sea. The agent inspected the cruiser to ensure that it did not contain a "single article of contraband of war" which would subject

¹¹⁹ Merli, *Great Britain and the Confederate Navy*, 53-54.

¹²⁰ Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, 18-19.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38-42.

the ship to British seizure. Bulloch then appointed a British subject, Captain James Alexander Duguid, as commander and enlisted a British crew to outfit the ship.¹²² These efforts to comply with British neutrality undoubtedly protected the vessel against seizure and are a testament to Bulloch's keen understanding of British neutrality procedures. Once out of British waters, the *Florida* sailed to Nassau. Upon its arrival, the vessel was seized and put on trial for violating the Foreign Enlistment Act. Once again, however, Bulloch's attention to detail and knowledge of the 1819 law salvaged the vessel, for the tribunal freed the ship on the grounds that the government had failed to prove three specific violations: that the *Florida* had taken on arms while still in British waters, that the ship was bound for use in the Confederate service, and that the ship was intended for hostile use against the United States.¹²³ Bulloch's attention to detail and astute understanding of British neutrality thus saved the C.S.S. from seizure. Furthermore, the trial confirmed that British interpretation of the 1819 act mirrored Bulloch's interpretation. So long as British interpretation and Confederate interpretation remained identical, Bulloch's savvy and competence would persevere, and Confederate ship procurement would continue.

The safe release of the *Florida* undoubtedly boosted Bulloch's confidence in his understanding of British neutrality. Thus, when the C.S.S. *Alabama* neared completion in the summer of 1862, Bulloch applied the same protocol to ensure Confederate compliance with British neutrality laws. In keeping with the ruse that the *Alabama* was a merchant vessel, Bulloch hired a British captain certified by the British Board of Trade, Matthew Butcher. Bulloch also arranged for the ship's armaments to be transported on the *Agrippina*. Once in international waters, the two vessels would rendezvous and transfer supplies and armaments. The *Alabama* would thus leave Liverpool in compliance with the Foreign Enlistment Act, for the ship would leave port with a certified British captain and be completely unarmed.¹²⁴ Bulloch also carefully guarded information concerning the ship's destination and intent. He held employees at a distance, and the ship's preparations were "done quietly, without any excitement or appearance of haste." Furthermore, no men were hired for "any other purpose than that of navigating an unarmed ship, and no man was enlisted to enter the Confederate service, or was a word said to any man to induce him to enter that service...until after the ship had passed far beyond British jurisdiction."¹²⁵ Bulloch thus adhered to strict compliance with British neutrality insofar as he interpreted the 1819 act. As was the case with the C.S.S. *Florida*, Bulloch's attention to detail would save the *Alabama* from British confiscation.

Despite Bulloch's precautions, the ship attracted the attention of federal agents and spies. Angered by the release of the C.S.S. *Florida*, Union consul Dudley increased Union surveillance and began sending detailed reports to Minister Charles Francis Adams in London. Convinced of the ship's

¹²² Bulloch, *The Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe*, 152-153.

¹²³ Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, 44.

¹²⁴ Merli, *Great Britain and the Confederate Navy*, 89-90.

¹²⁵ Bulloch, *The Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe*, 230-231.

Confederate origins, Adams called for the *Alabama*'s seizure. British officials once again refused to enforce neutrality beyond the specifications cited in the Foreign Enlistment Act and determined that the ship's structure alone was not grounds for seizure. When British authorities finally did call for the ship's seizure, the *Alabama* had already sailed and was beyond the confines of British jurisdiction.¹²⁶ Bulloch had been informed by a "reliable source" that the ship had to leave port within forty-eight hours or risk confiscation. This tip impelled Bulloch to employ yet another scheme in order to get the *Alabama* to sea. Bulloch organized for a trial run for local dignitaries; after a day of trial runs, Bulloch informed the guests that he wished to keep the vessel out for the night to complete the remaining runs. The *Alabama* sailed forward into international waters.¹²⁷ Bulloch's attention to detail and the British government's narrow interpretation of the law had benefited the Confederacy once again. Once again, Bulloch had out-maneuvered both Union and British officials and secured the release of another cruiser for the Confederate Navy.

After the safe releases of the *Florida* and the *Alabama*, Bulloch turned toward ironclad procurement. From the start of the war, Mallory had envisioned a two part navy: One branch would prey on Northern shipping while the other would force the Northern blockade.¹²⁸ Cruisers alone would not be able to force the Northern blockade; Mallory's vision required the construction of an ironclad fleet that could counter the North's numerical advantage with the offensive power of "plated or ironclad ships."¹²⁹ Geography and strategy required ironclads with shallow draft and narrow turning radius. These characteristics would allow the ironclads to navigate Southern ports and harbors effectively.¹³⁰ Thus, Bulloch's mission was specific and required strict compliance with British neutrality acts, especially because ironclads were more conspicuous than wooden vessels. When Mallory assigned Bulloch the mission of procuring two ironclad vessels, the agent consulted the Lairds Company, which had constructed the *Alabama*. Acting as a private citizen engaging in a commercial transaction, Bulloch signed for the construction of two identical ironclad rams. Bulloch also made specifications concerning the ships' armaments: "No magazines were to be placed in either ship. Nor any special places for stowing shells and ordnance stores." The agent even researched whether or not armor-plates could be considered armaments.¹³¹ Bulloch thus made every possible effort to ensure that the ironclads conformed to the Foreign Enlistment Act; unfortunately, Bulloch's narrow interpretation of the 1819 law would render the Laird Rams useless to the Confederate Navy. As Bulloch would soon discover, British neutrality was changing.

¹²⁶ Merli, *Great Britain and the Confederate Navy*, 89-92.

¹²⁷ Bulloch, *The Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe*, 238-242.

¹²⁸ Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, 3.

¹²⁹ Mallory to Davis, 27 February 1862, *ORN*, II, 2: 151.

¹³⁰ Merli, *Great Britain and the Confederate Navy*, 179.

¹³¹ Bulloch, *The Secret Service of the Confederate Service in Europe*, 386-887.

The first indication that British neutrality was tightening did not involve the Laird Rams or any other Confederate-contracted vessel; rather, the first indications of shifting neutrality emerged in response to another Confederate vessel, the *Alexandra*. The ship was a small, wooden vessel whose only warlike quality was a reinforced structure; furthermore, the *Alexandra* was not contracted by Confederate agents but was instead commissioned by Charles K. Prioleau, a British citizen, to be presented as a gift to the Confederacy.¹³² When the *Alexandra* was seized, Bulloch immediately recognized the shift in British neutrality, writing Secretary Mallory of the change in May, over a month before the *Alexandra*'s trial:

You have doubtless learned from the Northern press...that the British Government is now enforcing the provisions of the foreign enlistment act in a manner most injurious and damaging to us. I long since reported to you that it would not be advisable to attempt any further operations in England, and that I would go to France to build the additional screw ships.¹³³

Thus, even before the trial began, Bulloch recognized the shift in British neutrality; if officials were willing to seize and try a small wooden vessel with few warlike characteristics, the Laird Rams were undoubtedly at risk. The trial nevertheless ended favorably for the Confederates. Despite the efforts of United States Ministers Dudley and Adams, the court adhered to a strict interpretation of the 1819 law and rejected the notion that structure indicated intent.¹³⁴ Even though the court ruled favorably, the *Alexandra* trial represented a shift in British neutrality enforcement that would work against future Confederate ship procurement in Great Britain.

The *Alexandra* trial signified a dramatic shift in British neutrality. As previously noted, Bulloch's interpretation of the Foreign Enlistment Act relied on two separate factors: The law could not change, and British enforcement had to remain within the boundaries set by the 1819 act.¹³⁵ The *Alexandra* trial affirmed that British law had not changed; however, the government's actions in the aftermath of the court's ruling revealed that enforcement had changed. If the British government could not secure neutrality through the law, then neutrality would be achieved through force. Thus, from 1863 onward, the British government attempted to enforce neutrality through the provisions cited in the 1819 law, but if the law proved ineffective, then the government would use extralegal means to secure neutrality.¹³⁶ A number of factors induced this change. The escape of the *Alabama* and the subsequent uproar caused by the vessel's exploits, European international crises, Southern military losses, and pressure from English businessmen all compelled British officials to act more aggressively.¹³⁷ But the primary force behind the shift was British Foreign Minister, Lord John Russell. Russell recognized that the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1819 was insufficient and did

¹³² Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, 101.

¹³³ Bulloch to Mallory, 16 May 1863, *ORN*, II, 2:423

¹³⁴ Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, 102.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 102-103.

¹³⁷ Merli, *Great Britain and the Confederate Navy*, 195.

not enable the British government to enforce its neutrality. When the law failed, Russell acted on his own accord and enforced neutrality outside of the courts.¹³⁸ Bulloch's narrow interpretation of the Foreign Enlistment Act thus proved detrimental to naval procurement in Great Britain; when the British Government moved beyond the confines of the law to enforce neutrality, Bulloch was unable to maneuver effectively and was therefore unable to protect Confederate ships.

The Laird Rams were the first vessels to suffer the repercussions of changing British policy, confirming Bulloch's May 16 assessment. Despite an announcement on September 1 declaring that the government did not have sufficient proof to detain the Laird Rams, Russell ordered the Rams' detention on September 3, and on noon the next day claimed full responsibility for their detention.¹³⁹ Russell had acted outside of the law, demonstrating that British enforcement of neutrality had shifted from a matter of law to a matter of policy. The policy was neutrality, and if the law was incapable, then Russell was willing to side-step it. Russell's actions were backed by force rather than legal warrants, for shortly after the rams were formally seized on 9 October, Marine detachments boarded the ships, and gunboats were stationed in order to prevent a sudden escape.¹⁴⁰ Despite Bulloch's efforts to reassign the contract to a French company acting on the Confederacy's behalf, the rams were ultimately lost. The British Admiralty purchased the rams on May 4, 1864. Russell's desire to enforce British neutrality had forced him to go beyond the confines set by the Foreign Enlistment Act. Bulloch's narrow interpretation of the 1819 law proved detrimental, for when British officials enforced neutrality by extralegal means, Confederate naval activity halted. The seizure of the Laird Rams thus demonstrated how changing British enforcement ultimately crushed the Confederate naval program in Great Britain.

Foreign neutrality laws made Confederate ship procurement abroad a tedious, if not impossible task. Confederate ship procurement abroad required a thorough understanding of foreign neutrality laws, for if the laws were violated, ships would be seized. James Dunwoody Bulloch's actions in Great Britain demonstrate how Confederate naval agents maneuvered around and within neutrality laws in order to secure naval vessels. Bulloch's assessment of the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1819 was both accurate and narrow, for when Confederate naval agents first began acquiring ships; Bulloch's interpretation managed the safe release of Confederate cruisers. Bulloch's interpretation, however, relied on two separate factors: British law could not change, and enforcement had to remain within the confines set by the Foreign Enlistment Act. The *Alexandra* trial affirmed Bulloch's interpretation; however, the case marked a turning point in British neutrality. In the hearing's aftermath, enforcement of British neutrality shifted from a matter of law to a matter of policy. British officials, led by Lord Russell, were

¹³⁸ Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, 125-126.

¹³⁹ Merli, *Great Britain and the Confederate Navy*, 200-202.

¹⁴⁰ Spencer, *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, 111.

willing to go beyond the confines set by the outdated 1819 law in order to enforce British neutrality. When this shift occurred, Confederate naval operations in Great Britain were effectively terminated. Confederate agents' reliance on a narrow interpretation of the Foreign Enlistment Act thus benefited the Confederacy when the British interpretation mirrored Bulloch's interpretation; however, when British officials used extralegal means to enforce policy rather than law, Bulloch and his fellow agents were helpless and turned to France in desperation.

Powerful Women in a Patriarchal Society:

Examining the Social Status and Roles of Aristocratic Carolingian Women

Kristen Blakenbaker

Throughout history, men have dominated the pages of books--achieving great feats, triumphing over barbarous foes, and innovating law and technology. But behind those omnipotent men lie a more subtle figure, one that eludes annals and epics. These seemingly spectral figures are, in fact, women. While they lived in a patriarchal society, women are the little-acclaimed individuals who supported society and made the heroic deeds of men possible. Especially in the Carolingian Empire, women held positions vital to the sustainability of Carolingian culture and society. Not only did they support men in traditional roles as virtuous mothers, nurturers, and models of beauty and morality, but they also controlled massive amounts wealth, protected against armed revolts, and preserved family lineages. Although the majority of Carolingian texts are authored by men and concern masculine activities, brief glimpses of the lives of aristocratic women can be deciphered through careful examination. In addition, history has a tendency to view women through a modern feminist lens, which leaves pre-modern women subject to assumptions of vulnerability, subjugation, and passivity. But these assumptions are not necessarily true. Although they lived in the constraints of a patriarchal society, Carolingian aristocratic women held a high status and role achieved through law and politics, economic and managerial pursuits, religious ties and family bonds, as well as education and domestic leadership.

Before examining the status and various roles of Carolingian aristocratic women, it is necessary to establish a background of their lives and experiences to better understand their impact on society. There was no homogenous standard of life; women in the Carolingian Empire differed in their ethnic backgrounds, roles in religious or lay settings, and responsibilities. Even the simple idea of marriage during this time had different definitions as *Muntehe*, *Friedelehe*, and concubines existed simultaneously. It is therefore important to take these differences into consideration and further define the differing statuses of women in order to better understand them.

For the majority of Carolingian aristocratic women, marriage and the bearing of heirs served as the best and easiest means to secure stability for their own life as well as increase opportunities for advancement. Aristocratic families maneuvered themselves to find the best male suitor that would simultaneously increase their families' prestige and create stronger political and military alliances. As a result, families might betroth girls to their future husbands at young ages and marry them at around fourteen years of age. Noted in Einhard's *The Life of Charles the Emperor*, Rotrude, the daughter of Charlemagne by Hildegard, became betrothed to a Byzantine heir at the age of nine, although Charlemagne ultimately broke the betrothal promise.¹⁴¹ These political marriages were almost always legal contracts that would benefit both parties, rarely a result of affection or love. To make family and political matters more complicated, different definitions of marriage existed during the Carolingian age. As mentioned above and described by Professor Ruth Karras, the *Muntehe* marriage was more legally binding and involved the

¹⁴¹Einhard, *The Life of Charles the Emperor*, trans. Thomas F. X. Noble (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2009), 39.

transfer of the woman's protection from her family to her husband. The *Muntehe* also involved the bride-price, later the *dos*, and formal ceremony, which clerical authority valued.

In contrast, contemporary lay people considered the *Friedelehe* marriage to be valid, but it did not require a formal ceremony or bride-price, and it kept the woman's protection with her kin.¹⁴² This quasi-marriage was more easily absolved, as evidenced by Lothar II and Waldrada. In addition to forms of marriage, concubines also existed alongside wives, although they did not enjoy the same status and prestige. Despite being married, many Carolingian aristocratic women lived alone at their estate the majority of the time, as their husbands spent their time at the Emperor's court or on military campaigns. Not only does this suggest a lack of bonding and loving relations between spouses, but it also points to the managing of estate affairs by wives. Since men had official aristocratic duties elsewhere, women assumed responsibility of childrearing, family affairs, and the day-to-day management of her family's lands and wealth.

While the average age of death for Carolingian women was an estimated thirty-six years of age, many women became widows as they outlived their husbands.¹⁴³ Society held widows in high regard, placing them under special protection and holding them to higher moral standards. As outlined by Suzanne Fonay Wemple, during the Merovingian dynasty, widows often returned to their extended families where they could contribute to domestic duties and pursue religious interests. But due to policy changes during the Carolingian Renaissance, widows increasingly joined convents for protection. Families began to pressure widows and other unmarried women into convents as they did not provide economic value to the conjugal family unit, which became more important to society during this time. In addition, men who promised to defend widowed women sometimes extorted a large sum of money or else the widow could be robbed of her rightful property.¹⁴⁴ As a result, Carolingian aristocratic widows began entering convents in larger number as the ninth century progressed. Many of them became *deo sacrata*, described by Simon MacLean as veiled, but not living in an enclosed convent. He notes that affluent widows remained secularly influential and managed their wealth and land holdings. By joining a convent, they avoided allegations of witchcraft, adultery, or failure to live up to stringent morals set upon widowed women.¹⁴⁵ Widowed women did use convents as a means of avoiding political attacks, while attending to their personal interests. They also contributed their expertise in managing estates to the nunneries, which profited from widows' skills and financial resources.

¹⁴²Ruth Mazo Karras, "The History of Marriage and the Myth of Friedelehe," *Early Medieval Europe* 14 (2006): 120-121, accessed 12 November 2011, DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-0254.2006.00177.x.

¹⁴³Lisa Bitel, *Women in Early Medieval Europe, 400-1100*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 101

¹⁴⁴Suzanne Fonay Wemple, *Women in Frankish Society: Marriage and the Cloister, 500-900*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 104-105

¹⁴⁵Simon MacLean, "Queenship, Nunneries, and Royal Widowhood in Carolingian Europe," *Past and Present*, 178 (2003): 3-7, accessed 28 September 2011, DOI 10.1093/past/178.1.3.

After examining the lives of married and widowed aristocratic women, it is important to delineate the aspects of women's lives that defined their status in Carolingian society. Status, for the purposes of this paper, is the rank of aristocratic women relative to others, in addition to their condition under Carolingian law and the resulting expectations of females in society. While their individual status was important, a woman's position in society could further enhance or detract from their family's prestige. Three aspects of society specifically impacted aristocratic women: beauty, virtue, and Carolingian law and its reforms throughout the ninth century.

History has always recognized feminine beauty as a social marker of women. The opulent dress of royal women is well recorded throughout time. Carolingian writers, however, never recorded what qualified as beauty in their writings. In addition, it is difficult to ascertain from surviving texts what role beauty had in a woman achieving high status within the Carolingian Empire. Although writers often described queens and female saints as beautiful, it was a common practice during that time for authors to flatter their royal subjects as a means of currying favor. Despite this lack of information, it is evident that beauty played a significant role for several reasons. Most obviously, women used fashion as a way to distinguish between social classes and lay and religious roles, and therefore assert their social superiority in the Carolingian world. In addition to their coiffure and couture, physical differences between common and aristocratic women resulted as lower class women worked outside all day and ate less nutritious food.

More important than differentiation, however, is the connection between clothing and wealth in aristocratic society. According to Valerie Garver, aristocratic men often displayed women in richly-adorned dress to project his wealth, power, and status. As lavish clothing could include gems and pearls, a woman's dress had the ability to reflect her family's tremendous wealth and increase their reputation. This ability meant that feminine beauty had power, due to the connection of wealth and beauty. Regardless of a Carolingian woman's natural visage, her appearance required money for high society to consider her beautiful. Contemporary men who attempted to climb the social ladder used their wives and daughters to attract other aristocrat's attention and impress them with a show of wealth.¹⁴⁶ It was commonly known by nobles that their high status was dependent upon wealth and good marriages with women who owned land. Thus, women and their families used women's appearances to gain social status and create new political alliances through marriage.

Because of its opulence, the clothing itself was a moveable asset owned by women. Their ability to own and transfer land and moveable assets made women powerful in their own right as well as distinguishing them from lower class women. Because of the expense of making luxurious clothing, women must have carefully managed their resources and household to sustain such an appearance. In addition, displaying such clothing meant that families expected women to be socially competent in order to best create opportunities

¹⁴⁶Valerie Garver, *Women and Aristocratic Culture in the Carolingian World*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 28-37

for advancement within aristocratic society.¹⁴⁷ In her *Handbook for William*, the aristocratic Dhuoda not only quipped on female vanity, but she also attributed the cause of female vanity on men who preferred beautiful wives.¹⁴⁸ By remarking on the needs of men, Dhuoda understood the social pressure that men put on women in order to please them, resulting in female vanity.

In addition to a connection with wealth, Carolingians strongly associated beauty with inner virtue. As a result of an incorrect translation of the Second Council of Nicea in 787, the Christian community mistakenly believed that the Byzantines supported the adulation of images, sparking a debate in the Carolingian world over the place of beauty and aesthetics in religion. This clerical controversy modified the way in which clerics viewed adornment and beauty in the Carolingian world. As the religious argument continued, clerical texts from the ninth century show an increased concern with female vanity. While the Carolingian hagiographies of female saints almost always described the woman as beautiful, lay women became increasingly accused of vanity. In his writings, Alcuin associated the deadly sin of narcissism with women, as in his writings he quoted Old Testament biblical passages to admonish women, lay and religious, into dressing more conservatively.¹⁴⁹ Despite clerical rebukes, Carolingian aristocratic women continued to use their beauty as a way to achieve status and power.

Virtue, however, remained highly valued among aristocratic society, not only for its religious value, but also for more practical reasons. By remaining virtuous and pure, women reflected well on their families, but they also preserved stability within their families and established a legitimate family line. Accusations of adultery committed by women were severe and changed the entire political landscape. When Lothar accused the Empress Judith, Louis the Pious' second wife, of having an extramarital affair with Bernard of Septimania, he succeeded in causing division in the Empire and ultimately provoking a civil war. In addition, Lothar II's attempted divorce from his wife Theutberga, who allegedly committed adultery, caused considerable controversy throughout the Western world and stirred additional conflict between Lothar II and his brothers. Interestingly enough, commentary from Sedulius Scottus's *On Christian Rulers*, written around 855, highlights the importance of virtue in royal women as Lothar II's divorce scandal raged on. Sedulius Scottus wrote that "A wife virtuous in morals stands forth as the glory of the king...piety, prudence and sacred authority should adorn her."¹⁵⁰ The contrast between Scottus' ideal virtuous wife and the scandals that rocked Europe during this time further highlights the Carolingians' value of virtue. From these three sources, it is clear that virtue in women was necessary to establish legitimate heirs as well as keep stability within the Empire.

¹⁴⁷Garver, 53.

¹⁴⁸Dhuoda, *Handbook for William, A Carolingian Woman's Counsel for her Son*, trans. Carol Neel, (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 24, note 33.

¹⁴⁹Garver, 25-34.

¹⁵⁰Sedulius Scottus, *On Christian Rulers*, in *Carolingian Civilization: A Reader*, ed. Paul Edward Dutton, 2nd ed. (Ontario: University of Toronto Press: 2009), 385.

Especially important are Carolingian marital reforms and their impact on women's status. Not only did the reforms drastically change the definition of marriage, but they also transformed and somewhat limited women's power as the century progressed. As Carolingian rulers attempted to transform their vast empire into a Christian Empire, laws concerning marriage became increasingly delineating as they narrowed the definition of marriage into a monogamous union that made divorce more difficult to attain and excluded illegitimate children. These reforms exemplified the Christian model of marriage while making *Friedelehe* marriages and concubinage increasingly rare. The move toward a legal, monogamous marriage served to solidify women's legal status as well as establish the conjugal family the fundamental unit in the Carolingian world. During the Merovingian period, the extended family was the center of Carolingian society, but reforms in law placed emphasis on a nuclear family unit as the center of economic activity. These changes and the Christian model of marriage resulted in an increase in the wife's workload, as previously concubines and multiple wives shared the workload and management of the estate, as well as childbearing.¹⁵¹ In addition the *Friedelehe* form of marriage became increasingly used by men as a sort of "trial marriage," in which they could sexually gratify themselves in addition to denying his "trial wife" any legal rights.¹⁵²

While contemporary writers recognized the importance of women and their roles in society, they continued to view women as weak and subservient. In spite of social inequality, Carolingian law held women and men as equals. There are several surviving texts that relate divorce cases taken to court by women. One of these women, Northilda, tried to obtain a divorce in 822 when she alleged that her husband had sex with her in a 'shameful manner'. After lay bishops refused to suspend her marriage, they sent her to a secular court, which they felt was more appropriate to deal with such issues. Although the court refused to intervene on Northilda's behalf, they did intercede in favor of women when men physically threatened their wives. According to Hincmar, it was not rare for husbands to attempt to kill their wives if they were a 'nuisance'. In 895 the Council of Tribur instructed Bishops to make sanctuary for threatened women.¹⁵³ These examples of Carolingian law not only highlight women's ability to access the legal system and their confidence in protection by the law, but also the effects of Carolingian reform laws. Since it was more difficult for a couple to attain divorce, men began resorting to killing or harming their wives.

In addition to immediate deleterious effects, the marriage laws passed by Carolingian rulers had negative effects on women's economic freedoms. Due to the decrease in divorce during the ninth century, women could no longer divorce and remarry, a practice which often resulted in the woman's acquisition of new property and expanded wealth. Now, the law made women wait until their husbands died, when they could then exercise independent

¹⁵¹Wemple, 97

¹⁵²Wemple, 111.

¹⁵³Wemple, 104.

control over their dower and land.¹⁵⁴ According to David Herlihy's economic theory, contemporary evidence suggests that land ownership among women decreased, especially in the latter half of the century when Louis the Pious' reforms and the church's increased enforcement of the divorce law occurred. The decline in the number of second and third marriages meant that women could no longer gain new property through marriage settlements. This decrease resulted in a parallel decline in women's land ownership from the ninth to the tenth century, 13% to 9.7%. In addition, women's control of land sales, transfers, and donations decreased between 814 and 840, during the reign of Louis the Pious.¹⁵⁵ The individual economic activity of women was more elevated during Pepin the Short and Charlemagne's reigns, indicating that Louis the Pious' reforms restricted a woman's ability to act independently. Despite this evident restriction of economic liberties, husbands and wives often co-signed their property, even if the property was originally his.¹⁵⁶ Thus, certain men recognized that women, who managed the land, played an important role in the conjugal unit and respected women's equality before the law.

While the ninth century marriage reforms diminished aristocratic women's economic roles, Carolingian rulers, beginning with Charlemagne, officially recognized the Queen's important position in society. Despite his dysfunctional family, which included concubines, illegitimate children, and unmarried daughters with children, Charlemagne set the precedent of official recognition. He established the coronation and anointing of the Queen as well as including her name in litanies, symbolizing her importance and increased role in the Carolingian Empire. Furthermore, Charlemagne formally declared the queen as second in command. In *Capitulare de villis*, he commands that "anything ordered by us or by the queen... must be carried out to the last word."¹⁵⁷ By formally recognizing the authority of the queen, Charlemagne set a precedent for the Carolingian *reginae* to hold great authority and enhance their influence and administrative duties throughout the ninth century. The queen's duties included the possession, guardianship, and use of the royal treasury, palace administrative duties and management, in addition to producing heirs. These responsibilities and Charlemagne's recognition not only directly influenced the queen, but it also expanded the prestige of aristocratic women as elite Carolingians attempted to emulate the royal family.¹⁵⁸ Even after the queen became a widow, she continued to exert great authority and command respect throughout the Empire. While some widowed queens joined convents and retired from the public eye, many queens retained their influence, advising in alliances, selecting heirs, and negotiating to increase her family's wealth and land holdings. Charlemagne's mother and wife of Pepin the Short, Queen Bertha exemplified the widow's

¹⁵⁴Bitel, 162.

¹⁵⁵Wemple, 107-109.

¹⁵⁶Wemple, 112.

¹⁵⁷"Carolingian Polyptyques: The Capitulare de villis," University of Leicester, accessed 4 November, 2011, <http://www.le.ac.uk/hi/polyptyques/capitulare/trans.html>.

¹⁵⁸Wemple, 180.

ability to continue her role as a leader and advisor. After her husband's death, Bertha sustained peace between her two ruling sons and recommended marriage for Charlemagne in order to create alliances and isolate his enemies. Einhard writes, Bertha "grew to a great old age in [Charlemagne's] presence and was held in high honor. He treated her with such respect that no discord ever rose between them except when he divorced the daughter of King Desiderius, whom he had married on her prompting."¹⁵⁹ Charlemagne, the great Emperor of Europe, celebrated in contemporary and modern times, held a female political figure with "high honor" and valued her advice.

Despite the political recognition of the authority of the Carolingian *reginae* during the ninth century, the Carolingian Renaissance regulations and reforms created what Simon MacLean calls a "gendered political language" used to criticize queens. The Carolingians symbolized the queen as emblematic of the virtue and morality of the court, as well as the palace as symbolic of the entire kingdom.¹⁶⁰ When political opponents accused queens of sexual impropriety and 'polluting' the palace, as they did to Judith in the 830s and Theutberga in the midcentury, they symbolically attacked the king's authority and his kingdom. While these queens likely did not commit any misdemeanors, the language used to attack them was sufficient to cause widespread political instability throughout Europe. As a result of these scandals, a delineation of the queen's and lay women's roles became necessary in the latter half of the ninth century. Throughout the course of the century, female power became viewed by aristocrats as socially disruptive and a threat to the *status quo*. While early Carolingian rule formalized the roles of women and strengthened their influence within the family, it also consolidated the dominance of men in every other sphere of society.¹⁶¹ This standardization of gendered stereotypes in the Carolingian world ultimately prevented women from acting outside of their roles as wives, mothers, and property owners.

The status of aristocratic women hinged on virtue, the ability to manipulate beauty, wealth, marriage status, and Carolingian laws and reforms throughout the ninth century. While these components formed the status that defined their position in society, women simultaneously performed roles vital to the stability and prosperity of the Carolingian Empire. One vital function that women played in society was their ability to create and manipulate family bonds to further her kin. Through their role as nuns and abbesses or wives and mothers, women during this period could create multiple bonds through marriage or monasticism, making them incredibly valuable networking tools by which their family could increase its influence.

While seemingly contradictory to the ideal of women spreading influence through the birth of heirs, religious women served several purposes, both religious and secular. Many aristocratic families sent their daughters to

¹⁵⁹Einhard, 37-38.

¹⁶⁰MacLean, 8.

¹⁶¹Wemple, 105-106.

convents at an early age, usually with family lands that would be donated to the convent as an oblation offering. Not only did the monetary offering secure the daughter's entry into monastic life, but it also served to secure the family's control in the nunnery. During Carolingian reign, monasteries and convents were powerful economic and political forces that actively involved themselves in secular affairs. The abbots and abbesses of these institutions were in fact often from noble families themselves, and throughout their administration increased their family's influence in that region. For that reason, aristocratic families sought to ingratiate themselves with the top families in the Empire by sending their daughters to create a bond with the royal abbesses. In addition to political and socioeconomic reasons, religious women also served a more practical purpose as she prayed for her family's salvation and kept the memory of her lineage intact.¹⁶² Even during Louis the Pious' reforms that dramatically changed the status and roles of lay women, religious women continued to openly pursue family interests and travel to manage land. The combined advantages of monastic life made it a very appealing option for Carolingian aristocratic families.

While religious women perpetrated family influence through religious, political, and socioeconomic means, lay women's family ties rested on their ability to marry well and produce male heirs. After the deaths of their husbands, women were often dependent on their male heirs to provide for them, as Judith was on Charles the Bald. Her physical and political protection of him from infancy, as described by Ermoldus, was a foresight of the role that Charles would play after his father's death.¹⁶³ Despite Lothar's allegations of adultery between Judith and Bernard of Septimania, Judith continued to pursue her son's right to a portion of the Carolingian Empire, which would conveniently provide for her in her state of widowhood. In addition to bearing children and promoting their interests, women could also strengthen and manipulate family bonds as a method of increasing family prestige and disseminating family memory. Wives often created bonds with their children's paternal kin as the children could possibly benefit from the inheritance of her husband's family. In *Handbook for William*, Dhuoda admonished William to pray for his father's family that gave him a land inheritance. She not only recognized the importance of promoting her son's future interests, but she also attempted to pass an oral lineage, or a family memory, on to her son.¹⁶⁴

In addition to the perpetuation of family bonds and family memory, arguably the aristocratic woman's most crucial role was the education and moral instruction of children and lower class servants. During the Carolingian renaissance, society recognized that women had a special maternal bond with their children, putting them in a unique position to educate. Furthermore, Carolingians also recognized the role that socialization had on children and the importance of a moral example in their household.

¹⁶²Garver, 74.

¹⁶³For a detailed account of Judith and Charles the Bald, see Ermoldus, *In Honor of Louis*, trans. Thomas F. X. Noble (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2009), 181.

¹⁶⁴Dhuoda, 342.

These acknowledgements put women in a very powerful position as they controlled the early development of behavior, religious beliefs and habits, and education in an era when learning and academic advancement were especially valued. In addition, aristocratic women used socialization to perpetrate aristocratic behavior and beliefs in their children, further dividing social classes and instilling distinctive qualities and traits in Carolingian aristocrats.¹⁶⁵ The surviving texts from the ninth century tell much of the expected role of women as teachers. Clerical writings devote much time to the subject and asserted the duty of women to properly raise their children and slaves in a Christian household, with the wife as the moral center. If a woman failed to establish a virtuous household that reflected well on her family or committed immoral acts, society viewed her as disruptive and questioned the legitimacy of her heirs.¹⁶⁶ Especially since noble men were often away at court or on military campaigns, women carried the responsibility of education singlehandedly.

While educating their children and slaves, women also held a position of economic equality in the Carolingian world and managed her family's household, wealth, and land holdings. Because a woman's dowry included land that would expand her conjugal unit's influence, aristocratic marriages strengthened not only the family but the woman's position within the household.¹⁶⁷ She had the authority to transfer land, often participating as a co-signer on her husband's property, as well as the ability to manage household finances. Dhuoda mentioned that she took out loans from a Jewish creditor to pay her husband's debts, a sure indication that society recognized women's power to control family finances and transfer money.¹⁶⁸ Also, several mentions of various queens of protecting and using the royal treasury on a frequent basis indicate that women held power over finances while their husbands tended to political affairs. Both instances lead to the assumption that aristocratic women must have had a solid education in figuring sums and creating budgets, due to the fact that they managed their household's expenses, controlled treasuries, and paid loans. As society expected women to manage her household, including the products being produced by servants, as well as create a fitting atmosphere for royal guests and pilgrims alike, women must have had significant authority in the domestic and financial sphere.

As evidenced by their respected status and numerous roles, Carolingian aristocratic women played a significant role in religious and secular, private and public affairs. Their contributions to the Carolingian world were invaluable: aristocratic women bore and educated children while simultaneously managing the economic and physical dimensions of her family's estate while also pursuing her family's interests. This list of duties and responsibilities is nearly endless. But despite their significant duties, these

¹⁶⁵ Garver, 122-124.

¹⁶⁶ Garver, 123.

¹⁶⁷ MacNamera and Wemple, "The Power of Women Through the Family in Medieval Europe, 500-110" in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. Erler and Kowalski, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 90.

¹⁶⁸ Dhuoda, 342.

women remain hidden in a shadow world as they stand behind the epic male figures that instigated civil wars, Christian reforms, and the religious controversies of the ninth century. It is essential to understand these women's status and roles as they built the foundation and framework for Carolingian men to stand upon, not only because it gives one a greater comprehension of the past, but because the work and duties that these women bore deserves to be recognized.

Muppet Diplomacy:

Comparing the Social Influence of Pop-Culture and Politics

Jessica Bair

In 1945, the Cold War began between the United States and the Soviet Union for political world domination. The United States used different policies to gain allies for the battle of democracy and communism.¹⁶⁹ This paper examines one attempt to spread U.S. ideology that was successful and one that failed. 'Muppet diplomacy' represents the successful program. This long running diplomatic policy began in the late 1960s and still continues today. Vietnamization, a failed U.S. policy in an attempt to gain democratic allies, took place during the Vietnam War, tried to pass the fighting off to the South Vietnamese Army. The goal of both of these programs was to spread United States ideology; one used military practice and the other employed pop culture.

Muppet diplomacy was born on November 10, 1969 on the first episode of *Sesame Street*.¹⁷⁰ The show started because of a belief that children could learn from television; the proof being the amount of commercials on TV that was aimed at this younger age group. However, what they were learning could be negative or, given the right circumstances, positive.¹⁷¹ This idea was especially clear to Joan Ganz Cooney, a producer for the television station WNET in New Jersey. In 1966, she submitted a report to the Carnegie Corporation called "Television for Preschool Education." This paper would eventually lead to the creation of *Sesame Street*. The funding was granted by the Carnegie Corporation as well as the Ford Foundation and, what was then, the US Office of Education allowed further research to be done for the curriculum development for the show.¹⁷² The framework seemed common sense enough: form a professional organization to be in charge (the Children's Television Workshop or CTW), propose concrete educational goals and use experts to make a practical curriculum to achieve these aims and finally, constant self-correction.¹⁷³ These simple steps have produced one of the most successful television shows of all time. Shortly after *Sesame Street* went on the air, a team of educators from Germany approached CTW to ask for help in developing a German version of *Sesame Street*. This surprised Cooney who had felt *Sesame Street* was a hit in the United States, but had given no thought to an international market.¹⁷⁴ The cooperation of CTW with the German educators to develop a Germany based *Sesame Street* began the practice of Muppet diplomacy. While the critics of this policy claim that it is a form of cultural imperialism, further examination of the program would lead

¹⁶⁹ Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952," in *The Cold War in Europe*, ed. Charles S. Maier (New York: Markus Wiener Publishing Inc., 1991), 144.

¹⁷⁰ Richard M. Polsky, *Getting to Sesame Street: Origins of the Children's Television Workshop* (New York: Praeger, 1974), 90.

¹⁷¹ Samuel Ball and Gerry Ann Bogatz, *The First Year of Sesame Street: An Evaluation* (Princeton: Educational Testing Services, 1970), 2.

¹⁷² Gerald S. Lesser and Joel Schneider, "Creation and Evolution of the *Sesame Street* Curriculum," in *G is for Growing: Thirty Years of Research on Children and Sesame Street*, ed. Shalom M. Fisch and Rosemarie T. Truglio. (Mahwah: Erlbaum, 2001), 25-26.

¹⁷³ Shalom M. Fisch and Rosemarie T. Truglio, "Why Children Learn from *Sesame Street*," in *Children and Television: Lessons from Sesame Street*, ed. Shalom M. Fisch and Rosemarie T. Truglio. (Mahwah: Erlbaum, 2001), 234-236.

¹⁷⁴ *The World According to Sesame Street*, DVD, directed by Linda Goldstein Knowlton and Linda Hawkins Costigan (2006; New York, NY: Sony Wonder).

to the term cultural transfer.¹⁷⁵ *Sesame Street* is a United States export, but the culture on these shows comes from each country.

When *Sesame Street* first aired, the Vietnam War had been under way for four years and, despite public protest, was showed no signs of ending anytime soon. In 1969, Richard Nixon was sworn in as President of the United States and quickly began work on the mess in Vietnam that he had inherited. Nixon had run as the peace candidate for the 1968 presidential election, telling the country he had “secret plan” to end the war.¹⁷⁶ On June 8, 1969, he announced that 250,000 US troops would be withdrawn from Vietnam, and the policy known as Vietnamization had officially been implemented.¹⁷⁷ The policy called for the troops of South Vietnam, or ARVN, to begin to fight the war without the help of the United States military officers. The US would gradually withdraw troops, but after the troops were withdrawn, would continue to give ARVN monetary and military support. Another component of the policy was meant to make the leader of South Vietnam, Nguyen Van Thieu, popular in order to gain the support of his country. This involved building schools, bridges and giving health care to the peasants.¹⁷⁸ There were many problems with this policy, but unfortunately it was Nixon’s only policy choice by this time in the war.¹⁷⁹ The US involvement in the start of the Vietnam War was one of the most questioned decisions in the history of the United States.

To compare Muppet diplomacy with the Vietnam War and Vietnamization might sound farfetched, but the two policies offer concrete examples of the shift in United States foreign policy. While both of these missions occurred during the same time period, Vietnamization was part of a more traditional school of thought, while Muppet diplomacy helped usher in a new method of US foreign policy. The more traditional approach to international relations involved the interactions of two governments like that of the United States and Vietnam. Muppet diplomacy illustrated a newer form of international relations dealing with the cultural aspect of countries rather than direct dealings between heads of state¹⁸⁰. This paper will examine the evolution and policies of both Muppet diplomacy and Vietnamization. The results, both immediate and long term, will also be documented. By comparing these two methods of foreign policies, the most success and failures of both will come to light.

Muppet Diplomacy

Currently *Sesame Street* is viewed in over 120 countries¹⁸¹ and is co-produced in nearly twenty.¹⁸² Many countries chose to air the version that is

¹⁷⁵Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, “Cultural Transfer,” in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 257.

¹⁷⁶Michael Kort, *The Columbia Guide to the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University, 1998), 156-157.

¹⁷⁷Kort, *The Columbia Guide to the Cold War*, 193.

¹⁷⁸Patrick J. Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008), 158-159.

¹⁷⁹James S. Olson and Randy Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell* (Maplecrest: Brandywine Press, 2004), 216.

¹⁸⁰Akira Iriye, “Culture and International History,” in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 242.

¹⁸¹Joel Spring, *Globalization of Education: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 76.

¹⁸²“Around the World,” <http://www.sesameworkshop.org/aroundtheworld>.

seen in the United States, but dubbed in their own language. Co-productions are developed when a group of citizens from each country come to CTW to request help in developing their own *Sesame Street*. The focus of this paper is on the co-produced shows because these best illustrate the cultural diplomatic format. Rather than keeping the exact same show, the Muppet diplomacy formula allows for a nation's culture to be included. This idea of cultural transfer is a relatively new one, but newer still is the question as to how the countries modify the culture from the United States to complement their own.¹⁸³ The inclusion of a state's culture gives the show a better chance at success. These shows had the same basic structure as the American version, but incorporated each country's educational goals and problems. While critics felt that even keeping the framework of the U.S. version was seen as forcing United State's culture on other countries, studies showed that the care put into maintaining each country's individuality made the show an effective learning tool.¹⁸⁴

The framework for the creation of *Sesame Street* was briefly discussed in the introduction, but it is worth a more detailed look. The first step for each show was to develop educational goals and problems that each show would focus on. In Bangladesh, by age five, many children had started to work and support their families. The lack of education in the country could be combated by television; it has an 80% reach in the country. The education goals were clearly different in Bangladesh where many parents are illiterate than in the United States. One goal for *Sisimpur* was to make the show interesting for both children and parents not only to encourage family learning, but also to bring education to the older generations. Another important goal was to keep the culture that had been won during the war of independence in 1971. This was achieved by using storytelling songs and traditional puppets along with the Muppets. The problems that were addressed in the United States version of *Sesame Street* of a friend dying or Big Bird's nest having been destroyed by a hurricane were not the same that were being faced by children in other parts of the world. In Kosovo, there was a long history of hatred between Serbians and Albanians, the two primary ethnic groups in the region. By showing children on the shows *Rruga Sesam/Ulica Sezam* that these two ethnic groups were not that different from one another producers hoped that this would help eradicate the extreme feelings of hate. Another lesson the Kosovars wanted to teach to the children was the recognition of hand grenades and not to pick them up; as there had been many recent cases of this happening.¹⁸⁵

Like many other foreign policies, Muppet diplomacy was met with a negative and sometimes hostile press. One of the most controversial Muppets was on the South African show *Takalani Sesame*. She was a five-year old, orange, and fuzzy Muppet named Kami who had HIV/AIDS. In South Africa, HIV and AIDS is a major part of children's lives; 13% of children between ages

¹⁸³ Gienow-Hecht, "Cultural Transfer," 262.

¹⁸⁴ Shalom M. Fisch, *Children's Learning from Educational Television: Sesame Street and Beyond* (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2001), 26-30.

¹⁸⁵ *The World According to Sesame Street*, 2006.

two and fourteen had lost at least one parent to AIDS and 5.3% of this same age bracket had HIV or AIDS themselves.¹⁸⁶ Many in the United States did not feel that it was necessary for a Muppet to be diagnosed with AIDS. Among the critics were Pat Buchanan (a former staffer to Richard Nixon and former White House Communications director under Ronald Reagan) who went on called *Hardball* soon after Kami became public knowledge to talk about the corrupt practice of *Sesame Street* and CTW. The idea of giving a Muppet HIV was not just a negative shock to those in the US, but also some in South Africa believed it would have made light of the disease. However, after the show aired, Kami was accepted into the South African culture; she even had her own health rallies in her country and the South African Education Minister Kader Asmal welcomed her to the show. Once the US was assured that there would not be a Muppet with AIDS or HIV on the US equivalent, the critics calmed down there as well.¹⁸⁷ This provides another important reason for co productions; in the United States AIDS was not considered a needed element on a children's television show and a U.S. based company might not have thought to address this serious issue on a children's show in another country.

The second step to developing the show was to gather a group of local experts to form the best educational curriculum for the show. This was an integral because the people who were putting on the actual show were producers, actors and crew members who did not have the educational background needed to teach children. This part of the process was used back when Cooney was writing the report on preschool education and television for the Carnegie Foundation. Despite her degree in education, she felt it was necessary to get more input from other educators, psychologists and child development specialists. This was such an important piece of the plan that it was included into the mission for CTW.¹⁸⁸ The local experts would come together with CTW for a seminar in curriculum development that was followed by brainstorming. During these sessions, the designated experts would come up with three to five specific areas their show was focused on. Most productions came up with the same general themes of social interaction and mutual respect along with basic educational goals like numbers, letters and reasoning. The difference in each country is seen by the amount of focus that was put on each topic. For example, the *Sesame Street* versions in Palestine and Israel (*Shara'a Simsim* in Palestine and *Rechov Sumsum* in Israel) chose to focus on mutual respect first. Most co-productions started because of a lack of schooling in their country, but in these two countries it was the idea of bringing peace to this tumultuous area that started the ball rolling.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Danna Harman, "A Muppet Tackles AIDS Attitudes in South Africa," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 14, 2003, accessed April 9, 2011.

¹⁸⁷ *The World According to Sesame Street*, 2006.

¹⁸⁸ Polsky, *Getting to Sesame Street: Origins of the Children's Television Workshop*, 2-3.

¹⁸⁹ Charlotte F. Cole, Beth A. Richman and Susan K. McCann Brown, "The World of *Sesame Street* Research," in *G is for Growing: Thirty Years Of Research on Children and Sesame Street*, ed. Shalom M. Fisch and Rosemarie T. Truglio (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2001), 158-159.

Local tensions that are not noteworthy to foreigners caused another problem for CTW because of the great significance than many of these problems had to the countries. For example, the alphabet seemed a normal lesson on *Sesame Street*, but in Kosovo the alphabet brought up entirely new complications. The Serbians use a different alphabet than the Albanians. The show's producers in Kosovo were worried that if children or adults saw the other alphabet it would have immediately turned them away from the show. This problem would only be seen by a person who was in the environment for years; the solution also came from these same experts who were trying to bring peace into their country. Instead of writing the letters on the screen the way most of CTW's shows did, the language was only spoken. Therefore the differences in the ethnic groups were not instantly highlighted.¹⁹⁰

The final part in the CTW model was self-critiquing. Peace in a volatile area of the world is a difficult standard to assess as only time can judge that, but it is an important part of the process. The main focus in the United States was school readiness and educational growth. These goals were measured both by CTW and by independent research companies.¹⁹¹ The studies, both in the United States and in the co-production companies, proved that CTW has successful educational shows across the world. The specific findings of these studies can be found further along in the paper. One interesting find in these shows is that, while it is a United States export, US ideology is not a main element in the shows. The use of the local citizens to create a success is imperative in this policy. The policy of Vietnamization did not employ this same method.

Vietnamization

The United States' overt involvement in Vietnam started during the Truman administration. The French were losing their colony of Indochina to the Communist Ho Chi Minh and the Vietminh so the United States began funding the French in order to stop the spread of Communism. This lasted until France lost a decisive battle at Dien Bien Phu in 1954.¹⁹² After the battle, Vietnam was divided into a North half ruled by a Communist government headed by Ho Chi Minh and a South half run by the United States' chosen dictator Ngo Dinh Diem. While Ho Chi Minh worked to build a profitable industry and a better economy for his half of the country, Diem chose to build up the military and a society of fear.¹⁹³ His iron-fist ruling style worried the people who put him into power. The protests and arrests in South Vietnam continued to grow because of Diem's persecution of his people despite the advice from the United States on getting his citizens to support him. The treatment of the South Vietnamese people by fellow Catholic Diem embarrassed President Kennedy. After months of warning Diem to become a more compassionate ruler, the United States aided an assassination of Diem

¹⁹⁰ "Around the World," <http://www.sesameworkshop.org/aroundtheworld>.

¹⁹¹ Ball and Bogatz, *The First Year of Sesame Street: An Evaluation*, 5-8.

¹⁹² George S. McGovern, "America in Vietnam," in *Vietnam: Four American Perspectives*, ed. Patrick J. Hearden. (West Lafayette, Purdue University Press, 1995), 17.

¹⁹³ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 70-72.

and his brother on November 1, 1963, just three weeks before President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas.¹⁹⁴

After the assassination, Lyndon Johnson took over the presidency in late November 1963 and won the election for president just a year later.¹⁹⁵ In South Vietnam, the new leaders were the group of South Vietnamese generals who organized the coup against Diem. The lack of a single strong leader led to confusion in the South. By the middle of 1964, the generals were focused more on who would lead rather than fighting the North Vietnamese like the Johnson administration wanted them to be. However, none of this slowed Johnson's ambition for a non-Communist South Vietnam.¹⁹⁶ In Johnson's view, this was the Domino Theory at work; if South Vietnam fell to the Communists, the rest of Southeast Asia would follow. This would put the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in charge and give no market to the newly democratic Japanese. With a lack of markets, the United States dream of an open capitalistic world market would never come true.¹⁹⁷ It was this thought that dominated the minds of the Johnson administration on August 4th 1964. The US ships that were in the Gulf of Tonkin near North Vietnam, the *Maddox* and the *C. Turner Joy*, detected a series of alerts on the radar that were believed to be incoming torpedoes from the North Vietnamese. Soon after, Captain John Herrick of the *Maddox* realized it was most likely just choppy water, but the statement of a North Vietnamese attack had been sent and the war was moving full steam ahead.¹⁹⁸

One of the results of the Gulf of Tonkin affair was the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. This joint resolution of Congress passed with a huge margin of 416 -0 with only two dissents in the house. The resolution gave President Johnson the power to "take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression."¹⁹⁹ This resulted in the bombing of North Vietnam and finally in 1965 President Johnson went back on his campaign promise of not "sending American boys to fight battles that have to be won by Asian boys."²⁰⁰ While there had been United States armed forces in South Vietnam for years in advisory capacities, the first ground troops arrived on March 8 and 9 of 1965 putting the United States into a war that would not be winnable and forced the credibility gap between what the government said and what they did wide open.²⁰¹ After accelerating the war for the next three years, President Johnson shocked the nation by announcing that he would not be seeking a second term. The final two candidates for president in 1968 were Vice-President Hubert Humphrey and former Vice-President Richard Nixon.

¹⁹⁴ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 88-95.

¹⁹⁵ Kort, *The Columbia Guide to the Cold War*, 191.

¹⁹⁶ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 103-104.

¹⁹⁷ Kort, *The Columbia Guide to the Cold War*, 55-56.

¹⁹⁸ Olson and Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell*, 116-117.

¹⁹⁹ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 107-108.

²⁰⁰ McGovern, "America in Vietnam," 26.

²⁰¹ Kort, *The Columbia Guide to the Cold War*, 191.

In January of 1968, the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front (the nationalist fighting force in South Vietnam) came together to launch an offensive that they hoped would change the course of the war to their favor. While their plan actually failed militarily, on television in the United States it looked like a success; it appeared that the US was losing the war. Even Walter Cronkite, who was known as the most trusted man in the nation, came out against the war on the CBS evening news. By 1968, the majority of the nation believed that the war was a mistake.²⁰² These countrywide feelings led the people to distance themselves from the Johnson Administration by voting for Richard Nixon rather than President Johnson's Vice-President. On May 13, 1968 peace negotiations had begun in Paris, but Johnson's hard line on what he would and would not give up worked against Humphrey in the election.

It was felt by the Johnson administration that victory was no longer possible because General Westmoreland's war of attrition was failing. There were too many enemy troops to make the policy of killing the enemy faster than they could recruit possible. While the Pentagon persisted in assuring the nation that victory was quickly coming, Westmoreland's victories between 1965 and 1968 were zero. A new policy was needed and Alain Enthoven, a senior assistant in the Defense Department, came up with Vietnamization. The United States troops would stop any Communist uprisings while doing "population control" and participate in small offensive operations, but the majority of the offensive fighting would be left to the ARVN. After this new fighting system was established, the United States could negotiate a treaty and withdraw from Vietnam.²⁰³

After Nixon was elected and his Madman Policy failed, he had no choice but to turn to the program that had failed under the Johnson Administration. The anti-war movement in the United States also gave Nixon encouragement to remove US troops from Vietnam. The movement was gaining momentum and in October 1969 a group of well dressed liberals staged an anti-war protest, an activity that had been exclusive to the "hippie" college students who had a tendency to turn people away from their cause. Once Nixon saw the diversification in the anti-war movement, which had also hit Congress, he began to panic. That November he went on television to get the nation behind his long term plan of Vietnamization. At this time, the majority of the country still wanted a win for the United States along with the fast removal of the US troops. Nixon warned the public that a divided front at home would make negotiations with the North Vietnamese difficult. His speech worked and the popularity he gained would make implementing his policy easier, although the success of running the program was yet to be seen.²⁰⁴

The first step of Vietnamization was integrating newer high technology weapons to strengthen the military power of the ARVN. The first step of the

²⁰² Kendall W. Stiles, *Case Histories in International Politics* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006), 103-106.

²⁰³ Olson and Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell*, 189.

²⁰⁴ Harden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 158-159.

transfer of power was so successful that Nixon and South Vietnam leader Thieu announced the homecoming of 25,000 US troops. The troop deaths of the ARVN rose 12%, proof that they were taking over more of the fighting.²⁰⁵ The public support of the US troop removal, along with the ARVN seemingly stepping up, urged Nixon to continue his rapid withdrawal of US troops in Vietnam. However, in rushing this policy, Nixon forgot to look at the consequences it would bring about in Southeast Asia.

Despite the limited successes of the Vietnamization policy, the ARVN was not seen as ready to fight the war alone, even with a weaker enemy. To counteract the rapid removal of US troops, Nixon began to widen the war. He sent troops and bombing raids into Cambodia to attack a North Vietnamese intelligence headquarters, supply dumps and staging areas. The press in the United States found out that the Nixon administration was widening the war and published this information. The administration flat out denied this rumor and even falsified military records to keep up with their charade. Although the mission had used both US and ARVN troops to play along with the Vietnamization policy, it only achieved minor military success.²⁰⁶

By 1970, Congress made a bipartisan agreement to end the war. Not only did a resolution pass to end all aid for any ground attack on Cambodia, but the Gulf of Tonkin resolution was terminated, removing much of Nixon's power. The budget for the entire war also decreased. As more troops were brought home, those that remained in Vietnam suffered greatly from apathy. It began to look as though the United States was abandoning Vietnam and considered the war lost. Nobody wanted to be the last man to die for a lost cause. The system to supply the units with officers was also flawed. To secure a promotion, officers needed to serve in Vietnam. This caused a quick turn-around, which did not allow commanders to learn how to be effective leaders. The lack of experience of their leaders caused the troops to stop trusting them and to stop following orders.²⁰⁷ The lack of organization was mimicked in the ARVN army. Commanders were promoted because of loyalty, not skill.²⁰⁸ The same lack of trust resided in both the teacher army and the student army.

The first test of the ARVN was an invasion of Laos in February of 1971. The mission was to last until May, but Nixon had underestimated the force of the North Vietnamese. The North forced the ARVN to withdrawal from Laos in March and during the twelve-day retreat they lost fifty percent of their men. The retreat aired on United States television during the evening news and the sight of the scared ARVN troops hanging on the bottom of helicopters did not inspire trust in the war. The Vietnamization test was seen as a failure. In 1971, a new poll showed that the United States was ready to get out of Vietnam, even if it meant losing the war.²⁰⁹ The lasting legacy of the

²⁰⁵ Olson and Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell*, 218.

²⁰⁶ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 160-161.

²⁰⁷ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 160.

²⁰⁸ Olson and Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell*, 112.

²⁰⁹ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 162.

Vietnamization policy was a slow removal of United States troops until the end of the war.

Comparison

United States foreign relations have taken many forms throughout the years. While the two diplomatic plans in this paper are quite different in nature, they both have a similar goal of exporting the United States. For Muppet diplomacy it illustrated media imperialism and for the Vietnam War it was capitalism.²¹⁰ Both policies had the support of the United States government and the successes or failures of both policies were decided because of the involvement of the local community. Both had their outspoken critics.

The United States became involved in Vietnam after World War II because of the fear of the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia. Japan was newly capitalist and to continue to stay the way of the United States, it needed nearby countries to trade with.²¹¹ Another fear was the U.S. losing its place as the hegemony of the world. This was a time when the United States and the Soviet Union were fighting for larger spheres of influence during the Cold War. If South Vietnam fell to the North Vietnamese Communists, Domino Theory states the US just lost all of Southeast Asia to the Soviets.²¹² The Soviets and Chinese began aiding North Vietnam in 1955 and continued until the fall of Saigon in 1975 so these fears were not completely without credence.²¹³ The goal was never to help Vietnam. The involvement started with the United States helping France keep colonial rule over an oppressed people. The country was split up against the Vietnamese wishes and finally the U.S. wanted to create markets for Japan, not directly Vietnam.

Muppet diplomacy started as a surprise to *Sesame Street* creator Joan Ganz Cooney and came out of a desire to help rather than fear. When Germany sent over educators to ask for help in creating their own German version of *Sesame Street*, eventually named *Sesamstrasse*, CTW went to work. The Germans were followed closely by groups from Mexico, Brazil and Canada.²¹⁴ The passion that came from each of these countries continued to keep Muppet diplomacy growing. While the involvement of CTW internationally was not planned, their strong structure was readymade for foreign aide.

While both forms of diplomacy started with the United States going into another country, the primary difference that stands out right away was nobody asked for help in Vietnam. After World War II, France was working to take back their colony of Indochina that had been lost to the Japanese during the war. The United States put out a State Department statement that informed the world that the U.S. would not be a part of France's forceful taking of Indochina. The statement provided a wonderful distraction to the

²¹⁰ Gienow-Hecht, "Cultural Transfer," 265.

²¹¹ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 59.

²¹² McCormick, "American Hegemony and the Roots of the War," in *Vietnam: Four American Perspectives*, ed. Patrick J. Hearden. (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1995), 90.

²¹³ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 176.

²¹⁴ Cole, Richman and McCann Brown, "The World of *Sesame Street* Research," 148.

fact that during this time the United States began silently funding the French. The U.S. government preferred French colonialism over Vietnamese Communism and became involved, but not because the French asked for help.²¹⁵ Another key difference was the emotion and reasons that went into each policy. Fear is powerful, but it can cause impulsive rather than well thought out plans. Passion was the emotion that kept people involved until the best ideas or decisions had been reached. Both policies sought to help a country, but the difference in why each policy was helping caused the most problems.

The Vietnam War was fought through a series of trial and error. After monetarily backing the French stopped working when France decided to pull out of Indochina after Dien Bien Phu the United States took on the war effort. Putting a dictator into power in South Vietnam did not work so he was assassinated and after Nixon's Madman Theory failed, he switched back to the last resort, Johnson's Vietnamization. There was no cohesive plan throughout the war. The CTW model is summed up in this quotation from Cooney, "Without research, there would be no *Sesame Street*."²¹⁶ The process started slowly, with all countries getting the dubbed *Sesame Street* while development was in progress for the co-productions. CTW did not dive in head first into Muppet diplomacy. The time that they took to develop the process gave the Workshop a plan that actually worked. The steps that were discussed previously were driven by research and seeking out experts to do further research. This research was what gave CTW a solid structure that could be used time and again without having to start from scratch.²¹⁷

Research into the history and culture of a country should be a big part of going to war, but in the case of Vietnam the United States government missed a few necessary historical facts. The fear of China taking over Vietnam looked serious because of China funding the North Vietnamese, but the Vietnamese had no intention of allowing China to rule them again. China had colonized Vietnam in 111 B.C. and controlled the nation for several centuries. Ho Chi Minh was against the Chinese enough that in 1945 he was willing to ignore his nationalistic dreams and cooperate with the French colonizers to fight off China.²¹⁸ The Soviets were also giving monetary support to North Vietnam throughout the war, but after Stalin died, they were not looking for a ground fight with the United States.²¹⁹ This might have alleviated some of the fears the United States had about China and the Soviet Union. Another problem the U.S. faced was the actual ground war in a jungle. While the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front knew the land and the best way to fight a revolutionary war, having completed one just twenty years prior, the United States troops were not prepared for the terrain, the weather or the style of fighting. The North Vietnamese troops carried very little and

²¹⁵ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 30-33.

²¹⁶ Joan Ganz Cooney, "Forward," in *G is for Growing: Thirty Years of Research on Children and Sesame Street*, ed. Shalom M. Fisch and Rosemarie T. Truglio (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2001), xi.

²¹⁷ Cole, Richman and McCann Brown, "The World of *Sesame Street* Research," 148.

²¹⁸ Olson and Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell*, 5-7.

²¹⁹ Olson and Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell*, 48.

wore shorts and t-shirts. The U.S. wore long pants and boots and carried packs weighing the same as a small child.²²⁰ This is another problem that could have been solved by research or just asking the advisors who had been there the past ten years.

Before CTW agreed to co-produce a show with a country, research went into the decision. While there had to be a group of citizens requesting help, CTW wanted to make sure that there would be sufficient backing from other sources in the country. The educational system was explored to find additional support. The government was also looked to for assistance. The broadcasting and production capabilities of each country were also an important factor in CTW's decision. These aspects of the foundation for the show were considered mandatory for any co-production. After the preliminary research was done, then and only then, would a co-production begin.²²¹

In each case, the United States was sending a finished product to another country. In the case of the Vietnam War, it was a capitalist society and with Muppet diplomacy, it was an educational television show. As already noted, CTW was asked into a country before it began its work. Once a co-production had begun, CTW was the governing board, but it was up to each individual country to provide the group of experts in theater, child development and education, local culture and television production. This was one way to combat the critics that accused Muppet diplomacy of cultural imperialism.²²² It was also the best way to make the finished product exactly what was needed in each country. The Egyptian village portrayed on *Alam Simsim* would not translate well to a city apartment in Kosovo. The local involvement was easier to maintain if the finished product was something they wanted.

The South Vietnamese army (ARVN) had very little involvement in the planning of the war. In fact, the South Vietnamese had to do very little fighting in the war. The army was taught the United States style of fighting rather than being allowed input. As mentioned above, the Vietnamese knew the best way to fight a war in their own country. One question in the Nixon administration was why did the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front fight so much better than their fellow Vietnamese in the ARVN? The members of the first two groups had chosen to fight for something they believed in; a cause they were willing to die for. The ARVN were fighting for a permanent division of their country and to keep a military dictator as the head of state. Many members of the army did not agree with these missions and therefore had no drive to die for something they did not believe in.²²³ The use of a country's citizens for their drive and knowledge was imperative.

²²⁰ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 82.

²²¹ Cole, Richman and McCann Brown, "The World of *Sesame Street* Research," 148-149.

²²² Spring, *Globalization of Education: An Introduction*, 78.

²²³ Hearden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 133.

Conclusion

Vietnamization failed. The purpose of Vietnamization was to have the South Vietnamese army fight to keep the Communists from the North and the nationalists from the South from taking over the official South Vietnamese government. In March 1972, after the majority of the United States troops were home, General Giap from the North launched a massive attack that rolled ~~right~~ over the ARVN. The massive air support from the US was the only thing that drove the North Vietnamese army back. The treaty of 1973 established the ARVN as the main fighting force in the South; there would be no direct United States involvement. During the first three months after the treaty over 6,000 ARVN were killed. The U.S. sent money and supplies, but in just two years the North Vietnamese took over Saigon proving the failed effort of the Vietnamization policy.²²⁴

The goals of Vietnamization were much clearer than those of Muppet diplomacy. One reason for which was Vietnamization was a planned policy whereas Muppet diplomacy spontaneously occurred without any prior planning. Muppet diplomacy also had goals that were harder to judge, especially in the short time the program has been in effect. Mutual respect, self-respect and peace were difficult qualities to judge in an area, so the success of Muppet diplomacy was somewhat subjective. However, the educational benefits of Muppet diplomacy were clearer to judge and were less subjective.

Since *Vila Sèsamo* aired in Brazil in 1972, there have been twenty-seven attempts at co-productions throughout the world and of those only eight are no longer in the original run of production. France and Brazil are two of the eight countries that ~~have~~ brought back their *Sesame Streets*. The long run of the series gave the show one step towards success. The shows have been accepted into the cultures and well watched. In Russian, over 80% of the samples from all over the country had knowledge of the program and the majority of these people found the show as a positive addition. After the show is well known and liked, it needed to start working on social and educational goals put forth by the production teams in each country. In the Israeli-Palestinian production, a group of six hundred parents were surveyed and not only did they find the program entertaining, but the majority of the parents recognized the mutual respect lesson in the shows tone. Educational goals were easier to measure. Across the world, basics skills are gained by children from Sesame Street, especially in literacy and numerical skills.

The United States' policy priority in this time of diplomatic history was exporting U.S. ideology. While Vietnamization and Muppet diplomacy both attempted to achieve this, only one succeeded. The program that succeeded did not force the United States on other countries, nor did it assume that local help was not necessary. In Europe, in the 1940s and 1950s, the culture that came from the US was considered a threat to their society. The reception of these cultural exports was not studied by the US; it was just assumed the

²²⁴ Harden, *The Tragedy of Vietnam*, 160-170.

goods sent abroad would be appreciated.²²⁵ CTW focused on the reception of the audience and did not make the mistakes made in the '40s and '50s. Unfortunately, the Vietnamese as a whole did not play a part in Vietnamization and this hurt the policy.

Sesame Street has prepared children for school around the globe for more than forty years. The lessons that were taught were not revolutionary. Letters, numbers, self-respect, mutual respect and peace have been around for hundreds of years. Unfortunately, these lessons were not always well learned by the adults in children's lives. It took a young television producer to see the need the world had. When she connected with the magic man, Jim Hensen, the cast of characters revolutionized educational television in over one hundred and twenty countries. However, this was one kids' show that was not teaching lessons exclusively for children. *Sesame Street*, *'Alam Simsim*, *Sesamstrasse*, *Plaza Sèsamo* and *Ulitsa Sezam* all have Muppets, songs, letters, numbers and most importantly lessons for adults as well.

²²⁵ Gienow-Hecht, "Cultural Transfer," 262.

