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Preface

As folders began to stack with submissions for this journal, a problem more specific than the production of history began to become apparent. What does it mean to be an undergraduate journal? Reevaluating its definition allowed us, in conjunction with the content and style of the submissions, to attempt a new format. Research engaged inside the structure of the classroom, as opposed to independent research, became the thread with which we linked the selections for this year.

Perhaps the emblem of classroom work should be stamped upon Medium and Message of Leni Riefenstahl and Art Spiegelman, the 1996 recipient of the History C.I.V. award for the most outstanding paper. Written by a native German, it tackles the issue of the Holocaust and the problematic of representation. On the distant horizon, this paper also turns the problematic of representation and memory to history itself. Ironically but purposefully, it precedes Theodor Herzl and His Membership in Albia: A Stepping Stone to Zionism, a paper devoted to the difficult fusion of Theodore Herzl, the reputed “Father of Zionism” and author of Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State) a text conceiving the formation of a Jewish State, with his membership in and continued reflections of Albia, a fraternity with strong pro-German and increased Anti-Semitic tendencies. Out of this union a deeper question saturates the paper. What does it mean to be Jewish? In the strain of demythologizing historical persons and events, Playing the Man’s Game: Examining British and American Idolatry of Male Titanic Victims raises the Titanic only to puncture its masculine hull and sink it once again. From popular myths, The Conflation of European Diplomacy, Nationalist Ideology and Economic Imperialism in the Formation of the Post-Ottoman Nation-State System explains through the interconnection of politics, economics, and culture the creation of the Ottoman Nation-State (more

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These pictures of excellently-organized marching National Socialist troops in Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1934) and of unscrupulously murdering National Socialist soldiers in Art Spiegelman's *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* (1987) serve as a point of departure to reflect on the relationship of medium and message in both works. Riefenstahl chose film, a medium characterized by highly stylized realism; Spiegelman chose a comic book, a medium characterized by graphic simplicity. Riefenstahl speaks as a sympathizer of the Nazi Party, Spiegelman as a Jewish survivor of the second generation. Their media and messages are irreconcilable. However, there exists an inverse relationship between the media they use and the message they want to convey with these media. In *Triumph of the Will*, Riefenstahl uses the realistic perspective of film to create a mesmerizing, uncritical illusion of National Socialism. Spiegelman in *Maus* uses the fictional world of a comic book to make his readers aware of the brutal reality of National Socialism. The specific way in which Riefenstahl and Spiegelman connect medium and message depends on their personal understanding of the aesthetic and political process involved in art.

Film enables Riefenstahl to use reality itself to create a pseudo-reality. "Reality itself" means what can be perceived empirically. Film, like no other medium, provides her the possibility of reproducing the empirical reality as accurately as possible. Riefenstahl uses this characteristic of film to achieve a high level of authenticity, because her spectators are confident that they are looking at what has actually happened. Only through film can Riefenstahl establish such strong credibility with her audience. To increase the impression of authenticity, Riefenstahl gives her film an objective documentary character. She shows the events in alleged chronological order and she uses political speeches that were delivered at the rally. These speeches increase the impression of a documentary, because they convey the idea that she is objectively citing sources. Moreover, she employs written fade-ins to suggest the presence of a commentator with a detached perspective.

The fade-ins resemble a news reporter who gives objective background information (time, names, places).

Using these alleged objective and realistic means of film, she creates a glorious ideal of National Socialism that does not correspond to political reality. Riefenstahl's film has to be considered as propaganda, because she promotes political doctrines in the most appealing and uncritical way possible. The Nuremberg rally belongs to a series of events that National Socialist leaders used in order to glorify themselves. It was staged in order to mobilize the German population. The rally conveys idealized notions about a German community of workers and soldiers, but it completely ignores the brutal reality of National Socialism; i.e., the systematically pursued exclusion and dehumanization of broad parts of the population that was the precondition for this alleged unity. In reproducing the rally Riefenstahl depicts National Socialists as they wanted to be depicted, but this is only a very specific and limited view of National Socialism. The terror, the mass persecutions and the death camps do not exist in this vision. Riefenstahl's illusionistic depiction of what National Socialism is seems true to her audience because she uses the realistic means of film.

Another means Riefenstahl uses to convince her audience of the pseudo-reality in her film is her strategy of aestheticizing. She uses her artistic skills to stage the event in her own sense of beauty. Riefenstahl very carefully composes the images she is showing. She succeeds in doing so by exploiting the artistic possibilities offered by the medium of film; a medium whose characteristics prove very ambiguous. On the one hand this enables her to depict reality as accurately as possible, on the other hand it makes possible the most careful manipulation of this reality. Riefenstahl used a complex technique of cutting. Editing the film took her more than five months during which she was working twenty hours a day. This expenditure supports the monumentalism in her film because it evokes suspense. For example, a scene in which Hitler moves past a row of soldiers shaking their hands becomes very dramatic, because after every handshake, Riefenstahl cuts in the image of a
cannonball going off. Other visual devices that Riefenstahl uses to create appealing images include different camera perspectives, angles, and shots designed to manipulate the audience. She consistently inserts takes of her main character, Hitler, to mesmerize her spectators via repetition. She mostly films him from below and therefore makes him appear superior. Also, she often films his face using shots that are too narrowly focused to take in his entire face, so that he looks too big to fit in the picture. Her ability to stage the events in Nuremberg is crucial for the beauty she is trying to create for National Socialist images. She creates impressive images showing the arranged troops, applauding masses, or waving flags in a carefully composed manner.

In order to achieve this high standard of composition, she installed a camera in a lift on one of the flagpoles in order to have better takes of the masses that participated in the rally. The care and the effort Riefenstahl spent in making her film show how she applied her sense of aesthetics to the political event in Nuremberg. This aestheticization of the event helps her make her uncritical view of National Socialism seem appealing and convincing to the audience.

Riefenstahl also succeeds in glorifying National Socialism by addressing the feelings and not the intellect of her audience. Film is the medium that requires the least possible amount of active participation from the side of the spectator. The passive, almost hypnotic attitude in which film captures its spectators makes it easy for Riefenstahl to eliminate the independent intellectual ability of her audience. Furthermore, to achieve her goal of capturing the audience emotionally, she edits music, and indeed a very special kind of music, to her film. She mostly uses Richard Wagner, a composer known for his antisemitic tendencies who often chose figures from old Germanic sagas as protagonists for his operas. Moreover, by using film as a medium, Riefenstahl is able to stress certain symbols that emphasize the irrational, cultic, almost religious atmosphere of the rally. In the beginning of her movie, she depicts Hitler as a new Christ by having him come down from heaven in an airplane. Throughout the film she emphasizes motifs of flags, torches, fire, and altars that create the solemn, religious atmosphere. With this cultic atmosphere Riefenstahl evokes a feeling of solemnity and religious awe in the spectators and therefore manipulates their critical ability.

Film is a very appropriate means for Riefenstahl's propaganda, because it enables her to promote her illusionistic vision of National Socialism to a widespread audience. The choice of film to convey political ideas in an aesthetic form is crucial. The invention of film has to be considered part of a broad process of creating mass consumerism. Technological innovations allow the mass production of the artist's work, take away the limited accessibility of art, and open it up for the masses. Riefenstahl's film shows how this popularization of art can be mixed with political doctrines and usd for ideological ends. Triumph of the Will serves to politicize the masses. This mass mobilization was one of the keys to success for National Socialist leaders.

In Maus, the specific relationship between medium and message is an inverse one. When Riefenstahl uses the realism of film to create an illusionistic view of National Socialist politics, Spiegelman depicts the cruel reality of these politics through the fictional world of a comic book. The comic medium gives the artist a large amount of fictional freedom because it requires not only a narrative, but also graphics to envision a story. In Maus, Spiegelman uses the graphic characteristic of comics to create a simple, almost shadwoy setting. The reader finds himself in a world that seems very unreal in contrast to Riefenstahl. Moreover, Spiegelman alienates the characters of his story by taking Hitler's quote "The Jews are undoubtedly a race, but they are not human" seriously in a grotesque way and by turning Nazis and Jews into mice and cats. When Spiegelman, in his book, talks to his wife Françoise it also becomes evident that he is telling a story: "See what I mean .. in real life you'd never have let me talk this long without interrupting." This quote makes the reader aware that Maus is a piece of fiction.
However, although envisioning a fictional world of mice and cats, Spiegelman creates an incredible sense of what National Socialism really meant. The authenticity he achieves in his work differs from Riefenstahl's authenticity, which is achieved through realism. Spiegelman gains credibility among his readers by including his father as an eyewitness. Moreover, Spiegelman succeeds in creating a realistic world through his comic because, in contrast to Riefenstahl, he does not sentimentalize. He does not depict his father as a hero. Vladek tells his story in a very flat and unemotional tone and throughout the book is depicted in a very critical way. He often acts like an insensitive tyrant and, when Spiegelman is talking to his psychoanalyst, it becomes clear what a burden the father puts on the life of his son. Another means with which Spiegelman prevents sentimentalization is the brutally ironizing kind of humor he sometimes uses to characterize the tragedy of his father's story. It is an almost terrifying kind of sobriety with which he depicts the horror: "Hundreds of thousands of Hungarians were arriving there at this time" is written underneath the sketch of a smoking chimney. Spiegelman does not need to sentimentalize because the brutal reality of National Socialism he describes in his book speaks for itself.

Moreover, the comic helps him face the difficulty of representing the unrepresentability of the Holocaust. The theorist Theodor Adorno claimed that "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric." The writer Elie Wiesel agreed by saying that "There is no such thing as a literature of the Holocaust, nor can there be." Both thinkers express the paradox with which the artist is faced after the Holocaust. On the one hand, there can be no aesthetic form in which the horror the victims went through can be expressed, because the beauty of a poem or any other form of art that deals with this event cannot be unified with the essential evil that is its subject. On the other hand, the artist has to find a form of expression for the Holocaust. It is not only his ethical responsibility to memorialize the event, but also his personal psychological necessity to bring his experiences to the surface. Spiegelman finds himself in the paradoxical situation that there is no appropriate artistic form in which to represent the Holocaust, but he needs a form of representation to deal with this event, to understand, to rationalize its irrationality. In using a comic, Spiegelman finds his own language for this difficult topic and he makes the paradox clear. When his psychoanalyst suggests to him that he should not collect any more stories of the victims, because all existing stories can never express the side of the dead, Spiegelman answers: "Uh-huh. Samuel Beckett once said: 'Every word is an unnecessary stain on silence and nothingness.' . . . On the other hand, he SAID it." Here, Spiegelman expresses his own paradox: Beckett can only use language to deny it, Spiegelman can only use the means of representation to deny that there is an appropriate form of representation. With the shabbiness of comic strip, a medium not recognized as art, despised by critics, he makes the reader aware of the paradox and finds a way to represent the unrepresentability of the Holocaust. A comic strip leaves no room for beauty, aesthetics or grandeloquence. With his work, Spiegelman gives a new legitimacy to Holocaust art.

Spiegelman's choice of the comic shows that he, in contrast to Riefenstahl, does not seek to mesmerize his audience, but he wants to induce his reader's ability to think critically. He says: "I wasn't trying to convince anybody of anything." What he achieves with his medium, however, is to shock the audience, because he addresses the reader's sense of morality. He pushes the audience, postmodern consumers expecting light and lowbrow entertainment, to pose questions and deal with the Holocaust today. Spiegelman makes the Holocaust topical in order to memorialize it. Spiegelman criticizes his reader's consumerist attitude. He tells the reader who is looking for some easy-to-digest diversion that he cannot escape the serious and difficult questions the Holocaust raises. The critique of the consumer attitude is also evident when in his book, a reporter asks him to produce "Maus" vests. This is a suggestion that seems grotesque and immoral, but exactly reflects the search for profit in consumer society. In contrast
to Riefenstahl's spectators, Spiegelman's readers have to question themselves: "Look how many books have been written about the Holocaust. What's the point? People haven't changed," he writes. With this Spiegelman asks the reader whether he has changed, whether he has learned from history.

Riefenstahl's use of film as a medium to mesmerize and Spiegelman's comic as a medium to induce a sense of criticism depend on the way in which each artist addresses the issue of the aesthetic and political process, form and content, in his art. Riefenstahl separates form and content. She claims: "To me the film wasn't about politics... I shot the subject matter as well as I could and shaped it into a film. Now, whether it was about politics, vegetables, or fruit, I couldn't give a damn." With this incredible separation she refuses to take any political or ethical responsibility for her work as an artist. In fact, she states: "An artist who completely devotes himself to his work cannot be political." Asked about her guilt concerning the spread of National Socialist ideas she says: "I was never an antisemitic and never joined the Nazi Party. So what am I guilty of?" Riefenstahl's denial of the ethical responsibility of the artists explains how she was able to create a work that served as National Socialist propaganda. Indeed, her personal convictions and beliefs seem to be completely left out in Triumph of the Will. She does not appear in her film and therefore she seems not to be personally involved.

However, it is questionable whether such a separation of art and politics is possible. It is questionable whether an artist can actually exclude all his convictions and beliefs. In Triumph of the Will, Riefenstahl's emotions and motivations are only indirectly visible to her spectator. However, in Mueller's film, a documentary about her life, she reveals them by constantly contradicting herself. It becomes clear that her separation is an illusion. Riefenstahl admits that "She believed in Hitler" and was "never an opponent." This demonstrates that she must have identified with her message. In fact, in her interview, she points out that she had an indeed very political content in mind that she wanted to convey to the audience: "The creation of jobs through the labor service scheme... and peace... it is mentioned throughout the film" is her answer when asked for the message of Triumph of the Will.

Riefenstahl's assumption that she is able to separate form and content has to be seen as a concept to blind herself from the guilt she put on her shoulders by accepting Hitler's offer. The way in which she contradicts herself when talking about form and content shows her difficulties in digesting this period of her life. She says: "I don't live in this past anymore... It's like another world." This uncritical and repressive attitude is interestingly the same one that she expects her spectator to have when watching the National Socialist illusion in Triumph of the Will.

In Spiegelman, form and content are the condition for each other. He demonstrates the diffuseness of these categories constructed by critics in interpreting the artists' works. The horror of the Holocaust makes him choose the form of a comic for this content. From the beginning, he is a character in his own story: The first picture shows him asking his wife which animal to make her in the story. He is deeply involved in the content of his work. The writing of the comic for him can be considered a personal psychological necessity.

The close relationship between form and content in his work is evident on three different levels. On the first level, he deals with the personality of his father and tries to get over his childhood, which was overshadowed by Vladek's past. He suffered from his father's idealization of his "ghost-brother" Richieu who was lost in one of the concentration camps as well as his father's high expectations of him, his insensitivity and miserliness. He blames his father for his mother's suicide. His greatest burden is revealed when Spiegelman talks to his psychoanalyst: Spiegelman feels inferior when he compares his life to what his father has gone through. His father obviously imposed his own feeling of guilt for having survived on his son. Even if at the end of the book, the conflicts between father
and son are not resolved - Vladek still calls Art Richieu - at least one understands their motives better.  

On a second level, Spiegelman deals with his identity as an artist. He doubts himself:

Just thinking about my book ... It's so presumptuous of me. I mean, I can't really make sense out of my relationship with my father ... how am I supposed to make any sense out of Auschwitz ... I feel so inadequate to reconstruct a reality that was worse than my darkest dreams?  

Moreover, it is clear that his being an artist is deeply connected with the conflict-ridden relationship he has with his father: 'One reason I became an artist was that he [Vladek] thought it was unpracticed - just a waste of time ... it was an area where I wouldn't have to compete with him.'  

Furthermore, Spiegelman includes his thoughts when creating Maus. When he writes about the dogs and cats his psychoanalyst owns, he asks at the bottom of the picture: "Can I mention this, or does it completely louse up my metaphor?" These two levels show Spiegelman's tendency to self-reflection, in striking contrast to Riefenstahl, who completely distances her personal concerns from her art.  

The third narrative level also contradicts Riefenstahl's understanding of the artist. Spiegelman conveys a clear ethical message to his audience: "Everyone has to feel guilty. Everyone! Forever!" He considers it his responsibility as an artist to remind others of the Holocaust. These levels demonstrate his willingness and need to deal with the past. Spiegelman is reflective and critical towards himself. This is the attitude he expects from the readers of Maus.  

"When we talk about Hitler, we talk about who we are and who we are not." When Riefenstahl and Spiegelman depict the illusion and reality of National Socialism, they give statements about themselves. The inverse relationship of medium and message in their works expresses the artists' contrasting notion of their ethical and political responsibility. Riefenstahl appears as a most immoral and irresponsible artist because she glorifies a National Socialist pseudo-reality in her film. Spiegelman shows a high degree of personal, ethical involvement, because he uses a comic book to depict critically what National Socialism really meant. The artists' contrasting views of their ethical responsibility have to be seen as their contrasting ways of Vergangenheitsbewaltigung. Riefenstahl speaks as the assailant. Denying her responsibility is her way of freeing herself from the guilt. Spiegelman speaks as the victim. Dealing with the past and enforcing responsibility is his attempt to free himself from the pain and prevent it from happening again.

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2. Leni Riefenstahl, Triumph of the Will (Sandy Hook, CT: Video Images, 1996; originally published in 1935).
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
8. Ibid., 95.
9. Ibid., 72, 90, 43.
10. Ibid., 55.
13. Spiegelman, Maus II, 43.
14. Ibid., 43.
15. Ibid., 45.
Theodor Herzl and His Membership in Albia: A Stepping Stone to Zionism

Barbara L. Balter

In June of 1895, Theodor Herzl began formulating his idea for an independent Jewish state. Though he was not the first Jew to conceive of such a notion, Herzl's extensive work to actualize the Jewish state ultimately led to his being identified as the Founder and Father of the Zionist Movement. Yet for more than half of Herzl's life, the Father of Zionism rejected and abhorred all suggestions of such a separation of the Jewish people. He was a strong believer in assimilationist policies, emphasizing the need for Jews to abandon their cultural and linguistic heritage while adopting more European, particularly German, ways of life. Herzl's own efforts to adhere to this principle were ultimately manifested in his decision to join Albia, a German nationalist fraternity at the University of Vienna. Though Albia had welcomed Jews for many years, the changing political climate in Vienna in the 1870s transformed the fraternity into an increasingly anti-Semitic group. For a full year, Herzl disregarded this tendency of Albia's members and participated in all of the group's activities. Eventually, however, the Albia's blatant manifestations of anti-Semitism became too difficult for Herzl to ignore, and he resigned from the fraternity. His decision to leave Albia marked the first step in Herzl's turn away from assimilation. After twenty-three years of believing that Jews could adopt mainstream ways of life and thus lose their "Jewishness", he became aware that the political and social setting in Europe could not facilitate assimilation of the Jews.

Herzl's tendency toward assimilationist policies was instilled in him by his parents. Theodor Herzl was born in May of 1860 to Jakob and Jeanette Herzl. Though a
Hungarian family living in Budapest, his parents rejected their Magyar heritage and adopted German culture and language. Both parents were Jewish, but had been raised in secular households where Jewish practices were adhered to only in form. Similarly, Theodor Herzl rarely attended synagogue and had little education in Jewish history and culture. His lack of any knowledge regarding his religion so disturbed his grade school teachers that he was once caned for not knowing the story of the Jewish liberation from the Pharaohs and the Exodus.

The only indication of any significant Jewish education and religious participation in Herzl's youth was his bar mitzvah at age thirteen. Yet even this traditionally solemn religious ceremony lost much of its significance in the Herzl household; the invitations to the ceremony referred to it as a "confirmation" rather than a "bar mitzvah." This may have reflected an attempt to emulate the more mainstream practice of confirmation that was common among the non-Jews in Budapest. Herzl himself never mentioned the "confirmation" in his diaries or later writings, and there is no record of the ceremony in the archives of the Dohany Street congregation, the family synagogue. Jakob Herzl was extremely wealthy and prominent in the community, and he was therefore probably influential enough to prevent any records of the "confirmation" from being kept; though the family actively practiced Judaism, they avoided official documentations of their religious tendencies, such as those that normally accompanied a bar mitzvah ceremony. Such an action, which meant that no public announcement was made in any newspaper, further disconnected Herzl from the Jewish community and facilitated his assimilation.

Herzl's education also reflected efforts to achieve assimilation. He did not initially attend the Gymnasion in preparation for the university, as was typical of most upper-class Hungarian Jews. Instead, Herzl enrolled in a technical school that had very few Jewish students. The school, which emphasized science and mathematics, prepared students for applied sciences and the technical trades. As most of these fields were closed to Jews, Herzl's enrollment at the technical school seems an odd choice. Yet by educating their son to participate in fields dominated by non-Jews, Herzl's parents were most likely attempting to further the assimilation process.

Poor grades at the technical school eventually caused his parents to move him to the Gymnasion in preparation for the university. Initially, Herzl himself had little desire to attend the university, and would have preferred to be a member of the high bureaucracy or army officer corps. He expressed this wish to his parents, even stating that he would accept the necessary baptism. His parents were not willing to allow their son to convert; assimilation and conversion were not considered equivalent. They believed that Jews could maintain their religion while adopting mainstream social and cultural practices; it was not the religion they objected to, but rather its outward manifestations that differentiated Jews from the general population. Clearly though, Herzl did not regard his Judaism as very important, since he was willing to reject it in order to achieve a prestigious career.

The Gymnasion proved, however, to be an excellent environment for Herzl; he thrived in all of his classes. By 1877, he was prepared to enter the University. There was little question regarding where Herzl would attain his secondary education; intense anti-Semitism at the University of Budapest discouraged his enrollment, and the death of Herzl's sister in early 1878 encouraged Herzl's parents to leave Hungary permanently. The family thus relocated to Vienna in mid-1878.

But the move to Vienna occurred during a period of growing anti-Semitism in Austria. A decade earlier, during the 1860s, Jews had been increasingly integrated into Viennese society. As bankers and artisans, they were a crucial element in the booming economy. Furthermore, the dominant liberal party emphasized the importance of universal rights, and Jews enjoyed full civil rights; they enrolled in universities and participated in the same occupations as gentiles. Acceptance of the Jews during the 1860s, however, did not necessarily eradicate anti-Semitism;
a long tradition of discrimination against Jews could not be so easily overcome. Anti-Semitic statements and actions continued to appear periodically, though the perpetrators were usually not identifiable. Throughout the 1860s, an anti-Semite identified only as "Austriacus" published numerous pamphlets, criticizing Jews and labeling them as the "money aristocracy."viii

As the economy in Vienna continued to prosper and Jews gained status, huge influxes of Eastern European Jews resettled in the city. Between 1854 and 1880, the Jewish population grew from 16,000 (less than three percent of the total population) to 74,523 (ten percent of the total population). The majority of the immigrants came from Galicia, Hungary, Moravia, and Bohemia. As such, they were markedly different than the Jews who arrived in Vienna from various parts of western Europe before 1850. Linguistically, the new immigrants were Yiddish-speaking; many of them still wore the traditional dress of the shtetl, including black, draping clothing that completely covered the skin and hair. These traits were looked down upon by the more acculturated Viennese Jews, and divisions within the Jewish community developed. Immigrants were ridiculed by both Jews and non-Jews for their out-dated dress and adherence to what were perceived of as "dead" traditions. The Austrian Jews were frustrated by the refusal of the newcomers to attempt assimilation; the practice of more traditional Judaism was believed to stimulate anti-Semitism. The sudden growth in population also created problems and resentment among the established residents, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Competition in the labor market increased, as not enough jobs were available for such a rapidly growing population. Furthermore, a larger proportion of men than women arrived from the East, which created competition among men to find suitable wives. Many of the established Jews turned to the possibility of inter-marriage, further aggravating the non-Jewish men.x Tensions between Jews and non-Jews thus continued to grow.

In May of 1873, the fragile position of the Jews in Vienna collapsed. The stock market crash and subsequent depression led to overtly anti-Semitic activities. As controllers of the banks and stock market, Jews were viewed as the perpetrators of the depression. As a result, outward manifestations of anti-Semitism ensued. Jews were attacked in the press, and their heavy influence in the Austrian economy prior to the crash was emphasized.

Liberalism was also regarded as a culprit of the depression. The economic programs of the Liberal Party were viewed as failures, and the government lost much support. Consequently, the political program which stressed the importance of universal rights lost credibility. Jews could not look to the government to protect them from anti-Semitic outbursts, as the Liberal Party officials no longer had enough status to stop the growing expressions of hatred. The Austrian Reichsrat fell into disarray, unable to find a majority to legislate on anything.xi New political parties began to emerge, with anti-Semitism providing a basic foundation for many of the new groups. By the late 1870s, the Jews in Vienna were the targets of constant discrimination and attack.

The most overt forms of this anti-Semitism first appeared in the Universities. Professors complained of the huge influx of Jews, claiming that the newer students from Eastern Europe were not prepared for the level of study required at the University. Some particularly anti-Semitic instructors insisted that the distinct ethnicity of the Jews prevented them from accumulating the necessary knowledge; as a result, they were "destined to fail."xii Several German nationalist groups outwardly supported the professors who made such statements.

It was into this setting that Theodor Herzl arrived at the University of Vienna in the fall of 1878. Despite the constant outbursts of anti-Semitism, Herzl threw himself into University life, attempting to achieve assimilation. His ability to essentially ignore the prevailing attitude regarding Jews is better understood in the context of Herzl's own diary. In 1882, four years after he arrived in Vienna, he expressed his own dislike of the Jews, emphasizing that "Jewish inbreeding" had,
restricted [the Jews] physically and mentally. They have been prevented from the improvement of their race. Crossbreeding of the occidental races with the so-called oriental one on the basis of a common state religion, this is the great desirable solution.\textsuperscript{xviii}

According to Herzl, it was crucial that the Jews assimilate in order to overcome the weaknesses that they accumulated over years of ghetto life. He ignored his own Hungarian heritage, considering it inferior, and regarded himself as purely of German ethnicity.

Immediately upon entering the University, Herzl joined the Akademische Lesehalle, (Academic Reading Hall). Though it was technically an academic association which provided a library to its members, by the 1870s it had become intensely political. The members of Lesehalle were predominantly German nationalists, which led them to invite various German nationalist speakers; among them was Georg von Schönerer. As a pan-German extremist, he expressed violently anti-Semitic beliefs while espousing the superiority of Germany over Austria. In February of 1881, Schönerer gave a speech to the Lesehalle members that was so violently anti-Semitic and pro-German that it attracted the attention of the police.\textsuperscript{xxv} The Academic Reading Hall was subsequently dissolved by city officials. Throughout his period of membership in Lesehalle, Herzl attended almost all of the lectures and speeches, apparently never objecting to their anti-Semitic content. There is no indication in his diaries that Herzl ever considered resigning his membership.

Following the disintegration of Lesehalle, Herzl turned to one of the radical nationalist fraternities that had been associated with the Academic Reading Hall. Though supporting and participating in many of Lesehalle's activities, the Albia fraternity was considerably more elitist. Non-German minorities were barred from the organization, which only had fifteen active members at any given time. In order to gain admittance, Herzl had to be recognized as a German rather than a Hungarian; this "transformation" was possible because of Herzl's strictly German upbringing by his pro-German parents.\textsuperscript{xv}

Historically, Albia had welcomed Jews who expressed strong pro-German nationalist tendencies. In general, the fraternity believed in policies of assimilation, and though its members did not accpet Jews who were not willing to adhere to assimilationist policies, Albia was not initially overtly anti-Semitic. Herzl was fully aware when he entered the fraternity that he was expected to continue not to outwardly display his "Jewishness." He willingly accepted this condition, believing that strong German nationalism would lead to full assimilation.\textsuperscript{xvii} Considering his views regarding the necessity of "cross-breeding" Jews to alleviate their physical and mental "malformities," his decision to join Albia under conditions of assimilation is not surprising.

In addition to the opportunity to achieve further integration into Austrian culture, Herzl may have been attracted to other aspects of Albia. Considerable status was attached to membership in the fraternity. The group was extremely selective in choosing its members, refusing entrance to those who were not physically attractive and did not excel academically. The members wore identifying uniforms which included ivory-tipped walking sticks, pillbox caps, and a sash of red, black, and gold material. Furthermore, all members wore a blue cornflower in their lapel, representing support for Kaiser Wilhelm and identifying them as radical German nationalists.\textsuperscript{xvii}

As were several other fraternities, Albia was a dueling fraternity. This accorded it even greater status than the non-dueling fraternities. Success in a duel was required for admission to the group, and members fought duels periodically throughout their active years. Herzl was especially fond of the notion of dueling, believing that it demonstrated a man's strength.\textsuperscript{xviii} Furthermore, dueling fraternities were generally the most fervently pan-German, which also appealed to Herzl. Interestingly, they also tended to be the most anti-Semitic, a fact which he never addressed
in his diaries. Herzl's requisite duel for membership almost failed to satisfy the requirements, as neither participant was seriously wounded. After months of preparation for the fight, his failure to win the battle decisively was extremely embarrassing for Herzl, as was the subsequent debate among the active members as to whether he would be granted admission.\textsuperscript{xx} Eventually, however, he did attain the necessary votes and was inducted as a member of Albia. For the rest of his life, Herzl proudly displayed a scar on his cheekbone that was a result of a cut attained in the duel.

During his first months in Albia, Herzl was a zealous member. He faithfully attended every meeting and contributed to the group's published journal. He took up drinking and gambling, spending considerable hours playing billiards and fencing with his fraternity brothers. He adhered strictly to the rules and demands of the Albia fraternity charter.

However, a year after Herzl became a member of Albia, a heated debate erupted within the group. The fraternity brothers were divided over the issue of Jewish membership. The predominant attitude was that Jews should no longer be admitted; Herzl and the other two active Jews would be permitted to remain, and all Jewish Alumni, or "Old Boys", would retain their status, but no new Jewish members would be inducted. Though no official decision was made regarding the issue, an informal agreement was made to adopt the new policy. Disturbed by the increasingly anti-Semitic overtones of the group, Herzl applied for inactive status; it was granted. Yet despite the fact that the fraternity was bluntly anti-Semitic in its new policy, Herzl did not resign from the group. He merely attained "Old Boy" status and freed himself from active participation. He was no longer obligated to attend meetings, but he continued to wear the Albia uniform and was, therefore, publicly associated with the group.\textsuperscript{xxi}

It is difficult to understand why Herzl chose to retain his ties to Albia despite its members' anti-Semitic actions. Perhaps he was still attracted to the glamour and status associated with membership in the elitist club. He may also have been unwilling to fully relinquish his membership because he supported many of the credos of Albia. Specifically, Herzl firmly believed that duels were the ultimate method of proving manhood, and he steadfastly supported Bismarck and the ideal of the Prussian Junker. By preserving his membership in Albia, he retained a group of friends who shared these increasingly uncommon beliefs.

Despite Herzl's initial desire to maintain ties with Albia, two years later he formally resigned from the fraternity. The event that triggered this action was a memorial service for Richard Wagner, the overtly anti-Semitic composer. The event was transformed into a pan-German nationalist rally, with speakers from various student organizations proclaiming the supremacy of Germany. The final speaker, Hermann Bahr of Albia, delivered a violently anti-Semitic address, supporting Wagner's anti-Semitic beliefs and attacking the Jews of Vienna. Bahr's statements created so much unrest in the audience that the police intervened and disbanded the ceremony.\textsuperscript{xxii}

Though Herzl did not attend the Wagner memorial ceremony, he read about the event and his fraternity's participation in the newspaper. He subsequently wrote a letter to the members of Albia, asking them to separate themselves from Bahr's speech and make a formal statement rejecting his anti-Semitic statements. The fraternity members refused. The following day, Herzl requested his resignation from Albia:

From the press reports I have regretfully learned that the Richard Wagner meeting, whose sponsors included the fraternity to which I have the honor of belonging as an inactive member, turned into an anti-Semitic demonstration . . . . The press reports contain no indignant disavowal on the part of the fraternity . . . . It seems rather obvious that, handicapped as I am by Semitism (a term still unknown at the time I joined), I
would not today request admission to the Albia, which in any case would probably be refused because of the above reasons, and any decent person will understand that I do not wish to remain where I am not welcome. . . I request severance of my links to the fraternity. Since to the best of my knowledge, my record contains nothing dishonorable, I am counting on an honorable dismissal.xxii

Herzl was refused the honorable discharge. He was forced to turn in his cap and sash, and his name was stricken from all fraternity records. As a result of Herzl's resignation, Paul von Porthein, the most active of the fraternity members, proposed that all Jews be officially barred from membership. The fraternity wished to avoid any future problems such as those that were encountered with Herzl. His motion was accepted. Three months later, Porthein subsequently committed suicide; this action was probably a result of his own deteriorating position. Porthein was a Jew.xxiii Obviously Herzl was not the only Jew who was caught up in the glamour of Albia. His decision to remain a member of Albia for so long despite the prevailing anti-Semitic attitudes seems almost benign considering that a fellow Jewish fraternity brother actually proposed that Jews no longer be granted admission. Clearly, Albia grossly affected its Jewish members' perception of themselves and their fellow Jews.

In considering Herzl's letter to the fraternity, it is impossible to ignore that he appears to be upset about his resignation. He still considers it an "honor" to be a member of Albia, and, although he says he would not request admission "today," he stresses that such a decision would be based on his own "Semitism" rather than the group's beliefs. Furthermore, he is very concerned with an "honorable dismissal," which, under the circumstances, seems irrelevant. Herzl did not object to the group's anti-Jewishness, which had existed for years and he had supported by accepting assimilationist policies; instead, Herzl was opposed to the new form of anti-Semitic racism which was emerging in Albia. Yet, clearly Herzl was still very impressed by Albia and though he felt compelled to resign, he was regretful that the fraternity had been transformed into a racially anti-Semitic group where he no longer felt welcome.

Herzl's disassociation from Albia did not lead him to reject all notions of assimilation. He continued to believe that he could succeed as a writer and journalist despite growing anti-Semitic trends in Austria. The racial anti-Semitism that developed at the University, according to Herzl, was limited to the students, who tended to become more politically radical than the general population.xxiv

Though Herzl seemed to suggest that the politics at the University were not representative of the general population, he attempted to escape the environment of the rapidly deteriorating Empire; perhaps he did not truly believe that Austria could foster full assimilation. He took a job as a journalist, doing free-lance writing that focused on cultural issues. He developed into a feuilleton writer, which, according to Carl Schorske, was "an artist in vignettes, [who] worked with those discrete details and episodes so appealing to the nineteenth century's taste for the concrete. But he sought to endow his material with color drawn from the imagination. The subjective response of the reporter or critic to an experience, his feeling-tone, acquired clear primacy over the matter of his discourse."xxv Interestingly, as a young man Theodor Herzl had been very critical of the feuilleton writer, saying that he risked "falling in love with his own spirit and thus losing any standard of judging himself or others."xxvi Herzl was apparently able to disregard his own criticisms of Feuilleton writers in his efforts to escape the political climate of Vienna. Feuilleton writing provided Herzl with an escape from his surroundings; he adopted a style of writing that allowed him to delve deeper into his own imagination. The subjective
nature of this type of work shielded him from criticism that would be likely to result from political writings.

After several years of Feuilleton writing, Herzl left Austria and went to Paris. He believed that France was a bastion of liberal politics and that by moving to Paris, he would find the culture and setting necessary to fully assimilate. Though he felt compelled to escape Vienna, and regardless of the troublesome note on which he resigned from Albia, Herzl always looked upon his years in Austria positively. He had great admiration for the city, particularly its artistic and cultural developments, and he credited Vienna with fostering his own love for art and music.\textsuperscript{xvii}

The move to France did not sever Herzl’s psychological ties to Austria and Albia. Years later, when Herzl was contemplating the "Jewish question," his membership in Albia continued to affect him. Before he conceived of the notion of an independent Jewish state, Herzl contemplated several other possible "solutions." In 1893, he suggested in his diary that he, representing the Jewish people, would challenge each of the leading anti-Semitic figures in Austria to a duel. He viewed the issue of anti-Semitism as one of honor, and by winning duels against the anti-Semites, he believed he could re-gain the status of the Jews and bring an end to the problem of racial discrimination.\textsuperscript{xviii} Clearly, his respect for dueling from his days in Albia continued on throughout his adulthood.

The second approach that Herzl considered to solve the "Jewish Question" was mass conversion. He envisioned an agreement with the Pope where all Jews would be converted to Christianity and thus anti-Semitism would be obliterated. This "solution" represented the ultimate attempt at assimilation.\textsuperscript{xix} Herzl still firmly believed that Jews could "become" Germans if they rejected their Jewish traits and heritage, and they could therefore become true members of the liberal society that he envisioned. Essentially, Herzl hoped to lead all Jews to give up their "Jewishness" in an effort to blend in with the general population, much in the same way he had rejected his "Jewishness" to become a member of Albia.

Realistically, Herzl recognized that mass baptism and dueling could not effectively solve the growing problem of anti-Semitism. He continued to contemplate the issue, until, in June of 1895, he developed the idea of a Jewish state. Recognizing that no nation existed where Jews were fully accepted, his hopes for assimilation gradually deteriorated to the point where he realized that the only state where Jews would not suffer anti-Semitism, would be one where Jews were the majority. Significantly, his first thoughts regarding the state were written after he attended a performance of Tannhäuser, a Wagner opera.\textsuperscript{xxx} It may simply have been a coincidence, but it is difficult to ignore that a ceremony honoring Wagner led Herzl to resign from Albia, and an opera by the same composer inspired Herzl to write his first drafts regarding Zionism and the Jewish state. Perhaps the performance evoked memories of anti-Semitism in Austria and the University, and causing Herzl to realize that the trend was not limited to a single country or city, but spreading and growing throughout Europe.

Similarly, no single influence can be said to have caused Herzl’s turn to Zionism. Years of victimization and anti-Semitism in several cities throughout Europe culminated in the development of Herzl’s ideas. The political climate at the turn-of-the-century brought about an increase in discrimination against the Jews. As Liberalism lost its status and radical parties emerged, Jews all over Europe felt the deterioration of their status, and many looked for a solution to the “Jewish Question.”

In an attempt to “answer” this Question, many of the ideas regarding Jews that Herzl stressed during his years at the University, as well as themes from Albia, appear in his Zionist tracts. He never accepted the notion of a religiously Jewish state, continuing to emphasize the need for Jews to shed their heritage and culture. As such, he did not envision a Jewish state based on religion. It would have no Jewish character; the flag would not include a Star of David and Hebrew would not be the official language. Instead, the
Zionist state would be a liberal utopia, where the fallen ideas of Liberal Europe would be salvaged. The Jewish State would be a liberal democracy where individuals of Jewish descent could live freely, without suffering from the pressures and devastation of anti-Semitism. All European languages would be acceptable, and the people of the Jewish state would be assimilated together into a common state and culture. Furthermore, the new state would be culturally similar to Germany, the nation that Herzl continued to idealize despite its rejection of the Jews. Describing the Jewish state in his diary, he wrote, "Entertainments as soon as possible: German theater, operas, operettas, circuses, cafe-concerts, Cafe Champs Elysees." Outcast from the society and culture that he loved, Herzl hoped to re-create liberal Germany within the new Jewish state.

The rejection of "Jewishness" was not the only aspect of Albia's theories which appeared in Herzl's development of the Jewish state. Writing to Baron Hirsch in May of 1895, Herzl expressed his Zionist ideas, hoping to attain monetary support for his new political program from the millionaire. In the closing of the letter, Herzl concluded his thoughts with the phrase "Honor, Freedom, Fatherland." This was the motto of Albia. Herzl also used the phrase "courage, candour, and truthfulness" in Der Judenstaat. These three words appear in the founding documents of Albia. The song that Herzl proclaimed to be the "song of the Jewish nation" was an old fighting song of the German nationalist fraternities in Vienna: "Someday there will be a light again in our brother's hearts... they will return to the wellspring in contrition and with love."

It was not only in terminology that Herzl invoked many of the themes of Albia. In writing his description of the Jewish state in his diaries, Herzl stressed the importance of maintaining the use of the duel: "I need dueling in order to have real officers..." He went on to describe the importance of the duel and the exact rules which must be adhered to in order to ensure that the duels are fair and reflect the strength and bravery of the participants. Believing that "there has been no one to train us to be real men," Herzl emphasized that the duel would help the Jews to overcome their weaknesses. He was invoking the concepts of his fraternity in developing the Zionist state. Clearly, Herzl still firmly believed in the precepts of the group, though his resignation had taken place more than a decade before. Albia would continue to influence him throughout his life.

Herzl's experiences in Albia were crucial in his personal realization that assimilation was not a realistic possibility. It was at the University that Herzl first felt the effects of the shifting political environment. As a member of the fraternity, anti-Semitism had its first serious impact on him, causing him to disassociate from a group that he admired and respected. In Albia, Herzl first encountered the transition from anti-Jewishness to racial anti-Semitism. Though the impact of his experience in the fraternity did not influence him enough to cause him to immediately reject assimilationist policies, the painful resignation was not forgotten.

Considering that Herzl was, for all of his life, a strong believer in assimilation, it is not entirely counterintuitive that he was a member of an anti-Semitic fraternity, and that he never entirely rejected the creeds of the group. He was raised in a household that encouraged his membership in organizations that were not traditionally Jewish. He joined Albia, partly out of admiration for its practices and beliefs, but also because he believed that the membership would facilitate his own assimilation. When the group became increasingly anti-Semitic, and his goal grew more difficult to accomplish, he felt obligated to resign his membership.

Years later, in the development of Zionist ideology, memories of Albia continued to re-appear. Despite blatant discrimination against Jews, Herzl continued to believe that Jews should overcome their "Jewishness" and emulate, in their own state, the liberal Germany that had rejected their presence. He longed for the setting that existed in Europe before the stock market crash and collapse of the political system; in the Jewish state, he aimed to bring back
liberalism. As turn-of-the-century Europe disappeared into oblivion, Herzl dreamed of its recreation in the Zionist state. Interwoven into the new liberal state, he envisioned many of the traditions and beliefs of the anti-Semitic fraternity of which he had been a member.

Herzl’s struggles with the issues of assimilation and anti-Semitism, and the Jewish State demonstrate a personalized model of the battles that have continued to plague Jews throughout the twentieth century. Among the different Jewish sects all over the world, there are varying perceptions of the definition of a Jew. Is Judaism a culture, an ethnicity, or a religion? Can it be only a religion? Is it truly impossible for Jews to assimilate, and if not, does assimilation necessarily make an individual “less Jewish?” These issues are crucial to the future of Israel. Nearly a half century after its creation, battles continue to rage among Jews as to whether the political entity of Israel must adhere to religious or political principles. Herzl’s vision of a Jewish State was actualized, but it remains unclear whether this state is a liberal state for Jews, as Herzl imagined, or a religiously Jewish State.

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4. ibid., 16.
5. Schorske, 150.
9. Ibid., 79.
11. Schorske, 182.
12. Boyer, 89.
15. Ibid., 48.
17. Ibid., photograph, 47.
22. Herzl, as quoted in Pawel, 70.
23. Ibid., 70.
24. Kornberg, 59.
“Playing the Man’s Game”:
Examining British and American Idolatry of Male Titanic Victims

Jenny Ellickson

“Where Manhood Perished Not” (1912)

Where cross lines of forty north
   And fifty-fourteen west
There rolls a wild and greedy sea
   With death upon its crest.
No stone or wreath from human hands
   Will ever mark the spot
Where fifteen hundred men went down,
   But Manhood perished not.

Those men who looked on death and smiled,
   And trod the crumbling deck,
Have saved much more than precious lives
   From out that awful wreck.
Though countless joys and hopes and fears
   Were shattered at a breath,
’Tis something that the name of Man
   Did not go down to death!

After hours of speeding through mid-Atlantic ice fields on its way from Southampton, England, to New York City, the S.S. Titanic grazed an iceberg just before midnight on April 14, 1912. At the time passengers were generally unconcerned by the small jolt they felt, perhaps because they were sailing on the first and only ship ever to be dubbed “unsinkable” by the press, or perhaps because the company which owned the Titanic had only lost two out of its 2,179,594 passengers during the ten years prior to the voyage.

Few on board could have suspected that within three and a half hours the Titanic, whose hull had been ripped open by the ice, would have disappeared under the water, and that more than two-thirds of the 2,224 people on board would be dead, victims of the worst maritime disaster to date. The high number of fatalities was the direct result of inadequate lifesaving equipment: the Titanic’s twenty lifeboats had a total capacity which was half the size of the ship’s population. Because the crew and passengers followed the de facto rule of the sea by first trying to load all women and children into the limited number of lifeboats after the collision, 74% of females survived, a percentage almost four times the male survival rate of 20%.

Men, including a number of millionaires, had gone down with the ship in droves, and most of the women on board had entered lifeboats and lived.

As Steven Biel points out in his recently-published Down With the Old Canoe, “the disaster produced a contest over meaning that connected the sinking of an ocean liner in a remote part of the North Atlantic with some of the most important and troubling problems, tensions, and conflicts of the time.” Key among the issues which the disaster was seen as addressing were sexual equality and the roles which men and women should occupy in society. In response to the gender difference in survival rates, both British and American presses and publics instantly reconstructed the tragedy of the Titanic into a meaningful event by focusing on how it reaffirmed Anglo-Saxon male chivalry. This glorification of masculinity, however, did not simply take the form of benign celebration of the dead; instead it became an easy way to categorize women as members of a lesser species. The noble and self-sacrificing behavior of the men on board the Titanic had supposedly thrown female inferiority into relief, but in truth the evidence for exceptional heroics on the part of the British and American men was ambiguous and unreliable. Survivor
reports tended to be contradictory and fragmented, and the belief that there was weak or selfish behavior on the part of women on board is similarly unsubstantiated. In light of the fact that there was little proof that Anglo-Saxon males acted much more nobly than anyone else, the general deification of that demographic group and concurrent scapegoating of others seems at first to be a very odd response to the disaster on the part of the British and American people. In the end, though, it makes a sense from a psychological standpoint, because the fallibility of the ‘unsinkable’ Titanic added to the chaotic uncertainty of modern life, and a shaken public reverted to past paradigms to put the universe back in a logical order.\textsuperscript{ix}

In an attempt to find meaning in the tragedy, the British and American press and public immediately created a vision of unfathomable heroism among the men who died, and survivors only sometimes contradicted the preconstructed chivalry myth. Everyone agreed that the men had for the most part stood by to let women and children fill the lifeboats, even though doing so meant almost certain death, an act of self-sacrifice which inspired awe in British and Americans alike. The men who had gone down with the ship became heroes for a modern world desperately in need of heroes. This partially explains why a book written at the time would gush hysterically, "’Chivalry’ is a mild appellation for their conduct. Some of the vaunted knights of old were desperate cowards by comparison."\textsuperscript{x} Not only had the men given up their lives, but the successful implementation of the “women and children first” policy implied that they had gallantly died so women could be saved, an act of chivalry taken to the extreme. One of the more repeated anecdotes of the time fell in line with this image of smiling male sacrifice, describing how Benjamin Guggenheim, one of the wealthiest men on the Titanic, went down with the ship after reportedly telling a steward, “I am willing to remain and play the man’s game if there are not enough boats for more than the women and children. I won’t die here like a beast. . . . No woman shall be left aboard this ship because Ben Guggenheim was a coward.”\textsuperscript{xi} His statements effectively crystallized the then-current attitudes about what the mental state of the men on board must have been, serving as further evidence in the public’s mind that the men who had been lost with the Titanic were exemplars of masculinity and embodied conscious self-sacrifice and bravery.

Certainly the people who died with the Titanic deserve much respect and pity for what they went through and gave up, but at times the accolades showered upon them went far beyond realistic praise, especially when they implied that the men were superhuman or godlike. Captain Smith, who went down with his ship, was among the figures most often glorified in these excessive terms. According to one popular report, he jumped into the ocean with a little girl in his arms as the ship sank and reached a lifeboat in “only a few strokes.”\textsuperscript{xii} After giving the girl to the people in the boat, he refused to let them take him on board, instead pulling off his life preserver and saying, “I will follow the ship.”\textsuperscript{xiii} The Herculean overtones of this melodramatic image are palpable, and the message is a revealing one: the captain, totally capable of saving himself, uses his energy instead to rescue the most helpless of females and consciously chooses to die with the ship because to do so is his “duty”. The story, which flagrantly contradicts the numerous survivor reports that Captain Smith had disappeared underwater when the Titanic did, places its characters in stereotypical sex roles, with a valiant and powerful male protecting a weak female and earning honor for himself in the process. This schema serves as an appropriate metaphor for the traditional gender norms which journalists interpreted the Titanic disaster as affirming.

While Captain Smith was often depicted as a titan among men by newspapers, postcards, and cartoons published right after the disaster, the hyperbole went even further when similar media compared him and the other men who died to Jesus Christ. Dr. Van Dyke’s sermon to the Titanic survivors, given within a day of their arrival in New York after the sinking, said that “[this rule of ‘women and children first’] comes from God....The ideal that the
strength of the strong is given them to protect and save the weak...is in essential harmony with the spirit of Christ."xii
Certainly the men who died had committed a great act of self-sacrifice, but Van Dyke’s sermon went so far as to put them in the position of Christ, the quintessential “strong” figure who gave his strength to save the “weak” of the earth. An even more extreme metaphor lies in the dedication of a 1912 “non-fiction” account of the sinking of the Titanic, which reads:

To the 1635 souls who were lost with the ill-fated Titanic, and especially to those heroic men, who, instead of trying to save themselves, stood aside that women and children might have their chance; of each of them let it be written, as it was written of a Greater One—

“He Died that Others might Live”xxxv

The comparison of the dead men to Christ is impossible to miss, and the author shows no consideration either for the possibility of female self-sacrifice and death or for the possibility of male drives toward self-preservation. Such phenomena would have undermined the discreet gender categories which British and American societies had created along with their conception of what happened when the Titanic sank, categories which placed men in the positions of powerful protectors and women in the positions of passive weaklings.xxxvi

While those anecdotes and analogies which glorified the male passengers implicitly located the Titanic’s women beneath its men in worth and valor, more explicit indictments of both female passengers and females in general were common. When statements or articles lauded men for their bravery, they often simultaneously condemned women as members of a baser order. In discussing the nobility of the men who gave up their lives, a book from the period tried to emphasize male worth by pointing out that “there was no debate as to whether the life of a financier... was rated higher in the scale of values than that of an ignorant peasant mother... A life was given for a life, with no assertion that one was priceless and the other comparatively valueless.”xxvi The snobbery of this statement is as palpable as its sexism, and the author’s point, that the male self-sacrifice was all the greater because rich men were “better” than poor women who supposedly lived in their places, rings as a hollow compliment which gets much of its leverage from the way it degrades the women and steerage passengers on board and implies that neither group “deserved” to live. More vitriol towards women came with investigations into the disaster, which often blamed them as the reason why some lifeboats did not return to pick people out of the hypothermia-inducing water; crew members claimed that panicky women prevented them from returning to the scene for fear that the boats would be swamped.xviii

In addition to the women, men who survived the Titanic often garnered the scorn of the British and American people, who sometimes saw them as unmanly characters and variously typed them as physically weak, emotionally manipulative, or cowardly.xix One of the most popular Titanic stories, one which persists to this day, is that of a man who dressed up as a woman to get a seat in a lifeboat. This “mystery man” inspired the highest wrath from a contemporary book, which spat, “His name is on that list of branded rescued men who were neither picked up from the sea when the ship went down nor were in the boats under orders to help get them safe away,”xx thus casting suspicion on other male survivors and degrading them by associating them with this supposedly vile cross-dresser. The disgust that this story inspired speaks to preexisting doubts about the masculinity of the men who survived: not only did the cross-dressing man not try to protect the women on board, but he was actually so low that he became a woman when he entered the lifeboat, a possible allegorical statement about a lack of manhood among all the men who obtained seats in the lifeboats.

One group of male survivors did receive adulation from both continents, and both press and public chose
largely to ignore the negative aspects of their adventure and instead to glorify them for their ability to survive. The collection of men who actually went down with the *Titanic* only to climb on top of an overturned collapsible lifeboat once they were in the water were seen as doing their duty by sinking with the ship and triumphing due to their own physical power, a very “manly” set of actions. Once on top of the lifeboat, the men’s main concern must have been to live through the night and keep the boat from capsizing, which might partly explain their behavior to people in the water, like Thomas Whiteley, who reported, “They refused to let me get on. Somebody tried to hit me with an oar, but I scrambled on top of [the boat].”<sup>xxx</sup> Given that the collapsible boat was very crowded and in a constant danger of overturning, the men on board’s attempts to repulse the many people like Whiteley afloat in the ocean around them is understandable, but again far from heroic. Everyone on board the collapsible boat was male, and theoretically their semi-selfish escapades might have inspired the wrath of British and Americans alike. The cultural focus only on the positive aspects of the men’s experience again reveals a societal need to, for whatever reason, see the sinking of the *Titanic* as a showcase for male heroics.

The irony is that the *Titanic* chivalry myth gained such universal acceptance when the evidence for an abundance of heroism among the male passengers is limited and even contradicted. One survivor, Robert W. Daniels, told the *New York Times* that “five minutes after the crash everybody seemed to have gone insane. Men and women fought, bit, and scratched to be in line for lifeboats.”<sup>xxxi</sup> Such a picture of chaos directly contradicts the statement of another survivor, Col. Archibald Gracie, who swore that “there was not a man in [his] quarter of the ship who indicated a desire to get into the boats and escape with the women” and characterized the behavior of those on board as a “perfect and superb exhibition of self-control at this hour of severest trial.”<sup>xxxii</sup> Some female survivors told stories similar to Daniels’s, including Mrs. C.G. Stengel’s decidedly anti-heroic account of how “Chinamen and stokers hid in the bottom of the lifeboats before they were launched and men jumped into boatloads of women, injuring them.”<sup>xxxiii</sup> The first part of her statement is racist and shown to be largely untrue by later, more reliable reports about who was on board each lifeboat, but the second part was indeed correct to a degree. Even Gracie, the great booster of male chivalry aboard the *Titanic*, admitted that many men, including members of the first- and second-classes, jumped into lifeboats while they were being lowered.<sup>xxv</sup>

Granted, the British and Americans would not have looked favorably on the men who jumped into the lifeboats, but the greater point is that the evident chaos on board contradicts the picture of calm heroics put forth by many newspapers and books. An ominous explanation for the discrepancy lies in the statements of Mrs. Alexander Lurch, a survivor who claimed that all *Titanic* passengers whom the *Carpathia* rescued were made to sign a document which said “that there had been no disorder of any kind.”<sup>xxxvi</sup> In truth, this theory of mass censorship and cover-ups is probably a bit far-fetched, but it illustrates the difficulty in piecing together a coherent picture of what happened when all the survivors had different descriptions of the events on board, only some of which put male behavior in a favorable light.

With all the focus on male bravery, people tended to ignore the difficulties which the women who survived the *Titanic* had to face. While husbands stood back to let their wives enter the lifeboats, the women often did not want to leave without their spouses and only did so on the insistence of the crew. After the *Titanic* sank, they had to deal with intense feelings of grief and guilt about surviving themselves when their male relations often did not. Because male actions which commentators lauded as “superb courage”<sup>xxxvii</sup> tended to be small, rather understated gestures, like a man kissing his wife good-bye and helping her into a lifeboat, it might seem like similarly minor female actions would receive equal veneration, but this was not generally the case. There were exceptions, of course, like a *New York Times* article which proclaimed that
Oftentimes it has been written that out of each great moment of history some man has emerged as master of the situation, some one hand and mind that has controlled while others hang back. From verified statements and from circumstances explained by others the work of the women makes them the central figures in the great sea tragedy.\textsuperscript{xviii}

Such public acknowledgment of female valor in the \textit{Titanic} was not unprecedented, and indeed many commentators referred to a universal, non-gendered heroism which pervaded the \textit{Titanic}. For the most part though, articles and books mentioned women as an afterthought, often characterizing their bravery as passive or inactive, as when Gracie wrote that “no women even sobbed or wrung their hands.”\textsuperscript{xix} The inclusion of women in the chivalry myth seems to be due more to the desire of some members of the press to construct the sinking of the \textit{Titanic} as an event which brought out the best in everyone. As a result, female bravery became at times a supporting character for the great chivalry exhibited by the men, even though, as the evidence shows, it is not clear at all that the men were significantly more active and valorous.

Perhaps the greatest misconception upon which the masculine chivalry myth built was the general feeling that practically all women lived and practically all men died. Women did have a much higher survival rate than men because there were many more men than women on board, but the truth remains that 338 men lived, 22 more than the 316 female survivors. The actual ratio of men to women in lifeboats was one-to-one, but cartoons and artistic conceptions of the disaster in the press gave a very different impression by depicting nothing but flocks of boats filled with women, conveying the impression that almost no men survived. This made the female gender a very easy target for the resentment of British and Americans mourning the loss of so many vaunted men: the public saw women as occupying all the lifeboat seats, seats which could have held the “worthier” heroes who went down with the ship, even though in reality it was slightly more likely that a man had “taken” the seat of one of the men who died.

While the sinking of the \textit{Titanic} can hardly be blamed on an entire segment of the population, other demographic groups, like women, immigrants, and the lower classes, were all scapegoated in some way, but in fact the most obvious group to target and condemn, justly or not, was the white males who were so glorified by press and public. For instance, the lack of lifeboats was the result both of archaic British Board of Trade regulations, which did not require a seat in a lifeboat for every passenger, and of the stinginess of the White Star Line, which chose to spend money on swimming pools, squash courts, and barber shops instead of on extra safety equipment.\textsuperscript{xx} Upper class Anglo-Saxon men must have comprised the overwhelming majority of both the board which created the rules and the company which used them as a loophole for saving money, and yet it was just those sorts of power-brokers and big businessmen whom the public most glorified with the sinking. Granted, Bruce Ismay, the president of White Star who escaped the \textit{Titanic} in a lifeboat, was a detested figure after the sinking because he did not go down with his ship, but the universal vilification of him did not have any effect on public admiration for the corporate figures who died. An American suffragette pointed out “that since men had drafted the laws that governed the ship, they should be the ones to go down with it,”\textsuperscript{xxi} but on the whole the press and the public did not make that generalization and saved their greatest admiration of all for the rich men who died, business tycoons like John J. Astor or Benjamin Guggenheim who were none too different from the shipping magnates who could theoretically have been held responsible for the disaster.

An even more interesting phenomenon is the fact that Captain Smith was singled out for veneration when he, more than anyone else on board, was responsible for the disaster...
because he controlled the Titanic’s speed and should have slowed the ship down in such icy waters. Even though other ships had sent the Titanic six telegraphed messages about upcoming ice during the hours leading up to the collision, the Titanic was racing through the Arctic waters at a very high speed, perhaps its fastest yet, just before it hit the fatal iceberg. Newspapers at the time liked to attribute the decision to travel at full speed to the nefarious influence of Ismay and his desire to cross the Atlantic quickly, but Smith, who knew about four of the ice warnings, was in control of the ship, and no one could have ordered him to make it go faster. It must have been the captain’s decision to ignore the messages from the other ships, a decision he possibly made because rumors of the Titanic’s unsinkability had seduced him into a state of overconfidence along with the rest of the world. Further evidence for Smith’s possibly cocky state of mind and for his ultimate responsibility for the disaster comes from his failure to hold a lifeboat drill Sunday morning, even though to do so was standard procedure on White Star ships, and also from his decision not to post extra lookouts when he heard reports of ice ahead, an omission which flew in the face of maritime norms. Whatever the reason for Smith’s failure to slow the Titanic down, the ship’s high speed was a critical factor which limited its ability to maneuver around the iceberg once the look-outs had spotted it. Clearly Smith was highly culpable in the sinking of the Titanic, and even though he died nobly by going down with his ship, the adulation, both British and American, heaped upon him seems very strange in light of the fact that the well-being of the ship was his personal responsibility. Captain Smith is just another example of how the press and public on both continents were willing to ignore faulty behavior on the part of the Titanic’s male victims and focus instead on their supposed acts of glory.

Since the evidence for great acts of bravery by the men who died is fragmented and even contradictory, the question becomes, how did the press and public create such an immediate and crystallized conception of male heroics before the survivors had even landed to tell their stories? Well, one of the last telegraph messages that the Titanic sent out before sinking stated that the crew was putting the women and children on board into lifeboats. Within twenty-four hours, newspapers all over the world knew that the Titanic had gone down and also knew the contents of this message. Additionally, before the survivors arrived in New York aboard the Carpathia, that ship’s wireless operator sent out partial lists of those saved and lost, lists which rapidly entered the text of newspapers all over. Male names dominated the casualty list while female ones appeared mostly in the survivor list. Journalists, though they had heard no direct testimony from any Titanic passengers, surmised from the telegraph message and from the large amount of male dead that men had gone down with the ship to save the women on board. Before the Carpathia even landed, then, rapturous praise of the bravery of the men who died filled the newspapers, and by the time the survivors began to tell their stories, journalists already carried with them certain preconceptions about what had happened and may well have asked leading questions to probe for heroic male acts, thus perpetuating the chivalry myth.

These early assumptions about gender and class point to the mechanism by which the glorification of Titanic men arose. Still unexplained, however, is why the British and American people embraced the chivalry myth so fervently in the face of its many contradictions and in light of the fact that the sinking of the Titanic offered just as many reasons to condemn some of the dead as to glorify them. Gracie wrote that the sinking of the Titanic “caused more excitement . . . than any other single event that has occurred . . . within a generation, and a large part of that excitement revolved around public veneration of the male passengers; Titanic postcards, books, even songs filled the stores, and most of them centered on the chivalry of the men who died. Why would the tales of heroism have such strong appeal for the British and American nations? The answer to
the conundrum lies both in the cultural climate that was in place in England and the United States before the Titanic sank and in the concerns and fears which the death of the "unsinkable ship" raised in people's minds.

The period from the late nineteenth- to the early twentieth-century was riddled with fresh uncertainties about aspects of life which had often been taken for granted, notably in the form of questioning assumptions about the inferiority of women. This scene of sex-role confusion, with the New Woman struggling for acceptance in the face of intolerance and the surging cult of masculinity, was the scene which the Titanic entered, only to find itself playing into the dialogue between old and new ways of thinking about gender.\textsuperscript{xxxix} In large part because of the advent of various feminist movements, the 'New Women' of Europe were fighting for the right to lead lives which were more active and often more similar to those of men, and the suffrage movement in the United States likewise rattled traditional gender norms.\textsuperscript{x} After decades of clearly-defined, hierarchical roles for men and women, this radical move towards female liberation created a social crisis, leaving many people on both sides of the Atlantic with fresh insecurities not just about gender but also about the stability of the world as a whole. This societal unease resulted both in a backlash of negative press against women, who were seen as the causes of the angst, and in related attempts to reaffirm the beauty of masculinity.\textsuperscript{xii} "The strenuous life," a phrase introduced by Theodore Roosevelt, described a male ideal which rose to prominence in both the United States and England at this time, an ideal which emphasized manliness, courage, and physical prowess.\textsuperscript{xiii} In many ways, the concept of the strenuous life represented a semi-conscious attempt on the part of British and American citizens to return to past gender paradigms, which in turn recalled the remembered simplicity of earlier days.

In 1912, the suffrage movements in both England and the United States were in full swing, and the Titanic's "women and children first" policy coupled with the ensuing glorification of traditional gender roles resulted in a backlash against feminism, compelling suffragette leaders to comment specifically on the tragedy. Lida Stokes Adams, a suffragette from Philadelphia, complained that, "Women passengers of the Titanic lost one of the greatest chances ever presented to aid the cause of suffrage when they did not assert themselves and prove they are as courageous as men." In England, Millicent Fawcett asserted that women "must consider carefully whether it is worthwhile to let men assume the entire burden of physical sacrifice in times of danger," because otherwise "it will be difficult to get men to relinquish their heroic ideals." In many ways, the sinking of the Titanic exposed a difficult paradox for the suffragettes: as a member of the League for Civil Education of Women put it, "We are willing to let men die for us, but not vote for us." This is the contradiction which led to a rapid decrease of sympathy for feminism in England and the United States after the Titanic incident.

The Titanic had inspired great feelings of empathy and awe in both nations for the men who had given up their lives, and the fact that feminists went on the offensive, coming close to belittling their deaths, resulted in even greater losses of sympathy for their cause. A newspaper article about British suffragettes' responses to the Titanic gawled that "to this tsory [sic] of epic grandeur and infinite pathos . . . there has been added a jangling note, that by the militant suffragettes of England because of their insistence that putting women in lifeboats first was simply a tradition and not as especially noble act by the men on board. Even ministers joined in the feminist-bashing, like a New York reverend who simultaneously praised male heroics and thumbed his nose at suffragettes in a sermon which stated that "the men on the Titanic sacrificed themselves for the women and children. The women did not ask for the sacrifice, but it was made. Those women who go about shrieking for their 'rights' want something very different."

Condemnations of the suffragettes and the suffrage movement did not come solely from men, however, for
many women also criticized the feminist movement and revered the male chivalry which was supposedly exhibited at the sinking of the Titanic. Most notable in the efforts of the American anti-suffragettes was their decision to build a monument dedicated to men who died with the Titanic and the chivalry they exhibited. Donations could not be larger than one dollar, and only women could contribute to the fund. More than 25,000 women gave money, with President Taft’s wife Nellie donating the first dollar “in gratitude to the chivalry of American manhood.” This fervent belief in masculine valor was in place for many women even before survivors arrived in New York to tell their stories: a letter to the New York Times written the day after the sinking glowed, “Does not the heart of every true American woman go out in tender loyalty to those brave men of the Titanic who yielded their valuable lives that the weak and helpless might live?”

While it is unclear that the men who went down with the Titanic were selfless, brave, and chivalrous to the end, the gender conflict of the time makes it easier to understand why the public clung to the belief that they were the embodiment of the masculine ideal. Perhaps everyone was looking for a way to resolve the dispute, and the Titanic and its accompanying myth of male chivalry provided a means of temporarily resolving it in favor of the dominance of masculinity. Feminism and suffrage were relatively unpopular with the predominantly male body of British and American journalists, and the tales of male glory which early articles about the Titanic recounted were reaffirmations of the strenuous life and indirect snubs at British and American women who were trying to gain equality. The stories of masculine self-sacrifice were poetic, and it was near impossible for feminists to rewrite the dominant conception of the sinking of the Titanic without sounding like they were blaspheming the dead by trying to strip them of their heroism. In many ways, the brouhaha over the Titanic men and their chivalry was an important battle in the struggle between emerging feminism and traditional ideas of masculine dominance, and the perception of the sinking as a glorious reaffirmation of Anglo-Saxon manhood overwhelmed every other possible interpretation and has continued on to this day. The resultant crippling of feminism and increasing of support for the cult of masculinity could be interpreted as a turning back to more traditional social values on the part of the English and American people.

This drive to return to the ways of the past and its clear, hierarchical separations between men and women becomes even more understandable in light of the blow which the sinking of the “unsinkable” Titanic dealt to British and American beliefs in perpetual progress and ever-increasing happiness in the world. The Titanic was the most technologically advanced ship of its time in addition to being the largest and most luxurious, and the fact that it, of all ships, sank on its maiden voyage was an allegorical slap in the face of British and American overconfidence about the future and people’s own abilities to master the world in which they lived. An ancient iceberg, the perfect symbol of nature’s power, ripped into the hull of the Titanic, man’s masterpiece and left some of the world’s most powerful men to freeze in the Atlantic Ocean. Far from being a senseless tragedy, the death of the Titanic almost seemed like an apt condemnation of man’s cockiness and a sign of the deep flaws and failings of the modern world, with its emphasis on technology and speed. People at the time believed that “suffering and tribulations could be borne so long as it was believable that mankind was improving...[but] the Titanic disaster had shaken that belief.” This profound effect explains why the sinking of the Titanic was an event of such magnitude in the public mind, and the sinking’s implicit indictment of modern values may well have fostered a societal desire to return to the gender norms of the past. People saw the past as safer, simpler, and more predictable than the present, and all of these qualities were ones which appealed to British and Americans shaken by the Titanic events. By glorifying old gender roles, especially the beauty of manhood and chivalry, people were able to put aside the
negative statements which the ship’s vulnerability made about the values of the present and reconstruct the sinking in an almost positive way, as a reaffirmation of the values of the past.\textsuperscript{iii}

The glorification of the men who died can be partly explained by an automatic impulse to honor the dead and by the fact that men did die in droves so women could have seats in lifeboats, an undeniable act of self-sacrifice. Without an understanding of the British and American cultural angst about gender and technology, however, the intense rapture of the praise for the men who died and corresponding degradation of women cannot be easily explained. This early twentieth-century idealization of male self-sacrifice continued up until World War I, when adolescents flocked to the front to reach the same pinnacles of greatness through dying for their countries. The pointless slaughter of that war quickly broke down the Victorian ideals of Valor, Honor, and Sacrifice, however, and within five years of the sinking of the Titanic, the British and American publics would probably have responded to the event much differently. In many ways, the positive press surrounding the men who were lost with the Titanic became one of the last unfettered love songs to a masculine ideal which was rapidly becoming inadequate for the modern world and all of its new complexities.


\textsuperscript{iii} There are a number of differing statistics about how many people were on board the Titanic, how many died, and how survival rates were distributed in terms of gender and class. I have chosen to use the numbers in Walter Lord’s book, numbers which he got from the British Inquiry’s official report on the sinking of the Titanic, because they are the most complete ones I have. They are not substantially different from statistics cited in other books, but the general variation in Titanic data means that some of the percentages or numbers I use in this paper might be slightly greater or smaller than ones offered in other sources.


\textsuperscript{v} Lord, 92.

\textsuperscript{vi} I first looked at Down With the Old Canoe after finishing an earlier draft my paper. That book, like this paper, discusses how the Titanic played into contemporary gender issues, but it is more of a survey of how society interpreted the disaster, while this paper also examines the inconsistencies of the chivalry myth and attempts to explain how and why the myth arose with the intensity that it did.

\textsuperscript{vii} Steven Biel, Down with the Old Canoe: A Cultural History of the Titanic Disaster (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 8.

\textsuperscript{viii} Ibid., 23.

\textsuperscript{ix} Ibid., 24.

\textsuperscript{x} Marshall, 100.

\textsuperscript{xi} Wade, 52.

\textsuperscript{xii} Marshall, 236.

\textsuperscript{xiii} Ibid., 237.

\textsuperscript{xiv} Ibid., 8-9.

\textsuperscript{xv} Ibid., 5.

\textsuperscript{xvi} Biel, 27.

\textsuperscript{xvii} Ibid., 99.

\textsuperscript{xviii} Wade, 220.

\textsuperscript{xix} Marshall 117, 121.

\textsuperscript{xx} Ibid., 78.

\textsuperscript{xxi} Colonel Archibald Gracie, The Truth About Titanic (New York: Mitchell Kennerly, 1913), 88.

\textsuperscript{xxii} "Survivor’s Tales from the Titanic," New York Times, 19 April 1912, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{xxiii} Gracie, 34.

\textsuperscript{xxiv} Wade, 52.

\textsuperscript{xxv} Gracie, 245.


\textsuperscript{xxvii} Marshall, 64.

Gracie, 119.

Wade, 20.

Ibid., 65.


Ibid., 52.

Ibid., 52.

Davie, 36, 38.

Biel, 23.

"Tribute to Titanic Dead: Men Who Sacrificed Life for Women Lauded as True Americans," 17 April 1912, p. 7.

Gracie, 115.

Biel, 29.


Ibid., 58, 59.


Wade, 293.

Ibid., 291-92.

Ibid., 292.


Wade, 65.

Ibid., 292.

"Tribute to Titanic Dead," p. 7.

Biel, 29.

Wade, 63.

Biel, 24.

THE ROLES OF EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY, NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY AND ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM IN THE FORMATION OF THE POST-OTTOMAN NATION-STATE SYSTEM

Carol Armenteros

Beginning in the eighteenth century, the drawing of the Middle East into Europe-centered circuits of trade overhauled the society, economy and ideological paradigms of the Ottoman empire. Ideologically, the economic ascendancy of Europeans and religious minorities discredited Ottomanism as a social system and facilitated the hybridization of indigenous and European ideas. Economically, colonialism created one-product export economies buffeted by world market fluctuations and squelched indigenous manufacturing efforts by flooding the market with imported goods. Socially, the replacement of a semi-feudal system of urban hegemony over the countryside with dependent capitalism and an import/export market changed traditional social relationships by creating new social classes and giving old ones new roles. All these internal changes in turn prepared the groundwork for Europe's post-World War I parceling of the Ottoman Empire into nation-states. Broadly, we can analyze the emergence of post-Ottoman nation-states 1) socially as the differential empowerment of social groups, 2) diplomatically as the fruition of the economic interests of imperial governments and their native dependents (especially in the field of oil), and 3) ideologically as the culmination of nineteenth-century ideological disquisition. It is by examining the interplay of internal factors (ideological renovation and changing socioeconomic trends), and by tracing how diplomacy...
disrupted the balance of these internal factors, that we can reconstruct, holistically, the emergence of Middle Eastern nationhood.

This interplay between economic interest, ideology and diplomacy is a complex one, which must be conceptualized as the intersection of several analytical axes. On the one hand, purely ideational analyses (like that of Ernest Dawn), while providing a good account of intellectual fermentation within elite circles, does not examine how ideological restoration was consummated socially and politically. On the other hand, social/economic analyses (like those of Lockman or Batatu) present the rise of nationhood as a product of class struggle, neglecting the structural transformative power of ideology itself. Finally, diplomatic history, with its emphasis on agreements between individuals, is completely divorced from the structural and superstructural driving forces of country formation; while it provides an excellent explanation of why Middle Eastern nations appeared within the geographical delimitations and at the time that they did. Here I shall attempt to complement the advantages (and overcome the shortcomings) of these approaches by exploring how economic interests changed the social patterns of the Ottoman empire and gave rise to nationalism, and how nationalism in turn changed social and economic realities; and by investigating how European diplomatic agreements both reinforced and subverted these processes by creating nations to service European colonial interests.

Let us begin by asking how internal social and economic changes created the permissive conditions for the precipitate formation of nation-states after World War I. First of all, the European economic penetration of the Ottoman empire had, since the eighteenth century, disrupted local economic patterns of subsistence and self-sufficiency and integrated the empire into the global economy. Proximity to Europe facilitated foreign capital investment and the flooding of the Ottoman market with imported goods. This in turn promoted the selected growth of certain sectors of the economy (notably the transport and service sectors) while undermining traditional sectors like handicrafts and subsistence agriculture. The resulting sectoral asymmetry had important consequences for ensuing economic development. First of all, until the beginning of the twentieth century the decline in handicrafts that had begun in the eighteenth century was not offset by the rise of an indigenous industrial base, but rather by the development of dependent one-product import/export economies that exported raw materials to Europe (cotton in Egypt, silk in Lebanon, oil in Iraq) in exchange for manufactured goods. European competition dictated this pattern to a large extent, but the regional dearth of industrial resources (e.g. coal, wood), also thwarted industrialization. In addition, underindustrialization was as much a result as an epiphenomenon and driving force of dependence on foreign trade: for instance, it made indigenous exploitation and marketing of oil impossible. Horticulture, too, fell victim to the general tendency of substituting local technological and industrial development with increasing trade: here extensification rather than intensification drove the expansion needed for export.

These economic changes had profound social repercussions. First of all, the emergence of export/import economies promoted the development of a new Jewish and Christian merchant class—extroverted, European-patronized and -oriented (Hourani 16). Secondly, the Great Power scramble for Middle Eastern raw materials and markets drove the development of a large transport sector. The growth of transportation facilitated integration into the global economy, but more importantly it created a proletariat disaffected by its economic and working conditions and its strong consciousness of subordination and abuse by foreigners—a process exacerbated in the latter part of the nineteenth century by the expansion of the proletariat in the growing industrial sector. Thirdly, the increase in the standards of living that accompanied economic imperialism, coupled with the lack of (at least formal)
foreign political control and the spread of education fostered the rise of a new intelligentsia; at the same time, it created a feeling of discouragement and an increased perception of deprivation that paved the way for the “Revolution of Rising Expectations.” Fourthly, the creation of a “plantation economy” based on foreign trade created a new class of absentee landowners and shifted agricultural patterns from subsistence farming on peasant plots to large-scale commercial farming on latifundios—“from communal or tribal ownership to individual property rights”—thus increasing the inequality of wealth distribution in the countryside. Governments compounded the penury of the peasants by exploiting them financially to extract the surplus necessary to pay the increasing indebtedness generated by concessions to European powers.

Society mirrored these economic transformations in the orientation of social groups toward the national question on the eve of the mandate system. The nationalist movement, with all its secular and capitalist trappings (and despite the great class and ideological divisions within it that often threatened to rend it apart) was appealing and convincing to women, workers, religious minorities, the new Western-oriented bourgeoisie and large landowners: in short all those who had emerged as political actors under colonial rule or benefited from imperial policies. A nation-state modeled on Europe promised these groups enjoyment and increase of the social and economic advantages they had acquired under imperialism without the oppression of foreign rule. To large landlords (like the cotton growers in Egypt and the Iraqi shaykhs), secular nationalism offered opportunity for economic diversification, as well as for an extent of capital accumulation impossible within the colonial economy. Greater economic autonomy likewise held attraction for the intelligentsia, but its major stake in a liberal nationalist polity was as the primary political player. Liberal nationalism, and in particular its perceived potential for the realization of workers’ interests, tendered economic and professional freedoms to a newly politicized working class (shorter hours, higher wages, the right to strike and organize, etc.).

The benefits to religious minorities from secular, liberal nationalism were obvious, as it would finish freeing them politically—if probably not socially—from second-class citizenship while releasing them from European economic patronage. Even in Arabia, where Sharif Husayn envisioned the implementation of the shari’ah (holy law) after nationhood, Christians could hope for greater equality, thanks to Western patronage of the nascent nationalist governments. As Sharif Husayn reassured Sir Henry McMahon in his letter of October 24, he would treat the Christians like Omar: “He, Omar, declared with reference to the Christians: ‘They will have the same privileges and submit to the same duties as ourselves’.” Finally, elite women saw in nationalism and the national movement an opportunity for liberating themselves from patriarchy and entering the public space.

Whether gaining economic or social freedoms, all the groups that invested in nationalism were socially relatively privileged; and even the workers’ movement (at least in Egypt) was directed and organized by the afandiyah. Lockman seems to have strong doubts that without middle class patronage the working class would have articulated its demands within the nationalist framework, or even that it would have articulated demands at all. He notes, for instance, that middle-class support contributed significantly to the ability of the workers to strike and organize, and that the substantial gains won by some workers in the years of bourgeoisie-proletariat cooperation would have been “far more difficult” without middle class tutelage. Thus nationalism was not the product of a spontaneous class struggle, or of independent political affinities within the lower orders. Rather, nationhood serviced a Western-oriented elite in justifying and furthering their newfound political and economic prosperity. It originated and was largely implemented and popularized from above, accepted
by the masses only when political conditions made it seem natural and almost inevitable—as in the Revolution of 1919, when the dissolution of the Ottoman empire and the declaration of Egypt as a British protectorate made nationalism the explanation and solution most consonant with the situation. Even in countries without strong middle-class elements (e.g. Arabia), a Western-supported elite still implemented more Islamized brands of nationalism from above.

The elite justified its nationalist aspirations through various recently crafted ideologies. Since the early nineteenth century, the perception of economic and military weakness vis-à-vis Europe prompted the Ottoman bureaucracy to reconceptualize old indigenous paradigms and absorb new European ones. Initially, this process went unaccompanied by any major intellectual project. Dawn notes that the early proto-nationalists did not delve deeply into European nationalist theory. Tahtawi, the great self-styled proto-nationalist, still believed Islam superior to Western culture; he simply singled out nationalism as the key to Europe’s success and sought to apply it to Egypt, while his Ottomanist counterparts enforced it in the Ottoman context in an effort to bring the empire economically and militarily on a par with Europe. Thus Ottomanism and its accompanying tanzimat reforms were fueled chiefly by practical prerogatives and posited the existence of an Ottoman nation only to harness mass support to the government’s efforts; they were implemented out of pragmatism rather than conviction, and always from above against popular resistance. However, Ottoman intellectuals soon proceeded from this operational nationalism to more normative ideologies that went beyond simple apologetics to reinvent and rationalize “national” indigenous identities. Muhammad Abdurahman’s rationalization of the weakness of the East vis-à-vis the West is perhaps the most significant of these efforts. Abdurrahman attributed the rise of the West to its exercise of reason; in his view Eastern decline began when reason—the source of past Muslim hegemony—lapsed, and when the Muslims mixed science and religion, which should be separate. In Abdurrahman’s final analysis the weakness of the East was due to the abandonment of reason through the corruption of Islam. Along the centuries, the Muslims had forgotten the ways of the Arab fathers of Islam, and foreign ways had corrupted the religion.

This argument planted the seeds of what came to be two diametrically opposed orientations. First of all, Abdurrahman’s insistence that reason was congruent with—and indeed integral to—-Islam, and that science and religion should remain separate, became the fountainhead of a brand of nationalism that championed a rationalist/secularist/democratic model of social organization. On the other hand, his prescription for the ills of the East—the return to the uncorrupted Islam of the ancestors—was the ideological departure point of Rashid Rida’s salafiyyah movement, which, in its search for the true roots of the religion, laid the foundations of radical Islam. Muhammad Abdurrahman thus unwittingly created a tension (or perhaps simply provided a forum for articulating an already-existing tension) between a secular model of social organization and a more religiously-oriented one—a tension that was exacerbated by the confrontation between East and West, secularism and religiosity, materialism and spirituality. But external forces rapidly upset this uneasy balance of ideologies: the political conditions created by post-World War I European diplomacy and the mandate system determined which ideologies—and, by extension, what social groups and political movements—would prevail in the new order, and where they would be implemented.

Two major considerations dictated British diplomacy during World War I, and, consequently, the borders and political character of the nations that emerged thereafter. The first was securing direct economic control of Ottoman resources after the war, and especially of oil, which after 1912 became the major strategic and economic interest in the Middle East, surpassing all previous interests in trade routes
or raw materials or markets. The second was, quite simply, the urgency to win the war.

The conflict between these short- and long-term interests bedeviled Britain's diplomatic maneuvers in World War I, greatly obfuscating the question of territorial allocation. The first letter of Sir Henry Mc Mahon to Sharif Husayn illustrates this tendency in the Commissioner's attempts to gloss over the question of boundaries: "... it would appear to be premature to consume our time in discussing such details [the borders of the Arab state] in the heat of war..." The British thus wanted to secure the cooperation of the Arabs in the war without relinquishing their economic interests in Mesopotamia, or those of France in Syria. In the end Sir Henry made explicit England's special interests in Iraq on the Sharif's insistence:

With regard to the vilayets of Baghdad and Basra, the Arabs will recognize the established position and interests of Great Britain necessitate special administrative arrangements in order to secure these territories from foreign aggression, to promote the welfare of the local populations and to safeguard mutual economic interests.31

Sir Henry did not mention the oil-rich province of Mosul in this list. Its historical and economic ties to Turkey and Syria made it fall more logically under French influence; and the following year France formalized its hold over the region in the Sykes-Picot agreement. However, during the talks between M. Clemenceau and the British Prime Minister32, France renounced its claims to Mosul in exchange for the German share of the Turkish Petroleum Company.33 Thus in Mosul Lord Balfour's prescriptions for laying down borders according to "economic and ethnographic considerations rather than strategic" foundered on the rocks of British oil interests. By contrast, short-term strategic, rather than long-term economic, considerations dictated the resolution of the Palestinian question. Since Palestine did not proffer a lucrative economic prize, the War Cabinet established a Jewish Home there to sabotage the German government's putative popularity among the Jews (Meeting No. 227). And not only that; in its zeal to equip the Zionists with all the amenities of a good war ally should have, the British extended the borders of Palestine into Syria.34 Thus even while the war raged Europe drew the boundaries of post-Ottoman nations in keeping with imperial economic interests and war strategies.

Not only were the borders of the new nations determined at European conference tables; but their very existence was too. Lord Balfour noted35 that, while the framers of the Sykes-Picot never envisaged the existence of nations in the regions they were doling out, the Covenant of 1919 assumed that in these regions "as in other portions of the Turkish Empire, there [were] in the advanced chrysalis state 'independent nations.'"36 Lord Balfour further observed that while the idea of such nations might have seemed moral in Europe, "in the latitude of Damascus and Baghdad" it must have seemed at least strange. However, existing ideologies in the Arab world—most notably the strong currents of Arab nationalism—were amenable and easily pliant to the new political exigencies of the mandate system. The French and British carving of the Fertile Crescent muffled aspirations in Syria for a great state in the ancestral domains of the Arabs, yet pan-Arabism remained potentially compatible and integral to the superstructure of the new states. For instance, in Iraq the "monarchy took pains...to nurture in the schools the passion of patriotism and a lively sympathy for the pan-Arab ideal."37 Even so, the drawing of boundaries according to European economic interests, rather than indigenous economic and political aspirations, created a great deal of political instability in those countries without a historical sense of unity—as in Iraq, where the centrifugal forces of regionalism and
tribalism threatened to rend the country apart\textsuperscript{38} until an appropriate nationalist myth had been forged and assimilated by a new generation. Ultimately, the imposition of modern "nations" in the Western sense of the word was only an expedient—and, from a European viewpoint, very normal and logical—means of administering mandates. Most importantly, it was a convenient means of reaping the economic benefits of imperialism without bearing its political burdens.

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OUT OF THE BLUE
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE
KIMBERLEY DIAMOND MINES 1867-1890

Nick Bourke
Ben Sussman

Traveling through the English and Dutch colonies on the southern end of the African continent in the middle of the nineteenth century, a voyager would probably return with images of a relatively slow-paced, agrarian society. Especially in the landscape between the Vaal and Orange rivers, South Africa was not much to write home about. Returning only decades later, the same traveler would have trouble recognizing the area. Indeed, by the turn of the century, this portion of Africa had become the heart of the Republic of South Africa, the most powerful industrial nation south of the Sahara. The catalysts for this rapid change were not iron or coal, but crystallized carbon deposits, known to the world as diamonds. Within a decade of the first South African diamond finds of 1867, diamond mining in the area surrounding the town of Kimberley had become a booming profession.

According to the De Beers Company, which gained prominence at Kimberley and eventually came to dominate the world diamond production, “it was the development of a thriving diamond mining industry in South Africa, and associated developments in gold mining and resultant secondary industries that set the scene for the industrial development of South Africa.” Although diamond mining played a key role in South Africa’s rise to power, that rise could not have occurred based on the haphazard mining practices which characterized the first decade of digging. Indeed, the early diamond miners, whose disorganized structure and rabid land grab were reminiscent of the California gold rush, almost caused the collapse (quite literally) of the diamond industry. The survival and prosperity of the South African diamond mining industry depended on its ability to evolve into a highly centralized system of underground mining, a system that relied on the development of closed labor compounds for African mine workers. Such developments in the diamond industry had repercussions far beyond the industrial sector. The relationship between capital and labor that evolved at Kimberley became an important model in the articulation of South Africa’s later social and racial policies. Moreover, the rise of the South African diamond industry had profound effects outside of South Africa’s borders. In the process of industrializing, the South African diamond mines came to rely on a labor pool that spanned the entire southern end of the continent.

As the region’s dominant nation, South Africa was able to set the paradigm for both industrial management and labor practices. Furthermore, as one of South Africa’s most powerful industries, the diamond mines exerted an important influence over the form of those paradigms. Underground production and its accompanying system of labor management stabilized South Africa’s diamond mining industry and catapulted its champion, the De Beers Company, to world dominance while at the same time helping to make South Africa a regional industrial power. But these advances came at the expense of racial tension and labor unrest. The same compound system which organized labor in the mines, thereby facilitating the move to underground mining, also relied upon a policy of capital-labor separation which centered on racial stratification. As this policy spread beyond South Africa’s industrial sector and into the nation’s social and political consciousness, it became the defining feature of twentieth century South African society.

WHAT IS A DIAMOND?: A GEOLOGY LESSON

In its promotional material, the diamond industry claims that “diamonds have the longest endurance of any substance known to man on earth. They are forever. Their beauty is unaffected by age.” Whether it is their timeless
quality, their beauty, or simply effective marketing, diamonds today are regarded around the world as symbols of power, wealth, and love. Meticulously cut and polished, they adorn the heads of monarchs and sit on the fingers of brides. As one author dotes, “diamonds have always been far more than jewels; they are history twinkling on the skin.”

Given the high value that numerous societies place on diamonds, it is perhaps not surprising that the stones themselves are created through a dramatic geological process.

The crystals themselves actually begin as deposits of pure carbon deep inside the earth’s crust.

Under incalculable pressure and heat, deposits of pure carbon [mix] with liquid rock and gasses and [are] forced upward. As the mixture [rises] it [begins] to cool. The carbon [crystallizes] into hard, clear stones. The surrounding liquid [forms] into large tubes, widening as they [approach] the surface of the earth. A cross-section would show a tornado of diamonds with a mile-wide top, winding its way downward several thousand feet.

As these tubes, or “pipes” cool, they harden into a material familiar to geologists as “kimberlite,” and dubbed “blue earth,” or just “blue” by miners and mine owners. Within the kimberlite pipes themselves, finding diamonds is by no means an easy thing. In its entire 44-year lifetime, an estimated 25 million tons of blue earth were removed from the Kimberley diamond mine, producing more than 3 tons of diamonds—a remarkable amount, but still a daunting ratio. After separating the diamonds from the ore, “it takes a minimum of a million diamonds that have been mined to obtain a one carat gem-quality diamond.”

Thus, in addition to its beauty and strength, the diamond’s rarity has helped secure its place as the world’s most valuable gem, the history of which stretches over a surprisingly long period of time. Diamonds were first found by humans in India as early as 4000 years ago. They did not, however, achieve their current prestigious status until the middle ages, “when new methods of cutting and polishing brought out the full beauty of the stones.” India remained the world’s diamond center until the mid-nineteenth century, when Brazil briefly emerged as a leading diamond producer. Brazil’s importance in the diamond world was limited due to the fact that its deposits were less than abundant, and difficult to access. New discoveries on the African continent quickly overshadowed the Brazilian finds, and captured the diamond world’s attention.

**Early Diamond Mining in South Africa**

In 1867, a 15-year-old Boer farm boy living near Hopetown on the Orange River picked up a “rounded, apparently water-worn river stone.” By the time that the stone was identified as a diamond (weighing some 83.5 carats, it was dubbed the Star of South Africa, and sold to the Earl of Dudley for £30,000), several more had been found, and South Africa began bracing itself for a rush of diggers. Towards the end of 1869, the rush began. Miners, numbering in the thousands, began turning up the alluvial soil along the banks of the Orange and Vaal rivers. “Before 1870 wound down, some £300,000 worth of rough jewels had been taken from the ground.” As impressive as it sounds, this number did not represent a significant profit, averaging to £60 per miner. Perhaps discouraged by such low profits, some diggers began turning away from the rivers, searching for other sources of diamonds. At a place called Dutoitspan, those diggers found the diamonds that they sought. In quick succession, three other diamond-bearing locations were found nearby: the Bulfontein farm, the Voortuizigt farm (the De Beers mine), and the Colesberg kopje (the Kimberley mine and eventually the city of Kimberley). At these sites diamonds were much more plentiful. Again, geology explains these finds: at Kimberley, the prospectors had found a collection of four kimberlite pipes. The alluvial diamonds that started the
South African diamond rush originated in the same pipes, but were dispersed by erosion and deposited along the ancient beds of the Orange, Vaal, and other rivers.

Word of the new “dry diggings” quickly made their way around the alluvial mining camps, and around the world. A makeshift town, unceremoniously christened “New Rush,” sprang up between the four mines, and the area soon became the destination for another wave of potential millionaires. By the time that the town was renamed Kimberley in 1873, “the quantity and quality of diamonds produced in South Africa overshadowed all other centers of world production.”

In the early days of diamond mining on the Kimberley fields, a majority of prospectors were African men from the southern interior of the continent. However, Europeans had been present in large numbers since the first diamonds were found at Kimberley. The discovery of dry diggings brought increasing European interest and influence, prompting “an influx of European (mainly British) investment and immigrants.” By 1872, just one year after the opening of the fields, there were 13,000 Europeans in a population that was estimated to be between 28,000 and 50,000 people. The Europeans who traveled to Kimberley were mainly interested in claim ownership. While some Europeans did seek work as laborers in the pits, these numbers were quite small compared to the numbers of Africans, who in general found jobs as physical laborers in the developing mines.

Some Africans at Kimberley did own claims. However, they were few in number and were quickly marginalized by the European “diggers” (the name adopted by early claimholders). Through political and social organizations open only to Europeans, European diggers quickly began to exclude African claimholders from the daily business of the mines. For the Europeans, the most overt argument against African claim ownership arose initially from the frustration that they had experienced when managing their African labor force. Diggers would often neglect or be unable to pay their African laborers in a timely and satisfactory manner. Consequently, large numbers of the African labor force would desert their jobs during unstable periods, often opting to return to the security of their homelands. The result was an unstable and unpredictable source of labor for the European diggers, and a precarious and increasingly dangerous work environment for the African laborers.

As working conditions worsened for African laborers, they fled from the camps in late 1872. The situation was exasperated as Africans began to fear their digger employers, who had begun to engage in brutal racist rhetoric and violent punishments. The rage of the diggers was fueled by their inability to control the remaining workforce and to quickly replace those Africans who had left. This rage, combined with generally poor finds at some of the claims, convinced many diggers that diamond thievery was the real reason that much of their labor force had fled. Whether based on actual data or on inflated anecdotal information, early sources estimated that “in the first years, more than half the diamonds pried from the ground were being stolen by native laborers.” Such assumptions built a general feeling among the Europeans that African workers were not to be trusted. Many at the time believed that Africans were stealing diamonds and disappearing into the African labor camps and shanty towns, free to live off of their bounty without having to work any further in the mines. Violence and punishments continued to escalate, so much so that the Cape Governor took notice of the events and decreed what he saw as unjust punishment of the Africans. “The great majority of the sensational stories which have gone the round of the papers have,” the Governor wrote, “but very little foundation in fact.” Despite the governor’s cautionary words, the diggers who held control of the diamond mines disregarded such lack of proof of theft. They steadfastly accused their workers of stealing and handed out vicious summary punishments.

Diggers continued to resort to physical violence, but a better solution to the labor discipline problem was needed. “Violence was not a long-term solution,” writes Robert Turrell; “[w]hat was required was the majesty of British law
and its acceptance by those over whom it held sway.**xvii** Kimberley, located in Griqualand West, had been part of a region annexed by the British in 1871, and was therefore subject to provisional colonial rule. The British Cape Governor at the time, Sir Henry Barkly, exercised his powers by announcing Proclamation 14 in 1872, a measure which was an attempt to both appease the Kimberley diggers and to assert the British philosophy of social hierarchy and governmental control. While Barkly tried to institute a Pass System of labor control which was more classist than racist (all "servants" had to be registered, regardless of color, and could not travel without an official pass), the Kimberley diggers resisted this construct, preferring instead to base their social hierarchy on race alone. Consequently, only "native" laborers were subjected to this process. However, the pass laws were largely unenforced until several years later, when labor control became of paramount significance to the evolution of the diamond mining industry and its destiny underground.**ix**

An important effect of the Pass Laws in 1872 was the articulation of an early difference of opinion between the British government and the diggers, with the African workers caught in the middle.

At the same time that the Pass Laws were being instituted, the European diggers were escalating their objection to African ownership of claims by demanding that such ownership be legally abolished. They argued that African ownership of mines legitimized African sale of diamonds, and therefore left European claimholders vulnerable to huge networks of native diamond thievery (now known as "Illicit Diamond Buying," or IDB). Stolen diamonds, the diggers assumed, could be laundered through the African owners. A contemporary journalist wrote, "if niggers can dig for themselves and sell diamonds unquestioned, the employment of native labour becomes practically useless."**xx** Eventually, the diggers succeeded in inhibiting African ownership of claims—first by custom and then by legislation—to such a point that Africans were subjugated to the position of laborer in the mines.

Clearly for South Africa, and especially the areas surrounding the Dutoitspan discovery, the first two years of mining were tumultuous ones. Early miners, both in the alluvial diggings, and in the richer pipes of New Rush, found themselves in a situation that was disorganized at best. Like the gold rushes in California, the diamond rush was in many ways a bonanza for prospectors hoping to make their fortunes in one fell swoop. For their part, the Boer farmers on whose property the diamonds were found either sold out quickly or kept control over their land, charging "a private rent, rather than a state impost, as a bargain between proprietors and miners." For example, "the proprietor of Dorstfontein [another South African mine] made a single charge of 7s 6d for the right to mine each claim . . . and this was changed to a monthly fee when excavation began in earnest."**xxi** When large companies began buying out the mines, those companies retained a similar system of rents and fees.

Once the miners acquired the real estate, consisting of 31 x 31 foot plots, they then had to face the difficulties inherent in actually digging up the diamonds. Organized diggings at the Kimberley mines began in May 1871,**xxii** and diggers began excavating the yellowish topsoil with fervor. At Kimberley, where the mouth of the pipe spanned an estimated 10 acres of ground, the miners set up a series of 470 separate plots.**xxiii** However, the same system that allowed individuals from all walks of life to own a plot in the mines also allowed these diggers to excavate their plots at vastly different rates. The early mines were thus "the scene of confused and inefficient methods of excavation. Diamonds were not an industrial process, but a huge lottery."**xxiv** Instead of the flattened surfaces created by modern strip mines, the cross-section of the Kimberley mines bore a closer resemblance to a moonscape.

The rules dictating plot allotments exacerbated the disorder. For years after the founding of Kimberley, no single miner could own more than two plots,**xxv** leading to a fragmented pattern of ownership in the mines. However, there was a more fundamental difficulty in digging at Kimberley. Although a significant number of diggers at
As a final complication to early mining efforts, at the same time that the diggers were dealing with various contraptions for hauling excavated material away from the mines, the very nature of that material was also changing. By 1872, diggers in the four Kimberley mines were quickly running out of the yellow topsoil. In its place they found a layer of hard bluish stone that dented picks and shovels. For many, these first signs of kimberlite marked their last days at the mines, as the possibility of finding diamonds in the blue rock seemed impossible. However, those who stayed on at Kimberley soon found that the blue earth yielded diamonds in even greater quantities than before. Thus, mining continued, although with considerable caution. Kimberlite was harder than the yellow topsoil, but exposure to the sun and hot air quickly pulverized it. Coupling this characteristic with the fact that the mines were “riddled with pits from 50 to 100 feet in depth,” the threat posed by rock slides remained as high as before, if not higher.

**Native Labor in the Early Mines**

However, the diggers were not the ones who had to face these risks on a daily basis. Rather, it was a workforce composed of migrant Africans. Before the discovery of diamonds in 1871, Kimberley did not exist. There was no native population that called the region its home. Therefore, when diamond mining boomed there was an urgent need for labor and goods in the fledgling Kimberley market. Nearby African peoples, such as the Tlhaping and Koranna, became active in the commodities market in Kimberley, providing such goods as firewood and milk. There were many other groups that traveled far—as much as a thousand miles—to work in the mines at Kimberley. These workers sometimes came of their own accord, and were sometimes recruited by traveling scouts who sold their services to the mining companies.

The work itself was conducted in a migratory pattern, whereby laborers stayed only temporarily at the mines—usually between three and six months in the early days—and then returned home. The rich resources that labor migration offered, as well as the labor control problems it would bring with it, were unique to South Africa: “If an ore body similar to South Africa’s had been discovered in Australia, Canada or the United States, it would almost certainly have been left in the ground because of an inability to mobilize the right type of work force.” Migratory labor, which supplied large quantities of workers without the need for the permanent structures and infrastructures that immigrant populations require, was a distinctive and crucial ingredient in South African industrialization.

Migratory work patterns did not arise because of the diamond boom. For several decades before the Kimberley fields opened up, various African peoples migrated to farms and public works projects where, as they would eventually do in the diamond mines, they worked for part of the year. In some groups, migration was institutionalized by the 1860s, such that every male, upon reaching a certain age, would travel to the Cape Colony or some other region and work for a period of one or more years. With a population as diverse and as large as southern Africa, however, it is difficult to pinpoint the exact origins of and motivations for labor migration. Nevertheless, it is clear that men throughout most of southern Africa engaged in migratory labor by the 1870s. The combination of migratory labor habits and the growing European influence on African societies most often meant that fundamental shifts in culture and consciousness would eventually occur within them. For example, the concepts of wage labor and money were new to African cultures. Through a mixture of internal and external motivations, many African cultures began to internalize some features of the European capitalist culture that had arrived with colonialism. Migratory work patterns were both a means of gaining important monetary and consumable goods and a factor in the incorporation of European constructs into African societies.

Religious missions also played an important role in the introduction of key European concepts to native African societies. As early as 1820, Methodist missionaries were active in the Tshidi-Barolong society, which was found to the north of the Kimberley Fields. The Methodists arrived in
Tshidi society during a turbulent, war-stricken time. The Zulus, under Tshaka, were displacing waves of refugees to the East of the Tshidi’s land who fled to and relied upon such agrarian societies as the Tshidi for support. The strains of these war years on Tshidi society made the Methodists and their technology, such as guns, irrigation and plows, welcome and sought-after. “It was the encounter with . . . the Methodist mission, that laid the basis for the distinction between setswana [Tshidi tradition] and sekoa [‘the ways of the European’].”xxxvii The Methodists sought to both protect the natives from destruction and to prepare them for “civilization,” a process which inevitably tried to introduce subordinate behaviors into the native culture. The Methodists were preparing the Tshidi people for an encounter with European capitalist economies:

Drawing on metaphors from the factory and the foundry, [Methodism] spoke of individual salvation through arduous self-construction. And its emissaries to the slothful heathen. . . tried to make their stations living examples of productive enterprise. Here they demonstrated the utility of the plow and the pump, preached the virtues of sober discipline, and installed the clock and bell to mark out routines and ensure that time was well spent. Here too, as the other side of their spiritual coin, they taught the value of the ‘varied treasures of commerce’ and the supreme enabling power of money.xxxviii

The Methodists introduced a set of ideas and values that were distinctly different from those of traditional Tshidi society, which, like many African societies, measured wealth with cattle and had no concept of wage labor or abstract money. The Methodists’ lessons on the virtue of “sober discipline,” as well as their teaching of subordinate behavior, would later be echoed in the labor compounds of the Kimberley mines.

The missionaries were welcomed for their practical value by the natives but were not readily accepted for their spiritual message. Therefore, the missionaries’ role should not be overemphasized. Furthermore, many African cultures traditionally placed great importance on rites of passage, significant events in the lives of the members of the group, which included journeys away from the homeland. The importance that these tribes assigned to labor migration “is evident in certain ritual and symbolic actions associated with the departure and return of labour migrants.”xxxix The building of a homestead upon the occasion of the male’s maturation, the acquisition of a gun to protect the group and with which to hunt, and the accumulation of bride wealth with which to marry were all important rites of passage which relied heavily on migrant labor practices. The cultural values of many of the African societies were apparently consistent with the performance of limited amounts of wage labor. The most important feature of the evolved wage labor system in South Africa is the one that ensured a tie to the home group. Migration allowed young men to leave the group and return after having completed what might be called a “tour of duty.” Thus, migratory labor was for some time a supplement to and not a replacement of traditional ways of life for many African peoples.

Migration would eventually become a necessity for some African groups as ecological and colonial events altered their worlds. As early as 1858 cattle disease and drought “increased the number of people who, from sheer economic necessity, went out to seek work away from home. The development of the diamond fields in the 1870s and of gold mining from 1886 onwards, greatly added to this movement.”xl Studies of other African societies and their movement to migratory labor, such as Kevin Shillington’s study of the Tlaping people of central British Bechuanaland/Griqualand West, reveal that a mixture of ecological hardships, changes in trading relationships and (increasingly) the colonial communities, and the internal results of such changes pushed many societies into wage
labor contracts at the mines. The Tlaping people benefited early from the Kimberley mines as traders of produce, especially firewood. This allowed them an early alternative to wage labor in the mines. But by 1877, “with very poor harvests throughout the region, the number of Tlhaping seeking labour contracts in Kimberley increased enormously.” The Tlaping were suffering from a dispersion of their society as agriculture was stricken by bad weather and hunting was reduced due to a northward shift of the ivory frontier and a change in the central trading routes of the region. As the society was strained and dispersed in search of better land and a more prosperous existence, “a conflict of interest seems to have developed among the wealthier strata of Tlhaping society, especially between the new, ‘self-made’ men and the ‘traditional’ chiefly authorities.” While a section of Tlhaping society was emerging that was enmeshed in the capitalist society and was prospering from it, much of the rest of the native society was struggling.

African peoples began to lose their economic independence in the face of a changing natural and political world. Wage labor proved to be a powerful, altering force in their lives. In an effort to retain their independence and rural base, many Africans “tried to protect themselves by using migracy as a form of limited wage employment. Slowly but inexorably, however, migration became unavoidable rather than discretionary for many.” At first, the African workers were not reliant upon the wages they earned at the mines, and so they could leave the jobs there if conditions were too harsh. It was the unpredictable, uncontrollable nature of migrant labor that would frustrate capitalists at Kimberley for many years, and which would encourage them to find ways to establish a consistent, subordinate laboring class. As Africans “were progressively undermined by ecological disaster and politico-economic domination,” they were at growing risk of complete subordination and coercive treatment at the mines.

**CAPITALISTS EXERT CONTROL**

The Kimberley mines therefore became a hub of an increasingly important and powerful capitalist system. As the mining industry grew, it demanded more and more laborers to extract the earth from the mines, to sort the diamonds from that earth, and eventually to serve as engineers, machine operators, and overseers. As the African societies of southern Africa were experiencing growing pains from the new wage labor market at Kimberley, so was the wage labor market at Kimberley experiencing growing pains based on the structure and control of the labor force and of the mines themselves.

In 1873 Griqualand West, including Kimberley, became a British Crown colony, subject to formal British governmental control. Richard Southey, the British Lieutenant Governor of the area, set about furthering the goals to which Governor Barkly had already hinted with his Proclamation 14: to exert centralized British control over the mines, in part by having the power to regulate the labor market. Southey was an abomination to the European diggers in the Kimberley fields, who had become accustomed to ruling their own affairs through Mining Committees, on which all white diggers where equally represented. Advocating their own “Diggers’ Democracy” and violently opposed to Southey’s plans to dilute their self-rule of the mines, the diggers began to form rebel groups that would plague Southey for the duration of his tenure as Lieutenant Governor.

The Diggers’ Democracy advocates were fiercely opposed to monopolistic amalgamation of mines and very jealous of the power to control the mines. They were obstacles to capitalist development who fought to keep the number of claims any one person or company could own as low as possible. In this sense, the Diggers’ Democracy movement was fighting against the centralization of capital and labor, and its associated technologies. Turrell suggests that the Diggers’ Democracy advocates feared being subjugated in a class system: “Monopoly and capital threatened to enslave them to the rich and re-institute the ‘social slavery—the class distinctions of Europe’ which they had recently fled.” This is why the class-based Pass
Laws of 1871 were not implemented, while racial barriers were beginning to form. Southey and the British government were in a precarious position, for they had to defend their authority over the region against the diggers while trying to implement an effective growth strategy for the mines. Southey advocated capitalist economic growth, but also wanted to nurture local growth. He feared being overtaken by international capital and foreign control. Yet Southey and other government officials were nervous when the Diggers’ Committees tried to extend their formal control to municipal affairs such as streets, buildings and sanitary arrangements; and several government officials shared the sentiment “that given sufficient encouragement they would take sole charge and constitute themselves a Republican government.”

Southey undermined the Diggers’ Committees by replacing them with Mining Boards, whose significance lies in their introduction of “loaded votes.” Owners with three or more claims were given three votes, and fewer votes were given to those with fewer claims. This, along with the fact that the Mining Boards had a much more narrow scope of power than the old Diggers’ Committees had enjoyed, both increased the authority of the British colonial government and paved the way for the rise of powerful, dominant mine owners. In the wake of much political turmoil, including the Black Flag Revolt in which the remaining factions of the Diggers’ Committees made one final challenge to Southey’s authority, capitalists in the Kimberley fields began to amass and exert power. Southey was replaced in 1885 by an even more monopoly-friendly, capitalist-encouraging administrator.

**THE MINES AMALGAMATE**

While the Black Flag Revolt played a large part in Southey’s removal from power at Kimberley, the event also marked the beginning of the end of Diggers’ Democracy. This system had served the miners well when the mines were still young. However, with several years of digging behind them, the Kimberley mines had begun to take on an economic shape that Diggers’ Democracy was unprepared to handle. As Colin Newbury explains, “[s]ix years of frenzied exploitation had created a market. But the volume of production required to meet lower prices implied the need for restructing the outmoded technology and partnerships which had served well enough to open up Kimberley to the world and which now constrained its development.”

To this end, Southey’s administration had taken some steps to try to eliminate some of these constraints. In addition to stamping out the last vestiges of private rents and taxes on Kimberley miners, Ordinance #10 of 1874 raised from two to ten the number of claims that a single digger could own. However, the general effect of this regulation was to widen the gap between a very small percentage of multiple plot owners from the larger number of diggers who owned two or fewer plots.

It was the multiple plot owners who had a different vision for the organization of the mines. Barney Barnato, who in a few short years would eventually own the Kimberley mine, believed that “if the [diamond] business were to survive, the production of diamonds would have to be regulated by some central authority.” Like many of his statements, Barnato’s prediction may have developed more from his own personal goals than from his economic knowledge, because amalgamation was still years away. However, Barnato had hit upon a key issue facing the mines. Regardless of its political power the Diggers’ Democracy system essentially prevented the individual miners from raising large amounts of capital. Used for massive investments in labor and physical improvements (including machinery), such sums were absolutely necessary if the diamond mines were to make the transition from adventure to industry.

In the case of the Kimberley mines, capital would have been best spent on clean-up. In the latter half of the 1870s, rock slides at the mines, especially Kimberley, became increasingly frequent. The problem now was that, once the edges of the kimberlite pipe had been picked away, the surrounding non-diamondiferous material, known as reef, began to fall, often from hundreds of feet up. This problem grew to the point that, by 1881, “landslides in the
Kimberley Mine had grown so terrifyingly frequent that few men dared work under the constant threat of death under debris.\textsuperscript{iv} Aside from posing a significant threat to life and property, falling reef created a second problem for diggers. Whereas fallen kimberlite could be shoveled into buckets and hauled up for sorting, reef was pure waste which had to be removed if regular operations were to continue.

The effect of this latter problem should not be underestimated. “At all four mines, then, there was an increase in working costs by the end of the decade.”\textsuperscript{v} However, these cost increases did not fall evenly. Indeed, the falling reef, and the uneven effect it had on the different mines, was to be a crucial factor in deciding the outcome of amalgamation.

There was a steady haulage of reef in De Beers [from] 1877-1881...but this clearance over 5 years was less than a third of the unprofitable extra tonnage hauled out of the Kimberley mine in 1 year... By 1882, the [Kimberley] board had spent £1.5 million on reef removal, compared with a mere £150,000 paid out by the De Beers board.\textsuperscript{vi}

With no central funds of their own, the mining boards had to charge removal fees to their miners. Those who could pay did, while those who could not picked up their belongings and left. With the 1876 elimination of the 10-plot ban, men like Cecil Rhodes began quickly snatching up as many of these properties as possible.

This practice received official sanction in April 1880, when colonial authorities changed their laws to allow for the existence of joint stock companies. In many ways, the resulting rush to buy claims and invest in companies resembled the original diamond rush. “Every time [one company] bid for a holding, no matter how small... . competitors followed suit, merging claims, forming companies overnight. Shares in those companies doubled and tripled in a matter of weeks.”\textsuperscript{vii} Rhodes immediately took advantage of this opportunity, and “on April 1, 1880, created the De Beers Company, a major concern with assets of £200,000.”\textsuperscript{viii} The mines that had once been home to hundreds of individual miners were now the domain of only a few dozen companies.

After the British government helped to clear the way for monopolization of mining interests by eliminating the Diggers’ Committees and the strict ownership limits they imposed, the number of owners in the Kimberley fields dropped dramatically. The value of the claims grew rapidly as diamonds were extracted; and the initial costs of starting a claim quickly became prohibitive for the uncapitalized miner.\textsuperscript{ix} Brutal fluctuations in the price of diamonds between 1873 and 1876 compounded the problems for struggling diggers, such that a large percentage of them either sold their claims or lost them to usurers who lent them money at exorbitant interest rates and then took the claim when the miner could not pay his bills. In this way, the claims at Kimberley were swept up by capitalists and diamond merchants.

The fall of Diggers’ Democracy is also significant in the context of labor because it helped to bring about a poor white class at Kimberley, which in turn created “interracial competition in the labour market between whites and non-whites...[that] became a salient and crucial feature of South African society.”\textsuperscript{x} Although racial tensions and scattered implementation of discriminatory labor practices had been building during the Diggers’ Democracy period, with the end of Digger’s Democracy came the systematic implementation of racial subordination of African workers. A growing lower-class white population began to weigh down on the black labor class. As capitalists at Kimberley accumulated claims, labor power and political influence, small claimholders were squeezed out of the market and left to either work other owners’ claims or become a laborer for one of the companies. Share-mining, a practice that was analogous to share-cropping in agriculture, was one way that poor whites could work for themselves even if they could not afford to actually buy a claim. Centralization of mine
ownership, though, made share-mining an ever more difficult option for uncapitalized whites:

This was largely due to consolidation in claim ownership and the growth of larger units of production; share-working was gradually displaced as private firms organised digging purely on the basis of wage labour. Share-workers were often forced into the new and degraded position of overseer of labour. As such they were sometimes rewarded with the small percentage on finds, but they had lost the speculative benefits of profit-sharing that had existed in share-working.\footnote{\textsuperscript{l}n}

As a group of poor white miners emerged and grew, racial tensions were magnified in the Kimberley fields. Competition between whites and blacks began to heighten as amalgamation of mine ownership replaced share-mining with a more rigorous industrial wage labor system.

**Racial Frustration and the Move To Control Labor**

White overseers became common sights at the larger mining operations of the late 1870s. By this time, the majority of white share-workers had been transformed into waged overseers, with some becoming contract workers and managers. With the larger mines came larger African labor forces and increased usage of steam machinery, both of which necessitated overseers to watch and drive the work. Employers began to consider the cost savings of hiring Africans and “coloreds” instead of whites to be overseers and engineers. By trying to appease organized white laborers, while also engaging lower-paid colored artisans when possible, employers “thus helped to sustain the ‘split labour market,’ i.e. a condition whereby racially different groups of workers were paid different rates of wages for the same work.”\footnote{\textsuperscript{m}n} Racial tensions grew as a result of unequal pay for equal work.

Mine owners experienced both political pressure to uphold the split labor market and economic pressure to subvert it whenever possible by reducing the inflated wages of white laborers. Because the white miner vote was so important in a number of governmental constituencies, the government placed pressure on employers to uphold the differentiated wages. The result was most often the further lowering of the black wage.\footnote{\textsuperscript{k}n} In conjunction with pressure on employers to uphold the “customary color bar” that had evolved in the Kimberley fields, the government, in 1883, passed the first legislated color bar, which prohibited any native from manipulating explosives. Eventually, the legislation would mandate that all natives be in the charge of a white man whenever working in an underground mine.\footnote{\textsuperscript{l}v} Black miners were not silent; rather, they “resisted with a long series of strikes, work stoppages, go-slows (work slowdowns), and riots that showed they were far from passive or oblivious to the erosion of their position.”\footnote{\textsuperscript{v}x} The protests had little effect. Much of the African labor force by this time relied upon the mining jobs. Though many laborers did leave as a result of the racial discrimination, most did not. White labor had carved a niche for itself with the implementation of the color bar. However, mine owners, especially in tight times, remained uncomfortable with the system.

By 1883, mine owners were becoming desperate to find a way to control their labor force. They were concerned primarily with stopping the practice of Illicit Diamond Buying, which they felt was always a huge loss to them, and with regularizing their flow of labor. To quell diamond theft, the companies instituted a strip search policy, which mandated that laborers (including white overseers) would be searched in segregated houses at the end of the work day. There is little concrete evidence of black resistance to the practice of strip searching, though some sort of subtle resistance might be expected. As with the protests to the color bar, black workers probably engaged in slow-downs, and word-of-mouth was always used to warn prospective workers of inhospitable companies. The real uproar, however, came from the white overseers. The decision to
strip search white laborers came at a time when their social and economic position had already been severely eroded. Disregard for the skill or supervisory position of the white laborer degraded his value:

First, it appeared the thin edge of the wedge in the gradual homogenisation of black and white labour. Secondly, it was the final blow in a rapid passage from independent digger to proletarian status. Many overseers in 1883 had been respectable claimholders in the past and it was only, they argued, the turn of fortune’s wheel that had reduced them to wage labourers.\textsuperscript{\textit{lvii}}

White laborers felt that they were degraded and that their authority over their African workers was undermined by the policy of strip searching.

Though many white overseers complained, there was no organized resistance to the strip search policy until, later in 1883, the search policy was extended to the full regimen of white laborers—not only were the white overseers searched, but also the white engineers and skilled builders and mechanics who worked at the mines. These artisans, unlike the relatively vulnerable overseers, had the ability and security to organize themselves and go on strike to protest the search policy.\textsuperscript{\textit{lviii}} The strike broke out in October of 1883, when the new regulations were to be implemented. White artisans and overseers walked out of the mines, taking with them the African laborers under their supervision. The strike was short-lived, yet seemingly successful for the mine workers. According to a De Beers director, “the employers of labour were of the opinion that if work stopped, all the natives would leave for their kraals [homes].”\textsuperscript{\textit{lxix}} The resulting strike-ending concessions apparently given to white laborers—namely that the strip clause would not be enforced—may therefore be more appropriately seen as concessions to African migratory laborers and their employers’ fear of the enduring mobility which they continued to enjoy.

Another factor that was beyond the control of either workers or owners, which heightened the owners’ fears that their African work force would return to their homes, was an outbreak of smallpox south of Kimberley. By the beginning of 1884, smallpox had stricken thousands of people in South Africa, and though the epidemic had not reached Kimberley, it wreaked havoc on the mining center by instilling fear in the population and crippling their supply of goods. The Orange Free State, to the east of Kimberley, quarantined large areas of land which they believed to be contaminated with smallpox. These areas included some of Kimberley’s most important trade routes; consequently the price of goods and wages increased.\textsuperscript{\textit{lxx}} Mine owners were uneasy with both the damaged economy and what they perceived was a growing threat of African desertion.

In March of 1884 two white laborers refused to submit to a digital search of their mouths or to remove their boots in the search house. It was a challenge to the authority of the mine owners that was widely publicized. The owners chose this event as their standing ground against labor. This time, the large mining corporations of the day joined together under the Mining Protection Association and were prepared for the organized resistance of labor. In April, 1884, the Protection Association instituted a policy which stated “their resolve to search all workers without distinction and [required] all workers to sign an agreement in which searching, or rather the ‘stripping clause’, was a condition of contract.”\textsuperscript{\textit{lxxi}} Mine owners took the initiative in the conflict by locking out all workers who refused to sign the agreement. As a result, another strike was called by the organized white laborers.

Whereas the first strike was largely a surprise for the owners, the second strike was well foreseen, and even prompted, by the mine owners. The larger mine companies had banded together and made a plan. Therefore, it is perhaps no surprise that this second strike was put down swiftly. In the climax of the April 1884 strike, white and black laborers marched towards the Kimberley mine,
seeking to halt water pumping and underground mining experiments that were occurring there. On the way, however, they were stopped by a line of overturned carts, behind which stood armed policemen and special constables, commissioned by the mining companies. In the resulting conflict, several white laborers were shot and killed. The owners had clearly established the progressive motives of the company as the pathway for the future. Furthermore, they asserted their dominance over their workers.

The shooting of European workers was a dramatic warning to Africans. If European managers and directors were able to shoot their immediate subordinates with legal impunity, they would have no compunction in doing similarly with their African workforce. The mine owners' victory in the strikes created the right intimidatory atmosphere for the introduction of closed compounds in 1885, the means to control African labour more effectively.\textsuperscript{11}

In the aftermath of the 1883 and 1884 strikes, both owners and workers had learned a great deal about themselves and each other. Foremost among these lessons was that labor could and would be brought under the tight control of management.

The theft of diamonds, and the persistence of IDB, was the catalytic issue behind the search policies that led to the 1883 and 1884 uprisings. From the very beginnings of the mines, diggers attributed to IDB every facet of diamond theft, from the actual taking and hiding of the diamond to its resale.\textsuperscript{12} IDB was most often attributed to the African laborers at the mines. However, IDB was never the sole province of African workers. Indeed, motivated by the high price that diamonds would fetch on the world market, it was white "gentlemen" who perpetrated the largest and most famous diamond heists. For African laborers, the motivation was somewhat different. Although they were no strangers to revolt, Africans tended to be less vocal about the abuses that they faced. However, in his history of the De Beers empire, Stefan Kanfer suggests that the absence of protest hid a desire for some sort of vengeance. According to Kanfer "the vengeance often took the form of illicit diamond buying."\textsuperscript{13}

Whatever its motivations, IDB remained a touchstone for the frustrations of diggers, mining boards and government officials throughout the history of the mines. In almost every major event surrounding the mines, there appears some nod to tightening the noose on IDB. Unfortunately for mine owners, this noose often turned out to be a slip-knot. By 1881, diamond losses were still in the range of 30-40 percent, leading one British investigator to quip that "thievery had a great future in Kimberley."\textsuperscript{14} Nonetheless, mine owners kept trying to find ways to halt the theft. The search policy and its accompanying uprisings were no exception. What was exceptional—if not for its power to stop IDB then for its influence on the future of diamond mining—was what came about following the uprisings. By 1885, the major mining companies began requiring that their African laborers live inside a series of closed compounds. These compounds "were self-contained institutions. Once an African entered a closed compound he lost all access to the surrounding town for the duration of his contract."\textsuperscript{15}

**The Closed Compounds**

Immediately prior to the introduction of closed compounds at the mines, most laborers lived in open compounds which consisted of many small cubicles that were in a closed and secured area. African laborers who lived in the compound could come and go as they pleased. Other Africans lived in "locations," which were segregated areas on the outside of town reserved for Africans. When closed compounds were introduced, all African miners were forced to live in the company buildings, and all freedom of movement was revoked in the name of security. While IDB was the catalytic issue that led mine owners to implement closed compounds for African workers, labor control was
the true motivating force. The conditions for the effective introduction and use of the closed compounds had emerged by 1885, when colonial capitalism in South Africa had taken hold in the native cultures, and mining capitalists at Kimberley had centralized to dominate their labor and their industry.

The extended and often barbaric process of primitive accumulation of capital in Britain gave birth to the mill and its pattern of social relationships as the normal form of a mature capitalism; but in South Africa, conquest and the compound system gave birth through Cesarean section to industrial capitalism. The closed compounds regularized the African workforce and brought it under strict control by the mining companies. With large, exploitable sources of labor now at their control, and with the ownership of all the mines in few hands, centralized industrial mining, specifically underground mining was ready to emerge.

The importance of the labor control that closed compounds brought to the industrializing mining capitalists is difficult to overestimate. Closed compounds bridged the gap between two modes of production. The capitalist enclave in Kimberley began to extend its control over a labour-supplying pre-capitalist hinterland. At the same time that migrant laborers were becoming more dependent on the wage system for subsistence, closed compounds were ensuring that those laborers were staying at the mines for a fixed period of time. No longer could Africans simply leave the mines if conditions were poor or there was a need for them back at home; the closed compounds locked them in for the duration of their labor contract.

The system of labor contracts that was used had its origins in Barkly’s original Pass Laws of 1872. Though the laws were never strictly enforced, the notion of a labor contract, by which a laborer was assigned to be the “servant” of his “master” for a given period of time, took hold. This contractual relation was the centerpiece of the legal formation of the closed compounds. At the end of a laborer’s contract, he could leave or make a new contract. In theory, the African was free to decide his future at the end of each work cycle. However, “evidence of coercion lay in the large numbers of compounded Africans who remained uncontracted. . . [in a] legal no-man’s land.” Without the legal protection of a contract, Africans in compounds could be trapped there indefinitely until the employer had no more use for them. The compounds allowed the mine owners to finally solve their problem of erratic and uncontrollable migrant labor. The compound system “was the institution which simultaneously organized and subordinated the mine labour force to capital.”

Furthermore, the compounds revitalized the racial stratification in the mines, as whites were not put into the compound system. Once the mine owners had clearly established their control and paved the way for the closed compound system, they seemed to realize a subtle advantage in keeping their labor force leveraged against one another along the color bar. As a De Beers mine manager wryly noted, “if we were to dispute the white man’s honesty, we might lose more than by putting confidence in him.” South Africa’s unprecedented compound system formalized and solidified a complex social and authoritative structure in the mines through segregation and subordination of Africans and intense stratification of the labor force. Color bars were bolstered both by the increasingly technical nature of the mining industry and by the subjugation of African workers to their now clearly superior white overseers. Not coincidentally, it was at this time—when the closed compounds were introduced in 1885—that the ownership of the mines was centralized even further, and underground mining flourished.

**THE DIGGINGS GO UNDERGROUND**

The amalgamation era had brought with it larger groupings of locally supplied capital, as well as new influxes of foreign investment. Among other things, this new capital was directed towards the ongoing cleanup of reef in the
mines. However, with the accelerating pace of reef falls, traditional methods of removing reef did not always work. As early as 1882, the Kimberley mine had drilled relatively shallow shafts to attempt to remove reef from below. Within a very short period of time, the mining companies began to realize that, instead of using underground shafts to simply remove reef, these shafts could instead be constructed for the purpose of conducting actual mining operations underground. In Kimberley and De Beers, two different systems of shafts were in place by 1885. To be sure, these systems were extremely expensive, and were by no means safe, either—in 1888, a fire in a De Beers shaft killed more than 200 workers. However, the alternative was worse. In 1883, efforts to remove reef in the Kimberley mine, now 300 to 500 feet deep, had bankrupted the mining board. Even in De Beers, where falling reef had never created a problem on the magnitude of those at Kimberley, an 1885 slide caused a 6-month closure. By the middle of the decade, "excavation work in both mines had passed the point where open quarrying could be carried on without continuous falls of reef." Underground operations had become the only profitable way of digging for diamonds.

With the reef piling up around them, the ownership of the Kimberley mine (essentially Barney Barnato), and the De Beers mine (Cecil Rhodes) made the difficult, but ultimately profitable, decision to abandon the surface and to extract diamonds from below. "The technology required to operate at deeper levels was not new, but it was expensive and had to be supplemented by equally expensive labour." In fact, the switch to underground mining often entailed a significant increase in manual labor. Here, the closed compounds proved their full worth. Indeed, "in the case of [the] De Beers Mining Company, the board decisions to compound black workers and invest in shafts were made in May 1884, immediately after the climax of white labour unrest." Thus, the closed compounds were able to satisfy the needs of three different groups. For the frustrated white workers, the compounds cemented the color bar into place. Covered with mesh, the compounds were also viewed as innovative ways to eliminate IDB. Most important, the closed compounds finally stabilized the labor situation at the mines, giving mine owners the consistent supplies of workers, without which underground operations could not have succeeded.

The end of the 1880s marked the end of the amalgamation era. Total control of all four Kimberley mines, a dream ten years earlier, had now become the sole desire of giants such as Barnato and Rhodes. Such a takeover would require enormous amounts of capital, largely borrowed from foreign institutions; only a large, highly centralized company could entertain hopes of raising such amounts of capital. However, centralization was more than simply an opportunity for the personal advancement of a mining giant. Indeed, the entire strength of the diamond industry rested on centralization. Initial financial success in the mines was to some degree the result of South Africa's mineral wealth. However, the larger part of the diamond's popularity rested on the fact that diggers had turned the diamond into a luxury item by capitalized on the rock's beauty and especially its supposed rarity. The discovery Kimberley mines posed a severe threat to that rarity. If the diamond's high social status, and the profit that went along with it, was to be maintained, production of diamonds at Kimberley had to be strictly controlled. Barney Barnato's earlier prediction of the rise of centralization was made at a time when overproduction in South Africa had wreaked havoc in the world diamond market. Only unification could establish and maintain stable production rates, thus ensuring a stable market.

Underground mining, and the accompanying system of closed labor compounds, furnished the tools to achieve such stability, and therefore became the emblems of the move toward centralization. Although "the process of underground mining required the investment of large amounts of capital," company owners who chose to go underground soon found this to be a wise investment. Moreover, as individual companies began to gain control of entire mines, they found themselves in a position to affect the industry as Barnato had predicted. With a limited
number of hauling shafts (instead of hundreds of sets of ropes and pulleys) and a relatively fixed number of laborers, the owner of a mine could determine and achieve the levels of production necessary to stabilize the market while sustaining a profit. These profits, in turn, made the most successful companies more attractive to investors.

By 1888, the most successful companies numbered only two. At Kimberley, Barney Barnato’s Kimberley Central Mining Company had risen from under the reef to control the entire mine. The De Beers Mining Company had found even greater success, and Cecil Rhodes now owned the De Beers mine, and was making strong moves to buy out Barnato at the Big Hole. “In March 1888, the amalgamation was made official when Rhodes formed De Beers Consolidated Mines [Ltd], incorporating all of his holdings.” By the end of the decade, the owner of the De Beers and Kimberley mines completed his collection, gaining control of Dutoitspan and Bullfontein.

Biographers often attribute Rhodes’s success to his shrewd and heroic business practice. There is no question that Rhodes had done much work to amass his empire. However, other sources make the clear point that Rhodes’s success was due at least partially to serendipity. “The reasons why De Beers Mining had come to the top lay primarily in the company’s strategic location in a relatively rich endowment [with] steady profitability ratios.” More important, Rhodes started in the De Beers mine, where excavation had never taken on the fervor that Kimberley had seen. De Beers was thereby spared the worst effects of reef damage that Kimberley faced. Thus, whereas falling reef forced Barnato’s decision to go underground at Kimberley, Rhodes had more of a chance to decide when to go underground. When he did go underground, Rhodes also chose a slightly different, safer form of the chambering system, one which the Kimberley mine did not implement until well after unification. “The advance underground, therefore, gave the De Beers companies a considerable edge over their rivals.” By managing this technological edge to produce a steady, reliable company, Rhodes took control of Kimberley and by 1890 made De Beers the only name in the diamond business.

**THE DE BEERS LEGACY**

From 1890 on, Rhodes, and his successors, the Oppenheimer family, steadily expanded the company’s interests within and outside of South Africa. In doing so, they used the lessons that they had learned at Kimberley to efficiently manage their rapidly growing holdings. “The opening up and development of the newly discovered Witwatersrand gold fields in 1896 was made possible by money and technical skills generated on the diamond fields in Kimberley.” De Beers similarly parlayed its experience throughout what was becoming an international empire. By the time that the Big Hole closed forever in 1914, De Beers had begun developing diamond deposits in Zaire, Namibia and Angola. Current De Beers holdings include mines throughout Africa, as well as in Russia and Australia. De Beers currently holds control over 1,300 businesses, 90 percent of the world’s diamonds, and much of its gold.

In looking at how the De Beers empire developed, it is tempting to see the implementation of underground diamond mining as nothing more than a simple response to falling debris. Although this statement is based in fact, the overall history of diamond mining tends to contradict this observation. Long after De Beers abandoned the Big Hole, it continued to harvest diamonds from underground. With the exception of a few scattered pipes, underground operations still remain the only form of diamond mining. However, by making underground mining the dominant technique of the diamond world, De Beers advanced more than just a system of mining. Indeed, the mines, with their accompanying closed compounds (now known as “hostels”) and color bars, represented an entire social system that has been roundly criticized for its inhumanity. Moreover, as South Africa’s paradigm-setting industry, the De Beers labor system undoubtedly contributed to South Africa’s most vivid legacy: Apartheid. As Jonathan Crush, Alan Jeeves, and David Yudelman explain, “Apartheid cannot be understood merely as the product of Afrikaner nationalism, Calvinist
prejudice, and frontier wars. It is as much, or more, the legacy of the English and German financiers, Scottish and American engineers, British and Australian trade unionists, and British civil servants.\textsuperscript{iv} Even in their early history, the Kimberley mines became the homes of all of these individuals. In such a climate, it comes as no surprise that "by 1920, the mining companies had refined their low-wage system of oscillating migration and authoritarian control into a rigidly hierarchical racial division of labor."\textsuperscript{v} By 1948, this system was codified in South African law as Apartheid.

It is hard to underestimate the role that the Kimberley mines played in the development of South Africa. The development of underground mining practices and the concomitant system of closed compounds at Kimberley allowed for the emergence of a strong, unified mining industry. This industry served as the catalyst for South Africa's emergence from its agrarian roots, and, in doing so, advanced new and influential labor and management practices embodied in the closed compound system. But Kimberley's influence reached much farther. Considering that Cecil Rhodes also served as the South African Prime Minister during his tenure as the owner of De Beers, Kimberley and its philosophy on the treatment of labor had considerable national political influence. Moreover, to the degree that De Beers holds worldwide control of a profitable enterprise, the diamond industry, and thus South Africa, wields considerable international political influence. Around the world, Kimberley is associated with diamonds. In reality, Kimberley means much more. Indeed, the development of the Kimberley mines is more than just the story of an industry's growth, it is the genesis of an entire industrial society.

\textsuperscript{1} World Wide Web:
Subsequently listed as WWW1.

\textsuperscript{2} World Wide Web:
http://www.seemall.com/gems/diamond.html. Subsequently listed as

WWW2.

\textsuperscript{iii} Stefan Kanfer, \textit{The Last Empire} (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1993), 8.
\textsuperscript{iv} Ibid., 26.
\textsuperscript{v} Cedric E. Gregory, \textit{A Concise History of Mining} (New York: Pergamon, 1980), 146.
\textsuperscript{vi} WWW2
\textsuperscript{vii} WWW1
\textsuperscript{viii} Lawrence G. Green, \textit{Like Diamond Blazing} (London: Tom Stacey, 1971), 18.
\textsuperscript{ix} Kanfer, 24.
\textsuperscript{x} Ibid., 26.
\textsuperscript{xi} Ibid., 30-31.
\textsuperscript{xii} Kopje is the Boer word for the small hills that are found throughout South Africa.
\textsuperscript{xiii} Kanfer., 144.
\textsuperscript{xiv} United States Department of State, \textit{Background Material: South Africa}, 15 March 1993, p.8.
\textsuperscript{xvi} Ivor Herbert, \textit{The Diamond Diggers} (London: Tom Stacey, 1989), 11-12.
\textsuperscript{xvii} Turrell, \textit{Capital and Labour}, 27.
\textsuperscript{xviii} Ibid., 27.
\textsuperscript{xix} Ibid., 8.
\textsuperscript{x} Ibid., 30.
\textsuperscript{xii} Colin Newbury, \textit{The Diamond Ring} (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 11-12.

\textsuperscript{ii} Kanfer, 35.
\textsuperscript{iii} Turrell, \textit{Capital and Labour}, 6
\textsuperscript{iv} Newbury, 18.
\textsuperscript{v} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{vi} Turrell, \textit{Capital and Labour}, 5.
\textsuperscript{vii} Newbury, 29.

\textsuperscript{1} A "technic" refers to a specific machine, invention, etc, that, when combined with certain organizational practices, constitutes a "technology."
absolutely no knowledge of geology, he calmly guessed that there were more diamonds in the blue, saying that it had once been a sort of tube in the earth, through which the diamonds were distributed.

iv Herbert, 49.
iv Herbert, 48.
iv Herbert, 47-48.
vii Kanfer, 87.
ix Ibid., 87.	x Ibid., 50.
tx Van Duin, 60.
txi Turrell, Capital and Labour, 52.
txii Van Duin, 63.
txiii Crush, 7.
txiv Turrell, Capital and Labour, 53-4.
txv Crush, 7.
txvi Turrell, Capital and Labour, 137.
txvii Ibid., 136.
txviii Ibid., 137.
txix Ibid., 139.
txx Ibid., 140.
txxi Ibid., 145.
txxii Kanfer, 43-44.
txxiii Ibid., 43.
txxiv Kanfer, 88.
txxvii Turrell, “Kimberley’s Model Compounds,” 73.
txxviii Ibid., 71.
txxx Turrell, Capital and Labour, 154.
txxxi Newbury, 81.
txxsii Newbury, 77.
txxst Turrell, Capital and Labour, 8.
An Ever So Small
Introduction to the Authors

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