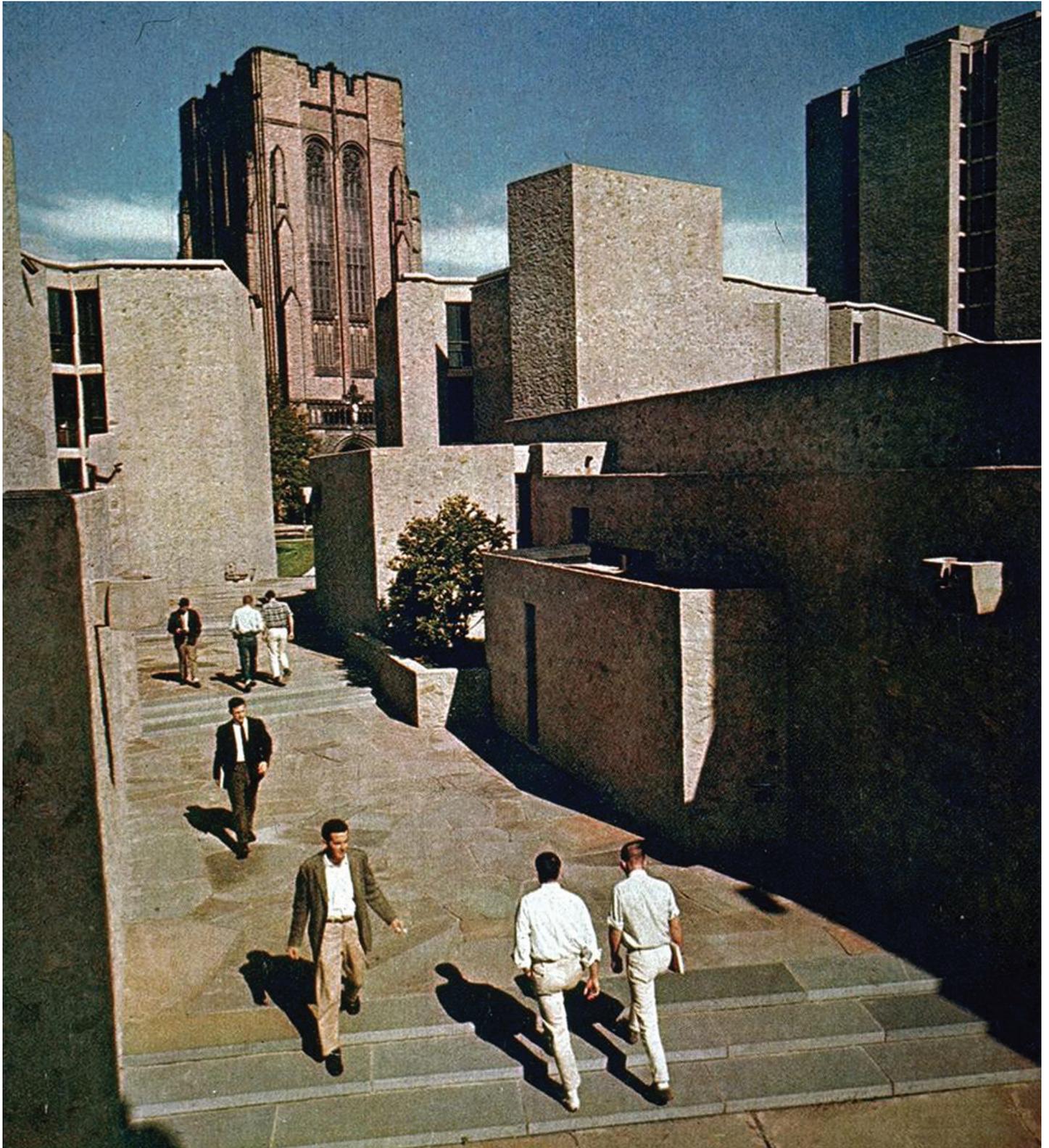


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Yale Historical Review
Yale University PO 207137
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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

Throughout this year news wires have been buzzing with stories about history and its impact on society. The Texas Board of Education's fractious curriculum review diverted the nation's attention away from wars and recessions and focused it on history books. Major news sources grappled with historical issues, with the New York Times Magazine cover asking, "How Christian were the Founders?" and the Wall Street Journal declaring U.S. History classes to be "the culture wars' New Front." This spring, Texas' textbook amendments reminded us of history's significance.

Among other changes, the Texas board removed Thomas Jefferson – unpopular for coining "separation of church and state" – from a list of influential writers and replaced him with St. Thomas Aquinas and John Calvin. When asked to explain the change, board member Don McLeroy stated, "We are adding balance. History has already been skewed. Academia is skewed too far to the left."

Some saw this saga as an example of an acrimonious cultural divide that unnecessarily colors apolitical items like history textbooks. But there is a more important lesson: history is dynamic. It is alive. It is not just names, dates, and figures, but rather how those facts are interpreted to fit within the contemporary cultural landscape. As we write history, we also make history.

This edition is no exception. Among other gems, our authors explore the central causes of the American Civil War, the impact of baseball on post-revolutionary Nicaragua, and provide a timely explanation of the design of Morse and Ezra Stiles colleges. These subjects are just as alive as the recently approved Texas curriculum. Our societal mores guide our writing no less than the facts themselves. The arguments our authors make are unique to our particular recipe of experience, conventions, and imagination. As these ingredients change, so does history. Of course, there are fixed truths that cannot and should not be bent to serve any agenda. But the true art of history comes in the argument. It is what allows stories of the dead to continue living.

With this in mind, I humbly invite you to sit back and enjoy our version of the past. There has never been, nor will there be, quite the same interpretation. Popular sentiment, and by extension history, is too dynamic to allow duplication. Like Texas textbooks, we are subject to change. Please enjoy what we consider history today, for who knows what tomorrow will bring?

V for victory,

Christopher Magoon
Editor-in-Chief

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Revolutionary *Béisbol*: Political Appropriations of “America’s Game” in Pre- and Post-Revolution Nicaragua

Sam Purdy

Revolutionary Change in Twentieth-Century Latin America

Professor Gilbert Joseph

Faculty Advisor: Kirsten Weld

2009

During their junior year, history majors complete at least two seminars covering history from two different geographical categories. Majors can choose from a plethora of topics and often find inspiration for their senior theses in junior seminars where students can hone in on particular areas of interest. Sam Purdy, a current senior in Davenport College, wrote this paper for Professor Gilbert Joseph’s seminar “Revolutionary Change in 20th Century Latin America,” a class devoted to analyzing revolutionary movements in Latin America through an interdisciplinary lens.

In his book-length exposition on Nicaraguan culture, writer Pablo Antonio Cuadras briefly takes up the question of why baseball is so popular in Nicaragua when most of its Latin American neighbors have an overwhelming preference for soccer. He first suggests, perhaps too prosaically, that Nicaraguans have been influenced by their warm climate and prefer baseball because it is a static game that requires little energy. The poet in him, however, sees a deeper connection between the essence of the game of baseball and the nature of the Nicaraguan soul. “In baseball, personal play stands out,” Cuadras writes, “and we are more friends of strong individuals... than of cooperative effort.” In baseball, as in politics, he continues, Nicaraguans are won over by the cult of personality – of a big hitter, a big pitcher, or a base-stealer.¹

One might think that the politics behind baseball would complicate Nicaraguans’ love of the game, as baseball is, according to Cuadra, “*el gran juego yanqui*,” a cultural product of the United States. For a country whose diplomatic relations with the United States over the last century have been fraught with violence, both real and rhetorical, Nicaragua has had a surprisingly steady relationship with America’s so-called national pastime. In Nicaragua, baseball is and long has been “*el deporte rey*,” the king of sports. Dating back to the late nineteenth century and continuing through the occupation, dictatorship, revolution, and war of the twentieth century, baseball has been a nexus of political conflict and machination in Nicaragua. Remarkably little of this fascinating history, however, addresses the fact that the game is an export of the country that best represents the antagonist in the story of Nicaragua’s existence during that period.

In April 1985, Tom Brokaw, the anchor of NBC Nightly News, visited the old Executive Office Building for a National Security Council briefing on the Contra War. The United States had spent the preceding several years fomenting a counterrevolutionary movement against the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), which had overthrown the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship in 1979. The Reagan administration attempted to justify American involvement by arguing that the Sandinistas were actively supporting a guerrilla movement in El Salvador by training rebels inside Nicaragua. Alleging that the Sandinistas were also closely aligned with the Cubans and the Soviets, the U.S. administration maintained that the Contra War was critical to the fight against Communism. Oliver North, a young Marine Corps colonel who would soon lose his position in the Reagan administration for his role in the Iran-Contra affair, briefed Brokaw and showed off aerial surveillance photographs taken above northwestern Nicaragua. In Brokaw’s retelling, North pointed to one of the pictures and said:

“We believe this facility is run by Cubans, probably with Soviet advisers - and is used principally to train El Salvador guerrillas.” He showed me a familiar outline, and said: “The interesting thing here is the baseball diamond. Nicaraguans don’t play baseball.

¹ Pablo Antonio Cuadras, *El Nicaragüense*, (Managua: P.I.N.S.A., 1971), 241-2. In another essay, Cuadras suggests that the baseball player has a certain odyssean quality – “leaving home, traveling around the world filled with countless difficulties, and then returning,” and this sort of journey fits with the Nicaraguan’s potential for creative imagination (Jorge Eduardo Arellano, *El Béisbol en Nicaragua: Rescate Histórico y Cultural, 1889-1948*, (Managua: Academia de Geografía e Historia de Nicaragua, 2007), 13-14).

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Cubans play baseball.” I looked to see if he were kidding. He was not.²

Colonel North’s false notion is particularly striking because one of the narratives of the introduction of baseball in Nicaragua holds that the occupying U.S. Marine Corps, North’s own branch of the military, brought the game to Nicaragua when deployed to the Atlantic Coast in the 1910s. Writing for an American audience in 1916, the Collector General of the Customs in Nicaragua made it sound as if the Nicaraguans living on the coast had never before seen baseball. Taking account of the progress that the Americans had made in relating to the locals, the Collector General wrote, “Baseball has done it.”³ Though not entirely accurate, the story appears widely in both American and Nicaraguan sources. “If a fan, or a moderately cultured person, is asked about the origin of baseball in Nicaragua,” the Nicaraguan intellectual Jorge E. Arellano writes in a study of the country’s baseball history, “the response will almost certainly be that it was the work of the United States’ military intervention.”⁴ The recent effort, led by Arellano, to correct the narrative of Nicaraguan baseball’s earliest days is a project infused with a touch of nationalism, not merely a desire to impose some academic honesty on the history.

In not having a clear and universally accepted narrative of its birth, baseball in Nicaragua shares common ground with the sport’s American iteration. The most popular creation story of American baseball is the most U.S.-centric story, but perhaps not coincidentally, that story – centered on a young man named Abner Doubleday drawing a baseball diamond and explaining the game’s rules behind a tailor’s shop in quaint Cooperstown, NY, in 1839 – is a myth. The reason that an early twentieth century sporting-goods mogul took pains to craft and proliferate this myth in the first place mimics the reason that Arellano wishes to counter the Marine-centric narrative of baseball’s arrival on their shores. In a classic essay exploring the nature of the Cooperstown legend, the historian Stephen Jay Gould writes, “hoopla and patriotism... decreed that a national pastime must have an indigenous origin. The idea that baseball had evolved from a wide variety of English stick-and-ball games – although true – did not suit the mythology of a phenomenon that had become so quintessentially American.”⁵ A similar incongruity affects Nicaraguans, too. The predominant instinct is not to reject baseball because of its American roots, but rather to assert local agency in the sport’s development.

Beginning in 1910, the Marines’ presence helped spread baseball, but the game had arrived on both Nicaraguan shores long before then. Albert Addlesberg, a German immigrant to the U.S. who came to Nicaragua’s Atlantic Coast in 1888 with imperialist ambitions, introduced youths to baseball, which he had learned during his time in New York. Although he failed to establish a colony, Addlesberg imported baseball supplies from New Orleans via a group of Americans that ran monthly voyages to the American port city, and the locals took to the game. In May of 1889, Nicaragua’s first baseball club, Southern, was

² Tom Brokaw, “Some Colonel Named North,” *New York Times*, 7 July 1987: A27.

³ Clifford D. Ham, “Americanizing Nicaragua: How Yankee Marines, Financial Oversight and Baseball are Stabilizing Central America,” in *The American Review of Reviews* 53 (1916): 187-8.

⁴ Jorge Eduardo Arellano, *El Béisbol en Nicaragua: Rescate Histórico y Cultural, 1889-1948*, (Managua: Academia de Geografía e Historia de Nicaragua, 2007), 63. Tellingly, the Spanish word in the book’s title, “*rescate*,” means “rescue” or “recovery.”

⁵ Stephen Jay Gould, “The Creation Myths of Cooperstown,” in *Bully for Brontosaurus: Reflections in Natural History*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1991), 51.

founded in the town of Bluefields, and a competing club, White Rose, came about soon after.⁶ Thus, by the time the American military arrived for what would be its first extended occupation, Nicaraguans had been playing baseball for two decades.

The circumstances of the game's initial appearance in the more populated cities of the Pacific Coast region, such as Managua, Masaya, and Granada, are entirely different. Children of the local conservative ruling elite who had studied in the northeastern United States brought baseball to the western part of the country. The majority of them had been students at the Catholic St. John's College in Fordham, New York, and the son of the former president graduated from Pennsylvania's Lehigh University. On July 24, 1891, these American-educated youths brought together newly formed teams from Managua and Granada for Nicaragua's first recorded baseball game.⁷ The earliest teams bore unmistakable marks of their American influence—the first team in the capital was called the Managua Baseball Club (in English), and another early team founded in 1902 was named New York—but both teams were filled with Nicaraguans. The early baseball players attracted imitators among kids in the cities where they played, most notably in Managua, where the mayor acceded to public complaints and banned baseball-playing in public thoroughfares. It was not until 1893, when the Liberals supplanted the Conservatives in power, that, in the words of historian Richard McGehee, “baseball's social base became more diverse.”⁸

As the world of Nicaraguan baseball liberalized, so did the country's economy and political leadership under President José Santos Zelaya. In the age of Dollar Diplomacy, the growing frustration of America's friends among the Conservative elite—and, more importantly, Zelaya's principled refusal to grant the US the land it needed to build a Pacific-to-Atlantic canal—pushed the Taft Administration to send Marines to aid Conservatives in revolt.⁹ In sixty-five of the seventy years from the initial invasion in 1909 until the triumph of the Sandinista Revolution in 1979, Nicaragua found itself either under direct U.S. occupation or ruled by the increasingly dictatorial leadership of the U.S.-backed Somoza dynasty.¹⁰ During more than two decades of occupation, teams of Marines played in—but did not by any means control—the nascent national league. While the coincidence of the Marines' occupation with the appearance of the first genuine baseball stadium, the establishment of the first amateur national league, and the growth of fierce rivalries might suggest a correlation between the American presence and the

⁶ Arellano, 45-47; Richard V. McGehee, “Sport in Nicaragua, 1889-1926,” in *Sport in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Joseph Arbena and David Gerald LaFrance, eds., (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2002), 178.

⁷ Arellano, 47-52; McGehee, 178-9.

⁸ John A. Booth, *The End and the Beginning: The Nicaraguan Revolution*, (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1982), 22; McGehee, 179.

⁹ Booth, 23-4.

¹⁰ After a sixteen-year occupation that drew increasing local opposition, American forces were withdrawn in late 1925 but returned just two years later, when the Liberals' support from Mexico threatened Conservative control and the security of American. From when US forces finally withdrew in 1933, it was only three years until Somoza rose to the presidency (Booth, 37-39).

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sport's development, Nicaraguans were by this point firmly in control of the game that was fast becoming their own national pastime.¹¹

Baseball was not politicized in Nicaragua until a veritable *fanático* – Anastasio Somoza García – took control of the country. His U.S.-backed appointment as head of the National Guard in 1933 gave him the means he eventually used to force out the president, Juan Bautista Sacasa, and initiate a long reign of Somoza family rule.¹² Earlier in his life, “Tacho,” as he was known, had spent four years in the U.S. studying business and working for American motor companies in two baseball towns, Philadelphia and New York. There, he met his wife, the daughter of an extremely wealthy León doctor also studying in Philadelphia, and he returned to Nicaragua “fluent in colloquial English and an ardent Phillies fan.” He was well positioned to endear himself to the Americans who wielded enormous influence in his country, among whom he became a favorite.¹³ Like the people of Nicaragua in the 1930s, the period in which the national team became something of a regional powerhouse, Somoza was baseball-obsessed.

When directing the Guard and in his two decades as president, Somoza's interaction with baseball reflected both his passion for the game and also his keen awareness of the sport's potential political utility. He had occupied a leadership role with a baseball club in León before his political career began, but once he took over the Guard, he thought it wise to form a team of his own as a way “to win the sympathies of the people, as propaganda,” in Arellano's words. The team bore Somoza's name, and so “*General Somoza*” appears in the standings of the loosely organized *Liga Nacional de Béisbol* (National Baseball League) throughout the 1930s.¹⁴

Somoza's use of his ballclub as a tool to aid his rise to the presidency began before the team had completed its first season of play. In February 1934, three days before going against the wishes of President Sacasa and ordering the killing of rebel leader Augusto Sandino, Tacho watched his team's ballgame in Managua with the U.S. Minister Arthur Bliss Lane. There, the two men allegedly discussed Somoza's plans to deal with Sandino sooner rather than later, even though Sacasa had been working to rein in Sandino without the help of Somoza's Guard.¹⁵ Somoza denied all involvement in the murder, but in the days following it, he heavily promoted a scheduled series of games between his *somoceños* and the new Masaya-Granada powerhouse club, Esfinge, to divert attention away from the assassination.¹⁶ In February 1936, after interfering with a major taxi operators' strike, Somoza led his team into a highly

¹¹ Gerald R. Gems, *The Athletic Crusade: Sport and American Cultural Imperialism*, (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 140; Arellano, 98-9. See McGehee, 184, and Arellano, 86-7, for detailed stories of Nicaraguan victories over USMC teams.

¹² Booth, 54-8.

¹³ Arellano, 186; David E. Whisnant, *Rascally Signs in Sacred Places: The Politics of Culture in Nicaragua*, (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 110.

¹⁴ Arellano, 186.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 189-90.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* Booth writes that while the assassination was actually being carried out on the night of February 23, 1934, Somoza, “With the cynical flamboyance that was to become his trademark,... gathered the officers who were not involved for a poetry reading – the first and probably the last in the history of the Guard” (Booth, 53).

publicized meeting with Esfinge in Masaya, where the rivals had never before met and attracted some eight hundred spectators to their Sunday game. Near the middle of the year, following Somoza's anti-Sacasa campaign that culminated in the Guard's putting pressure on the president to resign, the *Jefe Director* again manipulated the national game to suit his ends. This time, he set up an exhibition matchup between *General Somoza* and a club from Memphis, Tennessee. Three thousand fans turned out for the game, which the home team won handily.¹⁷

Somoza was a close U.S. ally and even an admirer of U.S. culture. His affinity for baseball was born in the United States – in games played at Philadelphia's Baker Bowl, New York's Polo Grounds, and Yankee Stadium. But his political use of baseball had little reference to the United States. It is impossible to measure the effectiveness of Somoza's attempts at using baseball to distract the people from his conspiring against the Sacasa government, but there is no evidence to suggest that Tacho's identification with the game had negative effects on Nicaraguans' perceptions of either him or of baseball, and certainly not of the Americans – *los yanquis*.

Although Nicaraguans had considered baseball their own for some time, it was not until the construction of Managua's Estadio Nacional that Nicaraguan baseball had a veritable home field. To borrow a symbol from American baseball, the nearly 30,000-seat stadium could quite literally be called "The House that Tacho Built." Somoza had long wanted to build a baseball stadium at the center of a revitalized capital city. Construction began in 1943 on the site of the old "La Peni" field, once home to a prison, but it was stopped and not restarted until Nicaragua was offered the tantalizing chance to host the *Serie Mundial de Béisbol Amateur* in 1947. Somoza relished the opportunity to have Nicaragua play in the series, which helped put the country on the international map in baseball and in politics.¹⁸ Hosting the series would only compound this effect, giving him the chance to put on the show himself.

In the story of the stadium's construction, plenty of details remind us that it was a project of a budding dictator. For one, after engineering the election of Leonardo Argüello to replace him in a scheduled election in 1947, Somoza carried out a coup just weeks after Argüello took power in May. The political upheaval that ensued – such that, including Somoza and Argüello, Nicaragua had four presidents in a period of less than four full months – slowed construction somewhat, but the project was set back on track once the dust settled and Somoza was firmly established as Nicaragua's de facto leader under puppet President Manuel Román y Reyes.¹⁹ Secondly, when it became clear that the materials to complete the stadium were lacking – specifically the steel to finish its roof – Somoza pushed for loans to import additional American steel. In the deals for these materials, Somoza was said to have pocketed enormous profits for himself, which foretold his future amassing of a fortune 150 percent the size of Nicaragua's

¹⁷ Arellano, 207-11. Sergio Ramirez's short story "*Tarde de Sol*"/"Sunshine in the Afternoon" contains a brief but powerful depiction of Somoza as a commanding team owner in the Nicaraguan professional baseball league. In the story, Somoza, threatening him with a National Guard attack on his business and strong-arms another owner whose star pitcher he wants for his team

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 259-63.

¹⁹ Booth, 59. The tournament was marred by the absence of Cuba and Venezuela, whose governments cut off relations with Nicaragua's following the coup and therefore did not allow their teams to attend (Arellano, 282).

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annual budget.²⁰ Nevertheless, writes the baseball journalist Marcio Vargas, “this was how it was made possible to complete the stadium before the singing of ‘Play Ball’ on November 20, 1948,” the day of the park’s inaugural game.²¹ A final dictatorial imprint on the project was most tangible in its name. On its opening day more than 26,000 prideful Nicaraguans crowded into the *Estadio Nacional General Somoza*; there could have been no more fitting moniker.

The Nicaraguan team was miserable on the field, but the country and its ubiquitous leader scored a major victory with its successful running of the event. Fans were devastated by their second-to-last place finish – so much so that the manager, Juan Ealo, practically fled by plane for his native Cuba after the bad start left the faithful looking for someone to blame. Somoza himself took the bold step of replacing Ealo in the dugout in the middle of the tournament, but the team was no more successful under Tacho: the team finished with just one win in its seven games. Still, press and players from participating countries sent praise to the leader, and even Somoza’s opponents recognized the series’ great success and Nicaragua’s adeptness as a host. The event “demonstrated a great organizational capacity,” Arellano writes. The Nicaraguan fans also made an impression on the U.S. Ambassador Fletcher Warren, who expressed amazement at “the human avalanche that filled the stadium.” The atmosphere, he wrote, was “one comparable only to those that are seen at the big games of professional baseball in the United States.” This was certainly high praise.²²

The statue of General Somoza on a horse at the entrance to the National Stadium was one of the most powerful symbols of Somoza rule – most infamous, perhaps, for the outsized testicles descending from the horse’s underbelly that came to stand for the era’s excess.²³ On the morning of July 19, 1979, the day on which the revolutionary Sandinista army stormed Managua and overthrew the Somoza dictatorship, a crowd spontaneously gathered to tear down the statue, doing their part to dethrone the dynasty.²⁴ The Sandinista National Liberation Front had by then grown from a small band of intellectual elites opposing the Somozas to a broad popular movement that posed a military threat to the regime. Finding themselves in power, the Sandinistas would work to undo the numerous vestiges of the forty-six years of Somoza rule, bringing them crashing down as dramatically as the ostentatious statue in front of the stadium. An important motivator for the Sandinistas in crafting their early policy was that the revolution they had led was, in the words of Comandante Jaime Wheelock, “a national revolution, and fundamentally anti-imperialist.”²⁵ Given this, and the fact that Nicaragua had been victimized by cultural

²⁰ “Nicaragua: The Champ is Dead,” *Time* 68.15 (October 8, 1956): 45. This article, published after Somoza’s assassination, reports that after his years in Philadelphia, “he never stopped rooting for the Phillies.”

²¹ Marcio Vargas A., “Testigo de la Historia,” in *Un Día Después: Crónica del XXXIII Campeonato Mundial de Béisbol Aficionado 1994*, Marcio Vargas A. and Edgard Rodriguez C., eds., (Managua: Laboratorios Técnicos, 1994), 182.

²² Arellano, 299-302.

²³ The first time he saw the statue in front of the stadium, Somoza was reported to have said indignantly, “If this horse has balls bigger than mine, this can’t stay here!” (Vargas, 179).

²⁴ Vargas, 178.

²⁵ Jaime Wheelock, *La Revolución Nicaragüense es Nacional y Fundamentalmente Antiimperialista*, (Managua: Centro de Publicaciones “Silvio Mayorga,” 1980), 19. “The Nicaraguan revolution is national and fundamentally anti-

imperialism on the part of the Americans - “both because U.S. corporations and the U.S. government urged it, and because of the Somozas’ sycophantic attraction to U.S. cultural values” – the Sandinistas strove with particular vigor to cleanse Nicaraguan culture of its plentiful American influences.²⁶

In an impressive display of pragmatism within the framework of their revolutionary ideology, the Sandinistas seem never to have seriously considered banning baseball or discouraging its play, choosing instead to use baseball to advance their interests. The dark years of the Somoza dictatorship had not changed baseball’s status as the national game; levels of participation in baseball, highest in rural areas and among the lower class, were four times higher than those in any other sport.²⁷ The Sandinistas were interested in serving the masses, and since the masses were baseball-crazed, the strong links that tied baseball to Somoza and to the United States did not damn the game in the eyes of the revolutionary leaders, many of whom were themselves fanatics. Nicaragua’s revolutionaries were heavily influenced by the Cuban model, which demonstrated that sport could be used to effect social stability immediately post-revolution. In that vein, the Sandinistas made the people’s love of baseball work for them.²⁸

However, the so-called *deporte rey* did change under Sandinista leadership. The new regime’s emphasis was on the “massification” (*masificación*) of sport, encouraging participation among men, women, and children in all parts of the country, from all social classes in order to take the people out of the dark ages that the dictatorship held them in for 40 years.²⁹ The community organizations through which Nicaraguans had been mobilized in the revolutionary cause were maintained in certain forms after 1979, giving rise to the Voluntary Sports Committees that helped the newly formed Nicaraguan Institute of Sports to implement its policies. In a 1988 article, the sports sociologist Eric Wagner wrote, “Nearly every small town... has at least one baseball team, and people are beginning to pay more attention to their own local sports activities and organizations.”³⁰ This progress, which saw increased participation in sport and a heightened emphasis on community level activity and organization, was in line with the Sandinistas’ goals for broad-based social and cultural change. Baseball’s pre-existing popularity made it an ideal vehicle for the achievement of these sorts of advancements.

Most drastic were the policy changes the Sandinistas made with regards to professional baseball. In contrast to Somoza, the Sandinistas refused to encourage the professionalization of the game on

imperialist,” Wheelock proclaimed at the height of his speech on the occasion of the eighty-fifth anniversary of Sandino’s birth at the Rubén Darío National Theater in Managua.

²⁶ Whisnant, 121.

²⁷ Eric A. Wagner, “Sport and Revolution in Nicaragua,” in *Nicaragua in Revolution*, Thomas W. Walker, ed., (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), 293. According to data from Managua only, 29.4 percent of the *adult* population played baseball, while the next-closest sport, soccer, had just 8.4 percent participation. “A national sample would have shown baseball as even more dominant,” Wagner writes.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 291, 295-6.

²⁹ “1979: Incremento Deportivo en toda la República,” [Managua] *Barricada*, 2 January 1980: 9. In this full-page feature in the FSLN daily newspaper, it is written that the new Instituto Nicaragüense de Deportes was created “with the end of ‘massifying’ and giving sports-related opportunities to all Nicaraguans in order to take them out of the obscuring influences that the dictatorship had maintained for more than forty years.”

³⁰ Eric A. Wagner, “Sport in Revolutionary Societies: Cuba and Nicaragua” in *Sport and Society in Latin America: Diffusion, Dependency, and the Rise of Mass Culture*, Joseph L. Arbena, ed. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 130.

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ideological grounds. They believed that the “human element,” so integral to the spirit of the game, would be lost. Therefore, they did not grant material or financial support to professional sports.³¹ Moreover, while Somoza had seen international competition as a means of demonstrating Nicaragua’s strength, the focus on *masificación* of sports meant that “the new government was more interested in the participation of the people in sports activities than in a select group of ‘high-performance’ athletes who might win a Pan-American or world championship.”³² In the midst of the Contra War in 1985, the Nicaraguan government intensified its regulation of sports, prompting American newspaper columnist David Broder to write at the time, “Some of the specific policies... the Sandinistas have put into effect are almost enough to make you root for the contras.”³³ In addition to limiting the numbers of innings that pitchers could pitch each week, a practice motivated by a desire to protect the athletes’ bodies, Nicaragua began manufacturing its own baseballs and completely stopped the practice of importing baseball equipment from the United States.³⁴

Before Nicaraguan baseball achieved this sort of self-sufficiency, the national baseball league’s governing body, FENIBA, launched a campaign in early 1980 that demonstrated the deep permeation of revolutionary ideology even in the face of very real limiting factors. Shortages of sports equipment affected communities around the country, and with scarce government funds directed to fill essential needs elsewhere in war-torn Nicaragua, it was necessary to take creative measures. Encountering extreme difficulty supplying their games with baseballs, FENIBA publicly requested that fans return balls hit to them during league meetings. “Be a patriot, give back the ball!” reads the headline above a brief article publicizing the campaign, which the four short paragraphs present as being part of a necessary spirit of sacrifice in the “new revolutionary period.”³⁵

Post-revolutionary fervor and the Sandinistas’ efforts to reform Nicaraguan culture deeply affected baseball – just not in the way that the Frente’s anti-imperialism would lead one to expect.

Meetings between Nicaraguan and U.S. baseball teams since the Sandinista takeover in 1979 attracted frenzied attention and were infused with great political significance – more so than in the Somoza years. However, this was more a product of the sport’s underlying popularity and of latent bitterness toward the United States than a sense that defeating the Americans on the baseball diamond was to beat them at their own game. The meetings during the Contra War had heightened intensity, as they were the only settings in which Nicaraguans could figuratively take aim at the U.S., which was sponsoring the destabilizing counterrevolutionary force. The Sandinistas’ adjusted approach toward these

³¹ “1979: Incremento Deportivo”; Wagner, “Sport and Revolution in Nicaragua,” 295.

³² Wagner, “Sport and Revolution in Nicaragua,” 294. This was an element not adopted from Cuba’s revolutionary approach. The Cubans, more focused than the Sandinistas were on demonstrating the viability of its economic and social model on the international stage, devoted considerable resources to their national sports programs.

³³ David S. Broder, “At Bat in Managua,” *Washington Post*, 10 April 1985: A23. In the column, Broder writes incorrectly, “The United States brought baseball to Nicaragua, as we brought so many other blessings to benighted lands in our earlier imperialist era.”

³⁴ Larry Rohter, “Play Ball! Sandinistas Deliver Sliders and Slogans,” *New York Times*, 16 March 1985: A2.

³⁵ “¡Sea Patriota, devuelva la pelota!” *Barricada*, 1 March 1980: 11.

international baseball competitions illustrated the weakening of their ideological convictions, something for which they were widely criticized throughout the 1980s. Despite their initial focus on *masificación* over professional sports or training a baseball vanguard, the government supported the national team's preparation for the 1987 Pan American games as if it was readying an elite squadron for a crucial mission. In their first-round game against the United States, after a dramatic send-off to battle by the Defense Minister at the airport, Nicaragua was blanked: 18-0.

In the immediate wake of the Sandinista takeover, just short of eight full months after July 19, 1979, the local mood surrounding the two-game visit of the Baltimore Orioles in March 1980 was overwhelmingly positive. Although the Orioles were the first professional American team to play in Nicaragua, the coverage in the major newspapers was surprisingly devoid of discussion of the games' possible political implications. In a straightforward manner, the *Barricada* reported on the national team's practices at the re-named Estadio Augusto C. Sandino, formerly Estadio Nacional General Somoza. A few days before the first of two scheduled matchups with Baltimore, the team was looking great, the reporter wrote. The batters showed "tremendous power," the fielding was "on level with" Baltimore's, and the pitchers were training "rapidly" to prepare themselves for the Orioles' mighty lineup.³⁶ In *La Prensa*, the other major daily paper printed in Managua, the team's manager, Octavio Abea, expressed confidence in his club and warned their opponents against underestimating his "tremendously combative team."³⁷ The circumstances were a bit unusual, but with the defending American League champions due to visit, excitement seemed the predominant emotion.

Of course, even if Nicaraguans had felt a desire to resent the Orioles' presence, the visitors did not fit the mold of an imperialist antagonist; the leader of their delegation was Dennis Martinez, a native of the western city of Granada who had made it in the United States as a pitcher. The Orioles' "Denis," as the papers called him, was the real focus of attention, and his presence on the team made Baltimore's arrival less an invasion than a homecoming. Before leaving Nicaragua that February to meet his team in the United States for the beginning of Spring Training, Martinez had told reporters that he would be pitching for Nicaragua against the Orioles, which Abea, the national team's manager, felt would increase the parity and make it possible for the games to be competitive.³⁸ Baltimore's manager, Earl Weaver, and star shortstop, Cal Ripken, Jr., both insisted that Martinez pitch for the Orioles, disappointing local fans who thought the home team's victory was nearly impossible. Edgard Tijerino, the country's leading baseball writer, painted it as a David and Goliath matchup.³⁹

When Nicaragua managed to tie the first game and then to win the second, sending the Orioles back to the United States without a win, the host fans were ecstatic. The triumph clearly reminded Tijerino, writing in *La Prensa*, of the Sandinista triumph, as he marshaled revolutionary language to describe the victory. "With .22's, with contact bombs made by hand, logistically at a tremendous disadvantage, the Nicas came to the battlefield ready to fight," he wrote with feeling. "Just like in the war of liberation, they... confirm[ed] that not in baseball, either, can the U.S. remove the thorns that

³⁶ "A ponerse las pilas!!!" *Barricada*, 13 March 1980: 11.

³⁷ Edgard Tijerino, "Si Denis lanza, se puede vencer," [Managua] *La Prensa*, 13 March 1980: 11.

³⁸ "Ayuda Deportiva promete Denis," *Barricada*, 19 February 1980: 9.

³⁹ Edgard Tijerino, "Aquí, los Orioles," in *Doble Play*, (Managua: Editorial Vanguardia, 1989), 45-6.

sandinismo hammered into them.”⁴⁰ The fans’ excitement, though, was not as politically motivated as Tijerino’s column might suggest. The reporting in *Barricada* celebrated the achievement as the triumph of the Nicaragua nine as ballplayers, not warriors in a larger fight. The article after the second game proudly reported that a few Spanish-speaking Orioles had categorized Nicaragua’s national team as equivalent to a Triple-A minor league club, “the step before the Major Leagues.”⁴¹ Far from noting animosity toward the visiting team or the country it represented, one U.S. news outlet reported that the local fans “cheered the Star Spangled Banner almost as much as their own anthem.”⁴² That the Orioles were in Nicaragua was what mattered. The significance of their being an American team playing in Nicaragua was that they represented the best, and the hosts – a team of baseball-hurling ‘Davids’ – had taken them down.

The two-day visit in 1980 was more remarkable than any previous instance, but it was not the first time that the United States government or private sector played “baseball diplomacy” with Nicaragua. It might be said that the Orioles’ trip was the beginning of the *benevolent* use of baseball because it was aimed at breaking a diplomatic freeze instead of decreasing local resistance against existing American presence or influence. In the 1950s, the American embassy in Managua communicated to Washington that baseball’s popularity in Nicaragua was such that having Major League stars visit “would pay off heavily in the promotion of good will.”⁴³ This episode in the history of Nicaraguan-American relations is more akin to teams of Marines in Nicaragua playing in local baseball leagues during the twenty-plus-year occupation than it is to the Orioles’ visit. The trip had been inspired by a pair of Washington-based brothers, former Peace Corps volunteers in Latin America, who, far from imposing on Nicaragua, wanted to “bring Americans closer to the Third World,” as *Barricada* expressed.⁴⁴ The March 1980 trip set off a small but significant movement of non-governmental organizations that sent baseball delegations to Nicaragua, particularly during that decade when the Contra War raged. In the winter of 1987, groups named Baseball for Peace, Bats Not Bombs, and Athletes United for Peace were among those that arranged Nicaragua missions.⁴⁵ Indeed, the American game face had changed.

A look at the baseball-related news from Nicaragua in 2009, the thirtieth year since the Revolution, makes it seem that the political use of the national game has come full circle, or, in baseball terms, made its way back to home plate. This January marked the return of *la Liga de Béisbol “Germán Pomares Ordoñez,”* the all-Nicaraguan amateur league whose initial iteration was in the 1980s, during the Sandinistas’ first period of rule. After his electoral defeat in 1990, longtime FSLN party leader Daniel Ortega returned to the presidency in 2006, and he now stands at the front of the movement to revive this

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁴¹ “Nicaragua 1, Orioles 1,” *Barricada*, 16 March 1980: 9; “...Y se pusieron las pilas!!!” *Barricada*, 17 March 1980: 9.

⁴² Christopher Dickey, “Orioles Win by Losing in Nicaragua; Birds Lose to Nicaragua But Win Over the Revolutionaries; Baltimore’s Birds Pitch In to Polish Slumping U.S. Image,” *Washington Post*, 17 March 1980: A1.

⁴³ Whisnant, 133.

⁴⁴ “Visita de Orioles un inicio del deshielo,” *Barricada*, 18 March 1980: 1. In the interview conducted before the series of games, Stephen Hillinger, one of the brothers, preemptively worried that an Orioles loss would lead to bad publicity in the United States and, overall, would be bad for their efforts.

⁴⁵ Tom Hawthorn, “Making a pitch for peace in troubled world,” [Toronto] *Globe and Mail*, 14 October 1987.

baseball relic, the reborn version of which successfully completed its first season in July 2009. Before President Ortega stepped in, some observers worried about the fate of baseball in Nicaragua. But Ortega has now committed himself.⁴⁶ With Nicaragua's economy stagnant, rife with unemployment and underemployment, and with Ortega's own popularity among voters flagging, though, one wonders what led Ortega to make an impassioned stand for baseball at this particular moment.

If the history of baseball and politics in Nicaragua can provide clues to their latest intersection, perhaps the reasons that make it seem ill-advised to devote presidential attention and federal money to the resuscitation of a defunct baseball league are the very reasons that Ortega has taken this step. It was, after all, at the most difficult moments in Somoza's years as the head of the National Guard that he was known to turn to his baseball team to divert the people's attention from his conspiring against the sitting government. On October 21, 2008, President Ortega hosted a publicized event with members of the national team and local Sandinista politicians from across the country, at which he announced, with great fanfare, that he would devote hundreds of thousands of dollars to help the team prepare for its appearance in the Baseball World Cup the following fall. It was also at that event that he announced his intention to support the revitalization of *la Liga Pomares*. Early the next month, just over two weeks later, Nicaraguans across the country were to head to the polls to vote in municipal elections. "Nicaragua's *deporte rey* ought to reemerge," reads the official FSLN article from the late October baseball event, "but this is only possible with the victory of the Sandinista mayors in the November elections and with the support that the government of President Daniel Ortega will give to the recovery of the traditional Pomares League."⁴⁷ The political manipulation of baseball could hardly have been made clearer.

In the words of Bayardo Cuadra, a leading historian of baseball in Nicaragua, "behind baseball, there is always political motivation."⁴⁸ History has shown that, whether in the hands of occupying Marines, a charismatic dictator, or the revolutionaries who overthrew them both, in Nicaraguan politics, there may be no weapon more potent than a baseball bat.

⁴⁶ Tim Rogers, "Gov't Aims to Revive Old Ball League," *Nica Times*, 7 November 2008, accessed 4 December 2009, <http://www.nicatimes.net/nicaarchive/2008_11/110708.htm>.

⁴⁷ Enrique Armas R., "Alcaldes de Poder Ciudadano promoverán el béisbol," *La Voz del Sandinismo*, 22 October 2008, accessed 14 December 2009, <<http://www.lavozdelsandinismo.com/deportes/2008-10-22/alcaldes-del-poder-ciudadano-promoveran-el-beisbol/>>.

⁴⁸ Rogers, "Gov't Aims to Revive Old Ball League."

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Directed Studies

Machiavellian versus Augustinian Realism

Bryce Taylor

History and Politics

Professor Marci Shore

Faculty Advisor: Professor Norma Thompson

2008

Bryce Taylor, a junior in Silliman College, wrote this essay for Marci Shore's History and Politics section as part of Directed Studies, a program for freshman by competitive application that consists of three year-long courses in the foundational texts of Western civilization.

Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430) was a theologian, philosopher, and Western Church Father from Roman Africa (today's Algeria). Among his hundreds of works, one of the most famous is *The City of God*, written after the catastrophic sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410, in which he describes history as a struggle between those living for earthly pleasure and reward and those living for redemption in the afterlife.

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) was a civil servant and political philosopher from Florence, Italy. Credited with the creation of modern political science, he is notorious for *The Prince*, an unapologetic call to ignore moral concerns in governance.

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Niccolò Machiavelli is often deemed a champion of calculating deception, deliberate cruelty, and cunning selfishness in the political realm. His views of human nature and the methods of managing that nature, as expressed in *The Prince*, have earned him a place among the most prominent political realists in history. Those who censure Machiavelli's seemingly immoral (or perhaps amoral) approach to politics often do so in favor of what they consider to be the more principled approach of the classical and Christian traditions. These same detractors of Machiavelli, however, tend to praise an earlier thinker who also advocated a form of political realism, a thinker who happened to serve as the very bridge between the classical and Christian traditions – St. Augustine of Hippo. This raises a crucial question: What is the difference between Augustinian and Machiavellian realism? Taking into account each thinker's view of human nature and the context of their works, we will find that their theories of realism, if superficially similar, are in fact radically at odds.

In the nineteenth book of *The City of God*, Augustine describes what he considers to be the necessary evils engendered by man's fallen state, the most terrible being torture, war, and capital punishment. He reasons that men "are often compelled to seek the truth by torturing innocent witnesses in a case which is no concern of theirs."¹ He writes of "the necessity of waging just wars" and the lamentable reality of capital punishment, to which innocent men, because of human ignorance, will inevitably fall victim occasionally.² The source of these evils, which are forced upon the authorities by necessity, is the fallen state of man, which began with the sin of Adam and Eve. For Augustine, the "earth is full of this vast mass of evils," and a "wealth of futile desires...accompanies a man on his entrance into this world."³ In order for some degree of harmony and order to arise in the midst of human depravity, a government must be instituted and given the powers necessary for punishing wrongdoers, restraining wickedness, and combating external enemies. Given the finite and fallen nature of man, these powers will at times bring about injustice – putting to death an innocent man, torturing an innocent witness, slaughtering blameless soldiers at war. These evils, however, are necessary evils, the only alternative to which is the even less desirable state of anarchy. In Augustine's words, "the wise judge does not act in this way" – does not execute an innocent man, for instance – "through a will to do harm, but because ignorance is unavoidable – and yet the exigencies of human society make judgment also unavoidable."⁴ He calls this, rather aptly, "the wretchedness of man's situation."⁵

Machiavelli shares Augustine's pessimistic view of the fallen nature of mankind. He declares, "For one can say this generally of men: that they are ungrateful, fickle, pretenders and dissemblers, evaders of danger, eager for gain"; in short, "men are wicked."⁶ The ruler of a principality – the prince – is compelled by necessity to act in ways that may be considered cruel or

¹ Saint Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Henry Bettenson (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003), p. 859.

² Ibid., 862.

³ Ibid., 863, 1065.

⁴ Ibid., 860.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 66.

unjust. Machiavelli condones the use of cruelty when it is well used, which is to say, when it is “done at a stroke, out of the necessity to secure oneself.”⁷ Cesare Borgia, for Machiavelli, was the paradigm of a prince who used cruelty well and endeavored to secure his rule in the face of fortune’s uncertainties. In one example of his cunning, Borgia appointed the ruthless Messer Remirro to bring order to the tumultuous and crime-ridden region of Romagna. Once Remirro had brought relative peace, Borgia no longer had any need of him, and he desired to distance himself from the reputation for cruelty that Remirro had gained. Hence, Borgia had Remirro “placed one morning in the piazza at Cesena in two pieces, with a piece of wood and a bloody knife beside him.”⁸ A number of separate instances of brutality and violence color the pages of *The Prince*, and Machiavelli generally depicts them as necessary steps for securing power. Even more important than the proper use of cruelty, however, is a talent for waging war. Machiavelli states, rather hyperbolically, that “a prince should have no other object, nor any other thought, nor take anything else as his art but that of war and its orders and discipline.”⁹ Like Augustine, Machiavelli recognizes that the wickedness of mankind inevitably brings about conflict, crime, and disorder, which in turn compel the prince to wage war, punish wrongdoers, and, at least in some cases, perform acts of cruelty.

What then is the difference (if indeed there is any) between Augustinian realism and Machiavellian realism? An obvious place to begin would be the context of each work. In *The City of God*, Augustine’s primary focus is the heavenly city: the community we cannot reach fully until the next life, the kingdom over which God Himself is ruler. Augustine’s discussion of the wretched condition of mankind comes in the context of contrasting the earthly city with the heavenly one. Heaven has no need of politics, for every individual’s will in that kingdom enjoys perfect harmony with the others; on earth, however, human politics must deal with the nasty realities of human depravity. For Augustine, this is cause for great sorrow and lamentation, but it is a truth we must have the fortitude to face realistically. Machiavelli’s work, in contrast, almost celebrates the cruelties and military exploits that the prince must employ. His is a work concerned only with the present life, and in particular the present life of a prince: how he can acquire and maintain power over a principality. Truly, it is a manual, both for princes and aspiring princes.

Perhaps the crucial difference between the two works can be seen in an examination of the ends for which they advocate war and cruelty. As regards war, Augustine writes that “peace is the desired end of war.”¹⁰ The end of torture is to “seek the truth,” to gain knowledge, which can be used in an attempt to exact justice for a crime.¹¹ Capital punishment, presumably, is intended to bring justice in the case of an exceptionally heinous crime, and perhaps, in addition, to deter others from committing similar crimes. These endeavors of the state, however displeasing they may be, are aimed at moral ends. The only justification for war, torture, and violence, is the attempt to bring about what has traditionally been regarded as morally good: justice, peace, and

⁷ Ibid., 37.

⁸ Ibid., 30.

⁹ Ibid., 58.

¹⁰ Augustine, 866.

¹¹ Ibid., 859.

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order. In stark contrast, Machiavelli argues that the ends of war and cruelty are the acquisition and maintenance of a prince's power. He claims, "It is a very natural and ordinary thing to desire to acquire, and always, when men do it who can, they will be praised or not blamed."¹² The whole of *The Prince* is aimed at aiding the prince in acquiring and preserving power; justice and moral uprightness are of little concern. What is important, for Machiavelli, is not that a prince should be merciful, faithful, honest, humane, or religious, but that "he should *appear* all mercy, all faith, all honesty, all humanity, all religion."¹³ When Machiavelli praises Cesare Borgia for his handling of Romagna and Remirro, he does not do so because of Borgia's knack for justice or his concern for morality, but rather his untiring determination to endear himself to the people and ultimately maintain his power over them. The Machiavellian end is power: getting it and keeping it. In Augustine's view, power is a means to a higher end; it is what is done with power that can be good or evil. Machiavelli, on the other hand, treats power as good in itself, as an end in itself.

In fact, Machiavelli reworks language about morality to fit his conception of power as a positive good. This reshaping of language strikes even modern readers as strange, and it was surely revolutionary in sixteenth-century Italy. He writes, for example, that "if France could have attacked Naples with his own forces, he should have done so," as if the power to do something entails the moral obligation to do it.¹⁴ He seems to suggest, to use the old maxim, that might makes right. Further, his use of the term "virtue" famously deviates from its traditional meaning. The cardinal virtues of temperance, prudence, justice, and fortitude, the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and love are redefined. They are replaced by – even reduced to – the Machiavellian conception of virtue as the ability to face the whims of fortune with manliness and to secure and protect power with one's own strength. This alteration of language reflects an attempt to restructure morality around the acquisition and preservation of power, which seems, at least in *The Prince*, to be the highest good.

An interesting way to consider these differences between Augustinian and Machiavellian realism is to examine how each author uses the term "necessity." Neither of the two uses the word to denote an absolute inability to do otherwise; instead, they mean a kind of necessity that involves a choice on the part of the prince. Augustine writes of the wise ruler:

[H]e will rather lament the fact that he is faced with the necessity of waging just wars; for if they were not just, he would not have to engage in them, and consequently there would be no wars for a wise man. For it is the injustice of the opposing side that lays on the wise man the duty of waging wars.¹⁵

Necessity, for Augustine, turns on whether or not an action is just. If waging a war is just, then a ruler is bound by necessity, by a sort of moral necessity, to engage in war. Not surprisingly, Machiavelli's use of the term is rather different:

¹² Machiavelli, 14.

¹³ Ibid., 70. Emphasis added.

¹⁴ Ibid., 15.

¹⁵ Augustine, 862.

[A] prince...cannot observe all those things for which men are held good, since he is often under a necessity, to maintain his state, of acting against faith, against charity, against humanity, against religion. And so he needs to have a spirit disposed...not [to] depart from good, when possible, but [to] know how to enter into evil, when forced by necessity.¹⁶

Necessity, then, turns on whether an act will allow the prince to preserve his power – “to maintain his state.” Faith, charity, humanity, and religion are for Augustine the highest ends of political order; the power of a ruler is merely the means to achieve them. Machiavelli turns this thinking upside-down, making them the means to what he regards as the highest end: power. The moment they begin to interfere with the preservation of power, these traditionally Christian virtues can be discarded.

Augustinian realism acknowledges the frightful difficulties of the fallen human condition, taking as its aim the restoration and continuation of those ideals taken to be good by the classical and Christian tradition: justice, peace, order, and virtue (in the traditional sense). The revolutionary nature of Machiavellian realism consists in its setting up power – acquiring and maintaining power – as an end in itself. Indeed, Machiavelli seems to think of political rule as the highest end, endeavoring to reframe the concepts of morality and virtue to fit around it. For Augustine, good laws are grounded in God’s eternal law; for Machiavelli, they are grounded in military power (“good arms”). For Augustine, the wise man rules out of a sense of duty; for Machiavelli, he rules out of “natural and ordinary” ambition. Augustinian realism aims at moral ends; Machiavellian realism aims at the possession of power. In the classical tradition of Greece and Rome, this Machiavellian ambition, this obsession with power, may have been condoned; in the Christian tradition, and most certainly in the philosophy of Augustine, it would have been fervently and forcefully condemned.

¹⁶ Machiavelli, 70.

At-Large

Morse and Ezra Stiles: A Study in Modernism

Naomi Grunditz

Civic Art: An Introduction to Urban Design

Professor Alan Plattus

Faculty Advisor: Ariane Lourie Harrison

2009

The At-Large Category encompasses papers written by Yale sophomores, juniors, and seniors that fall outside the range of Junior Seminar papers and Senior Essays. Naomi Grunditz, a current junior in Morse College, wrote this paper for Professor Alan Plattus' "Civic Art: An Introduction to Urban Design." This class is offered by the Yale School of Architecture and covers the history of the Modernist architecture movement. The paper itself is distinct to Yale in that it analyzes the construction and subsequent criticism of Eero Saarinen's Morse and Ezra Stiles residential colleges.

A small courtyard stands alone in the back wing of Ezra Stiles College, one of the two residential colleges built for Yale by Eero Saarinen. The tawny polygonal walls cradle a conspicuously empty space, now used as a basketball court. Fifty years ago, when Saarinen designed the buildings, a thick, mature elm tree stood in this location. Although Saarinen altered Ezra Stiles' layout to save the tree, the elm died decades ago, and students now wonder about the awkward, seemingly inexplicable void.

The empty courtyard in many ways symbolizes the buildings of Morse and Ezra Stiles: this modern architecture was a result of forces no longer visible to the current generation and thus receives extensive criticism. Architecture, as the physical shell of society, reflects and represents specific problems that society faces. Modernist buildings mirrored the principles and desires of their times; even the most "unreasonable" building had an impetus for being built.

While this claim can be made for all architecture, Modernist building poses a special case. Out of all architectural movements in history, it is the only one to have been discredited mere decades after its birth.¹ Few other styles evoke such emotion and widespread criticism on behalf of the general public. However, due to its construction frenzy during the 20th century, Modernist architecture is inescapable; it composes a pervasive background to daily life around the world.

I. History of Modernism

Modernist architecture assumes multiple definitions, including material, technological, aesthetic, and social. In design it expresses the mantra "form follows function:" its shapes project simplicity, expressive structure, and a rejection of ornamentation.² Modernist architecture differs from other early 20th century architectural styles (such as Craftsman and Art Deco)³ in its focus on the use of new materials such as steel, glass, and concrete, giving it the nickname of "glass box" architecture. In fact, the simple, unadorned "glass box" serves as the hallmark of International style and Meisian Modernism. The United Nations headquarters in New York, designed in part by Le Corbusier, presents one commonly used example of this simplistic International Style.⁴

Modernism represents a comprehensive break with the past in both material *and* social senses. Its ideology, which can be traced to the Historical Modernism of the Bauhaus movement of Germany, arose in part from the disillusionment with Western empires caused by the horrors of World War I.⁵ Early Modernists argued that monarchies, industrialization, and the capitalist system had turned the world into a violent machine, crushing the common man. The endless

¹ Glazer, Nathan. *From A Cause to A Style: Modernist Architecture's Encounter with the American City* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2007), 5.

² Tom Wolf, *From Bauhaus to Our House* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1981), 17.

³ Roberto Papini, *Arts in the '20s: Architecture and Decorative Arts in Europe* (London: Verba Volant, 2005), 13.

⁴ Richard Padovan, *Towards Universality: Le Corbusier, Mies and De Stijl* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 59.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

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ornamentation and opulence of royalty - the architecture of the rotting nation state - was a physical reminder of this diseased social system. In response, a new kind of socialist housing arose that disregarded the past and focused solely on the future. It emphasized equality, order, simplicity, health (and access to green space), and the individual dignity of its inhabitants.⁶ Architects such as Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and other members of the Bauhaus group sought to design a modern shell for a new society, one based on rationality, modernity, and prosperity - a utopia.

The destruction of World War II gave architects and planners an unprecedented opportunity for rebuilding and reordering. Deeply troubled by violence and eager for the future, Western European governments and Socialist Russia embraced the new architecture. America was no exception as it began to develop its own version of the new, simplified European forms, known as Corporate Modernism.⁷ Fueled by economic prosperity and inspired by the notions of novelty and progress, the cult of experts and “technocrats” saw new architecture and its place in urban planning as a remedy for the United States’ social ills. Threats of communism, racial unrest, the slow death of cities and manufacturing - everything could be solved through architecture.⁸

However, the results of this progressive optimism have left a legacy of neglect, inequity, and unforgiving urban renewal that has colored popular reactions to Modernist architecture.⁹ Following the Housing Act of 1949, cities were granted federal funding to purchase lands designated as “slums” and given the right to sell development privileges to private firms.¹⁰ The 1954 Housing Act Amendment further encouraged redevelopment by offering FHA-backed mortgages to developers.¹¹ Beginning with Pittsburgh’s downtown “Golden Triangle” project in 1950, developers in most U.S. major cities began demolishing inner-city neighborhoods in order to make way for car-oriented developments.¹² Today’s familiar “downtown skyline” began to take shape as International Style office buildings of glass and steel sprang up in former residential areas. Modernist public housing replaced the other condemned neighborhoods; New York’s ubiquitous “projects,” to which the previous neighborhood’s poor inhabitants were relocated, provide a good example.

This architectural transformation provoked criticism for a variety of different reasons. First, the destruction of old, poor neighborhoods inhabited by minorities for the construction of modernized downtown developments or public housing projects only kindled the firestorm of the

⁶ Wolf, *From Bauhaus to Our House*, 18.

⁷ Akin, *Technocracy and the American Dream* (University of California Press, Berkeley: 1977), 132.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Katherine Bristol, “The Pruitt-Igoe Myth,” in *American Architectural History: A Contemporary Reader*, ed. Keith L. Eggener (Routledge, New York: 2004), 353.

¹⁰ U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, “HUD Historical Background,” <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/about/admguide/history.cfm>, April 5, 2010.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Robert J. Gold, *The practice of modernism: modern architects and urban transformation, 1954-1972*, (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 55-57.

minority rights movements occurring in the 1950s and 1960s.¹³ In addition, other urban populations began to protest the impersonal replacements of their neo-classical and Belle Époque public buildings.¹⁴ By the 1970s, financial troubles and mismanagement led modern housing down the path of crime-ridden slums, and the 1972 demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe public housing project in Missouri was largely hailed as the “end of modernism.” The 1970s featured a critical backlash against Modernist, and especially International Style, architecture.¹⁵

What explains these shortcomings of Modernist architecture? Katherine Bristol argues in *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* that Modernist architecture itself is not wrong but rather external factors such as declining property values and changing demographics led to the buildings’ failure.¹⁶ However, many other critics accuse Modernist architecture of losing touch with the human element: it dedicated itself to ideals and aesthetics rather than real human interaction. Noel Annan poses the question well in his book *Our Age*: “Why did so many buildings, specifically designed to meet the functions which those who were going to use them were going to perform, end up being inhuman?”¹⁷ According to critic Tom Wolf and Nathan Glazer, Modernist architecture went “from a cause to a style.”¹⁸ Architecture, along with the other arts, took on a new definition: art for art’s sake; the architect’s personal expression; pure aesthetics; endless innovation. The human element was left behind.

The Morse and Ezra Stiles Colleges at Yale University provide good case studies to examine the complex history of Modern architecture as they represent several defining issues of Modernist building. First, the poorer inhabitants of Modernist public housing projects had few alternative options of habitation. Similarly, students at Yale have practically no choice in being assigned to Saarinen’s buildings for their four undergraduate years. While a large disconnect exists between human rights and dorm rooms, in both cases inhabitants are at the whim of greater powers, and personal choice is made near impossible. Second, Modernist architecture was initially carried out on individual residential commissions, but institutions (governments, businesses, and universities) later became its main patrons.¹⁹ In the same way Morse and Stiles were buildings commissioned by and constructed for a large institution. Third, the colleges’ designs used new (theoretical and scientific) concepts for the ordering of a particular life style. They were essentially experiments in social engineering. And finally, the project was designed by a celebrity architect and became the subject of widespread professional discourse.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Daniel Fitzpatrick, “The story of urban renewal: In East Liberty and elsewhere, Pittsburgh’s dominant public policy tool didn’t work out as planned,” *Post-Gazette*, May 21 2000, <http://www.post-gazette.com/businessnews/20000521eastliberty1.asp>.

¹⁵ Charles A. Jenks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), 144. See also Bristol, “The Pruitt-Igoe Myth.”

¹⁶ Bristol, “The Pruitt-Igoe Myth,” 352-54.

¹⁷ Annan, *Our Age*, quoted in Glazer, *From a Cause to a Style*.

¹⁸ Glazer, *From A Cause to a Style*, 5. See also Wolf, *From Bauhaus to Our House*.

¹⁹ Ibid.

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However, while the colleges represent general trends of Modernist architecture, they also serve as distinct episodes in the timeline of the Modernist movement. They embody the vision of an atypical Modernist architect who created a significant break with traditional International Style Modernist dogma. In Morse and Stiles, Eero Saarinen consciously addressed issues of aesthetics, history, community input, and urbanism in a way utterly unique for his position as a Modernist architect. Not only are the buildings as complex socially as they are physically, but they also offer insights on the apparent failures and potential successes of Modernism.

II. Eero Saarinen

Several factors influenced the stylistic tendencies of the famous Modernist architect Eero Saarinen. First, his father, Eliel Saarinen, was a Finnish architect renowned across America and Europe for his Craftsman and Neoclassical public works. Eliel maintained an “atelier” style studio, employing several co-architects in the front salon of his apartment. Eero would later inherit this particular style of group design when establishing his firm *Eero Saarinen and Associates* with Robert Swansen.²⁰ Eero was also influenced by his father’s sensitivity to surroundings, his focus on “defining urban space rather than merely occupying it,” and the importance of integrating history to create a sense of place.²¹ This last practice would be a running theme throughout Eero’s solo work (in contrast to the Miesian tenants of International Style) and finally culminate late in his career with Morse and Stiles.

After studying sculpture under his father, Eero took architecture classes in Paris and later enrolled in the Yale School of Architecture. Although the beginnings of “Saarinen style” are impossible to pin down, his early contest projects exhibit some of the design patterns that he would develop later in his career. His plan for a memorial tunnel project, for example, shows a Modernist’s love of simplicity combined with grand, graceful gestures and direct interaction with existing environment.

As he continued to enter project competitions, Eero also began to design for the government. His Smithsonian Contemporary Art Museum was a highly functionalist, International Style glass box. However, the design included “non-functional” interjections that set him apart from strict Modernists. These distinctions included the use of selected ornament, careful attention to arrangement and composition of volumes, and the insertion of a poetic reflecting pool.²²

With the return of veterans after World War II and the subsequent economic boom, college and university campuses came running to Modernist architects for prestigious, modern additions to their campuses.²³ Eero became immensely successful with campus design, running

²⁰ Peter Papademetriou, “Coming of Age: Eero Saarinen and Modern American Architecture.” The MIT Press on behalf of *Perspecta*, 21 (1984): 116-143, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1567085>.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 120.

²² Papademetriou, “Coming of Age,” 127.

²³ Wolf, *From Bauhaus to Our House*.

“perhaps the most prominent campus planning and design firm of the time.”²⁴ American architect and author Peter Papademetriou attributes Eero’s success to his buildings’ ability to walk the fine line between the avant-garde style of artistic architecture and the more conservative sentiments of his clients.²⁵

In designing campuses, Eero adhered to the Mies van der Rohe system of large, cohesive environments.²⁶ But instead of constructing stand-alone Modern buildings and complexes, he expressed an explicit interest in accommodating his designs to interact with existing site architecture (later in full expression in Morse and Stiles):

On campuses there is the opportunity of achieving total, beautiful twentieth-century environments that have unity and order. On existing campuses, there is the challenge of building proud buildings of our own time that are in harmony with the existing buildings of other times... Different areas of a campus can have different characters, but we could stand for more unity within each area; I am beginning to long for monotony.²⁷

In designing campus residences, Eero also strived to shape each individual solution to its particular setting. A tour of Finland had left him with a “Scandinavian sensitivity to place-making.”²⁸

If the architect stresses the practical at the expense of the psychological, the result will be barracks...The problem is to house not only an aggregate of people but also to give them a home and realities and beauties of community life.²⁹

Nowhere was Eero more able to realize his ideas of community and urban harmony than Yale University.

III. Morse and Stiles

In the early 1950s, Yale President A. Whitney Griswold sponsored a program to bring great architectural works to Yale. His campus expansion policy included the commission of an outstanding architect for each new building, with an overall master plan outlined by the Yale

²⁴ Papademetriou, “Coming of Age,” 127.

²⁵ Ibid., 128.

²⁶ Ibid., 119.

²⁷ Saarinen, A., *Eero Saarinen on His Work*.

²⁸ Papademetriou, “Coming of Age,” 131.

²⁹ Saarinen, “Architecture and Defense Housing,” 5.

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Corporation Building Committee and administration.³⁰ The *Architectural Forum* hailed the deluge of new buildings as “an architectural renaissance at Yale,” praising the university as a modern and progressive institution.³¹ This period’s buildings include Paul Rudolph’s Brutalist-style Arts and Architecture Building and Louis Kahn’s Yale University Art Gallery.

Although Yale had already called on Eero Saarinen to design an ice hockey rink (now Ingalls Rink) and a science building, Griswold turned to him again in 1958 as the university sought to address complaints of serious overcrowding in its ten residential colleges. The buildings would be located between the Hall of Graduate Studies and Payne Whitney Gymnasium, replacing a condemned high school, its parking lot, and a row of shops along Broadway Avenue. Budget constraints were higher for the new colleges than for the construction of the last residential projects twenty years prior, but Eero promised the colleges should not appear as cheap, stripped down versions of their older counterparts.³²

The building site itself presented another constraint. Not only did the Hall of Graduate Studies and Payne Whitney Gym squeeze the space from the north and south at odd angles, but Broadway Avenue and Tower Parkway cut the land into an awkward polygonal shape. Saarinen’s concern for urban compatibility made him hesitant to recreate a purely Modernist complex:

Almost all architectural problems—in fact about 95% percent of them—can be solved within the general framework and vernacular of modern architecture: rectangular form, repetitive modular construction, glass and curtain wall construction, etc. But sometimes, as in these new colleges for Yale, a special problem poses a special challenge.³³

He discussed this challenge further when he wrote that the “rectangles and cubes seemed ill-suited to the irregular site, bounded by buildings placed at a variety of angles.”³⁴ Also to be taken into account were the special aims provided by Yale’s residential college system. The residential suite-style system, modeled after Oxford, grouped students into smaller communities where they would develop a sense of identity and individualism within the larger university.

In order to accomplish these aims, Eero Saarinen and Associates conducted surveys and interviews with current students in order to determine their desires and needs. According to these interviews, the students desired privacy and individual spaces, leading to the decision that most

³⁰ Griswold, A. Whitney. “President’s Ground Rules: ‘Efficiency and Idealism,’” *Yale Daily News*, Nov. 12, 1959.

³¹ *Architectural Forum* (October 1958), quoted in Richard B. Stewart, “Architectural Renaissance Hailed,” *Yale Daily News*, November 12, 1959.

³² Eero Saarinen, “Individualism in a New Artistic Vocabulary,” *Yale Daily News*, November 12, 1959.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Eero Saarinen and Associates, Architects, “Polygonal Architecture: A many-angled, several-faceted expression in stonework for the Samuel F. B. Morse and Ezra Stiles Colleges Yale university, New Haven Connecticut,” *Architectural Record*, February 1960, 159-63.

rooms should be singles.³⁵ They “preferred gothic over Georgian architecture. They wanted individualism in their rooms. They also wanted the stress placed on the student, rather than the university.”³⁶ Students, along with the administration, also emphasized scholarship and study.

These challenges led to Eero’s realization that a new approach to Modernism would be needed for this specific situation:

As we studied the dual challenges of site and meaning, we realized that these special problems could not be solved within the current vocabulary of modern architecture. The systems, the elements, the materials usually associated with modern architecture—regularity, uniformity, standardization—were at odds with the diversity and individuality we wanted.³⁷

In order to respond to the specific desires of future inhabitants, Saarinen designed a program of polygonal rooms, “as random as those in an old inn rather than as standardized as those in a modern motel.”³⁸ The “architecture would show that these colleges were worlds apart, distinct communities with emphasis on the individual and his scholarly life.”³⁹ Furthermore, the architects arranged individual rooms in varied configurations of “suites,” opening onto a windowless hallway instead of a common room and sharing a windowless bathroom with a connecting suite. “The character of the room will express an atmosphere of study and contemplation,” Saarinen explained in an interview with the *Yale Daily News*, “where the main focus is the spacious, well-lit, and carefully worked-out study area.”⁴⁰ As a result, built-in desks, specially accommodated to each polygonal plan, dominate the rooms. Each room also has an unprecedented amount of square feet allotted per student as well as floor-to-ceiling windows of the same style used in Saarinen’s earlier Vassar dormitory. Maintaining the theme of scholarly pursuit and an emphasis on individual contemplation, Saarinen endowed both Morse and Stiles with luxurious libraries that feature partitioned study desks.

Saarinen was equally as concerned with the exterior, urban experience of the buildings as with their interior programs. He believed that the new buildings should fit into the existing urban fabric of the campus’s “traditional style enshrined in many an ivy-covered wall.”⁴¹ Saarinen used Morse and Stiles to expose, reflect, and create dialogue with the Hall of Graduate Studies (abutting Morse) and Payne Whitney Gymnasium. Furthermore, the spatial dynamics of progressing courtyards, elevations, visual juxtapositions, and angles were meant to create a

³⁵ “Essay by Carleton Knight III on Eero Saarinen,” (1966) Yale University Manuscripts and Archives Collection, Eero Saarinen Collection, Group No. 593, Series IV, Box. No. 56, Folder No. 119.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Eero Saarinen and Associates, “Polygonal Architecture.”

³⁸ Saarinen, “Individualism in a New Artistic Vocabulary.”

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ David R. Finkle, “Saarinen’s Designs for New Colleges Put Construction Cost at \$6,200,000,” *Yale Daily News*, Nov. 12, 1959.

⁴¹ Wilmarth S. Lewis, “Dedication Address.” See “Dedication of Ezra Stiles and Morse Colleges, 1962.”

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comforting sense of urban compositions. His fractured, polygonal buildings served as a Neo-neogothic interpretation of their surrounding environment, “not unlike a small Italian hill-town street” with “the walls of old Pennsylvania houses or the stone walls of Cotswold in England.”⁴² Not only did the verticality of the windows add to the fractured, gothic style, but in *Architectural Forum*’s review of the building, Walter McQuade also called attention to Saarinen’s gothic use of light and shadow to create the illusion of depth in the flat, exposed walls.⁴³ Eero described the final building as “citadels of earthy monolithic masonry - buildings in which masonry would be dominant, and whose interiors of stone, oak, and plaster would further the spirit of strength and simplicity.”⁴⁴

The construction of Morse and Stiles was a highly anticipated, highly publicized episode in Yale’s “Architectural Renaissance.” And the buildings were, for the most part, very well received: “Saarinen’s design for the new residential college embraced Yale’s tradition but expanded the public nature of the buildings,” an editorial in the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture publication gushed.⁴⁵ Other magazines published similar reactions: “The colleges are a triumph of exploring new forms for collegiate living. And blending of an exciting new concept with older styles for an admirable homogeneity [...] the effect is one of primitive grandeur,” wrote *Time Magazine*.⁴⁶ The Hartford Courant stated, “The buildings are emphatically graceful yet masculine.”⁴⁷ Furthermore, student newspapers excitedly described the features of the modern buildings and reported that many students were applying for transfer into Morse and Stiles based on the desirability of new singles and the “impregnable atmosphere.”⁴⁸

While the colleges generally received a positive reception, other critics were not so kind. In an article in the *New Statesman*, architectural critic Reyner Banham publicly accused the buildings of exhibiting a “mania for the picturesque.”⁴⁹ Banham then moved past aesthetics and complained that despite ostensibly being designed for the inhabitant, the buildings showed “a complete lack of any sense of the real priorities in student accommodation, [and] a complete lack of fundamental research into student requirements.”⁵⁰ The new dormitories, he claimed, were uninhabitable, with “cramped, awkward room shapes, espresso-bar crazy paving, and windows placed to give the architectural photographers Caligari lighting effects, not to provide the inhabitants with illumination or a view.”⁵¹

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ McQuade, “The New Yale Colleges.”

⁴⁴ Eero Saarinen and Associates, “Polygonal Architecture.”

⁴⁵ ACSA International Conference, “Conference Topic: The City as a Work of Art,” 1959, http://www.architecture.neu.edu/research/scholarly/ACSA_International_paper.doc, accessed April 25, 2009.

⁴⁶ “A New Blend,” *Time Magazine*, November 23, 1959.

⁴⁷ “Yale’s New Colleges Conceived As ‘Citadels,’” *The Hartford Courant*, September 23, 1962, sec. 17A, <http://www.proquest.com>.

⁴⁸ McQuade, “The New Yale Colleges.”

⁴⁹ Reyner Banham, *New Statesman*, July 13, quoted in McQuade, “The New Yale Colleges.”

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

In his article of defiance, reprinted in the otherwise glowing *Architectural Forum* review of the new colleges, Banham gets to the very heart of what was and had been subtly going awry with the Modernist movement:

It was horribly fascinating to sit afterwards in Philip Johnson's glass house in New Canaan - one of the most pellucidly habitable structures in the world - and hear U.S. architectural pundits of Museum of Modern Art caliber admitting that these rooms are uninhabitable, yet praising Yale for being 'responsible' enough to let Saarinen do it.

And his final barb:

To encourage an architect thus to play at being a 'pure' artist is to amputate the factor of use that gives architecture the moral and human authority that painting and sculpture lost long ago.⁵²

While all architectural projects receive criticism, Banham's claims raise an interesting question: are Morse and Stiles really "uninhabitable?"

Saarinen's designs receive criticism for several reasons. First, in creating rooms with "the randomness of an old inn" he also reproduced disparity in quality characteristic of an old inn. Some rooms are spacious, filled with light and offering scenic views, while others look onto dumpsters, blank walls, or directly into the windows of their neighbors. The issues of the polygonal shape of the rooms and inconsistency in lighting present further problems. Before building, the architectural team constructed and furnished several full-sized mockups of polygonal rooms. During this process they claimed to have "worked most of the peculiarities out of the space, but preserved most of the individual flavor."⁵³ However, as seen in Philip Steadman's paper for the *Architectural Research Quarterly* about the reason why most buildings are rectangular, square and rectangular rooms provide the greatest flexibility and arrangement of use. Not only are certain rooms in Morse and Stiles less pleasant than others in that they are hallway-like or difficult to enter, but they also ignore the students' request for individualism through flexible room design. Furthermore, access to natural light is essential for mood regulation and basic bodily functions. However, due to poor window placement, many rooms in Morse and Stiles receive little to no light.

Finally, the arrangement of rooms into suites offers another point of contention. As mentioned before, Saarinen broke with Yale's traditional suites and created a new configuration of rooms off short hallways, in addition to vertical entryway clusters.⁵⁴ The "suites" realistically consist of clusters of singles with shared facilities rather than a common room oriented mini-

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Eero Saarinen and Associates, "Polygonal Architecture."

⁵⁴ Ibid.

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community as seen in the rest of Yale's colleges. This set of problems related to the architecture of the two colleges suggests that Banham's criticism of the "inhabitability" of the buildings deserves merit.

IV. Conclusion

New York's dilapidated Projects; desolate, Brutalist public plazas; riot-proof student dorms; the tragedy of Eastern European socialist housing; pop culture's dystopias. These examples of Modernist architecture demonstrate its association with decay and shortcomings in the public realm. With the late modern age came disillusionment with the "brash boldness of American modernism ... its big gestures and unfailing optimism, [its] synthesis of progressive high technology with emotive, abstract expression."⁵⁵ The United States in particular is undergoing an identity crisis as the nation progresses further into modernity. Instead of turning to the future in this current time of uncertainty, and thus following in the steps of modernism, popular taste migrates back towards the comfort of traditional communities and architectural styles.⁵⁶

Morse and Stiles contain many controversial traits— aesthetic as well as in providing for the needs of their long-term inhabitants. They represent the broader Modernist movement in that these supposed failures result from problems that every architect faces: the unavoidable disconnect between architect and client and a mistranslation through time. Morse and Stiles also illustrate the uneasy transition of modern architecture from "a cause to a style:" despite designing for the resident, the individual became partly obscured in the pursuit of art and progress.

However, these buildings also represent Saarinen's departure from traditional Modernist architecture. He understood an important factor that the late Modernist movement overlooked: history cannot be ignored because it determines the contribution of new architecture in an environment. He took a huge risk as a Modernist architect in creating this new vernacular and was consequently rewarded. In a 1963 review of 411 designs of the past five years, "The American Institute of Architects" awarded Saarinen top honors for Morse and Stiles Colleges. The jury mentioned selecting designs that "noted an encouraging rend away from 'stereotyped clichés' based on imported themes," and in describing Saarinen's achievement said, "There are many indications that the best American design is now characterized by a sense of appropriateness and creative individuality."⁵⁷

Thus Modernists rejected the past but failed to understand that the past is inescapable; Modernist buildings, too, would become part of our architectural heritage, ones to which future generations would have to adapt. The world is too limited and too interconnected to sustain the

⁵⁵ Papademetriou, "Coming of Age."

⁵⁶ For further discussion see *The New Urbanism* by Peter Katz.

⁵⁷ "Architects Cite Saarinen For Yale College Designs," *The Hartford Courant*, Feb 25, 1963, 3, <http://www.proquest.com>.

endless destruction and construction they envisioned. Although his works contain controversial elements, Saarinen understood the importance of history and cautioned against following a futuristic ideal too fanatically. His departure from conformity and inflexibility had a tremendous impact on the greater community of architects and city planners, paving the way for a more forgiving environment.

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Faculty Advisor: Katherine Mooney

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The Yale History Department offers a wealth of academic opportunities to freshmen. Freshmen Seminars allow students to collaborate with some of the university’s top professors in an intimate setting during their first year at college, while the larger lectures let students widen their gaze and explore larger topics. In this issue, we have selected a paper from one of Yale’s most popular lectures, Professor David Blight’s *Civil War and Reconstruction*. For the class’s first assignment, students were asked to respond to a pair of quotes by William H. Seward and James G. Randall in order to determine who or what caused the Civil War. We hope you enjoy a classic Yale paper written by Christian Eubank during his freshman year.

“Our country is a theatre, which exhibits, in full operation, two radically different political systems; the one resting on the basis of servile or slave labor, the other on the basis of voluntary labor of freemen... It [the slavery controversy] is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation.”

-William H. Seward, October 1858

“If one word or phrase were selected to account for the war, that word would not be slavery, or state-rights, or diverse civilizations. It would have to be such a word as fanaticism (on both sides), or misunderstanding or perhaps politics... It was a needless war, a repressible conflict...indeed, thus was the generation misled in its unctuous fury.”

-James G. Randall, “The Blundering Generation,”
1940

The bloodiest conflict on American soil, the Civil War was a crucial turning point in America’s political and cultural history, but the search for its causes leads to passionate debates even today. Separated by decades, Secretary of State William Seward and historian James Randall presented different visions of the war’s origins, including the conflict over slavery and regional “misunderstanding.” Slavery sparked contentious debate even among Southerners. Despite his Southern upbringing, Hinton Helper, a non-slaveholding North Carolinian, argued that “slavery...has retarded the progress and prosperity of our portion of the Union.”¹ In an age of politically charged rhetoric and rapid polarization, only the tradition of political compromise preserved an uneasy peace. However, the Supreme Court’s intervention through the Dred Scott decision undermined the efforts of the compromise-seeking legislators and hijacked the democratic process. As a result, politicians and orators warned that either the North or South would force the entire nation to adhere to its regional slavery policy. This failure of political compromise fueled sectionalism and fear, as Southern leaders, anxiously anticipating the results of the 1860 presidential election, decided to secede and protect slavery from Northern intervention.

The acquisition of southwestern territories through the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo made the role of the Missouri Compromise Line in territorial disputes more uncertain. Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina ominously warned that “nothing will be left to hold the States together except force” if the North interfered with Southern interests.² Congress narrowly passed the separate components of the Compromise of 1850, including the redrawing of territorial borders, abolition of the slave trade in Washington D.C., and the creation of harsher federal fugitive slave laws.³ In response to the last provision, Harriet Beecher Stowe published her best-selling novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, which inspired new abolitionist sentiment in the North and infuriated Southern planters. Within four years, Stephen Douglas’ Kansas-Nebraska Act and its policy of territorial popular sovereignty revoked the terms of the Missouri Compromise, prompting Salmon P. Chase to claim that “its effect will be...that no

¹ Hinton Rowan Helper, “Slavery Impedes the Progress and Prosperity of the South,” in *The Civil War and Reconstruction: A Documentary Collection*, ed. William E Gienapp (W. W. Norton & Company., 2001), p. 12-14.

² William E Gienapp, ed., *The Civil War and Reconstruction: A Documentary Collection*, p. 29-31.

³ Bruce Levine, *Half Slave and Half Free* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), p. 186-189.

compromise[s] with slavery will endure.”⁴ Voting fraud, political ambiguity, and violence in the west, especially the massacre of five pro-slavery settlers at the hands of John Brown near Pottawatomie Creek, Kansas, further complicated the implementation of popular sovereignty in these territories.⁵ In 1857, amidst uncertainty and disagreement over the compromise lines, the Supreme Court simultaneously dismissed a slave family’s claim to freedom and thwarted national compromise.

Dred Scott, a slave who moved with his master to free territories, sued for his freedom after moving back to slave-owning Missouri. The Supreme Court agreed to determine if Scott’s voluntary movement to free soil granted him his freedom. Invoking due process of law and Fifth Amendment property arguments, Chief Justice Roger Taney stated that the “Federal Government can exercise no power” in regard to slavery and ruled that the Missouri Compromise Line was “therefore void.”⁶ Although the Kansas-Nebraska Act had already superseded the previous Missouri Compromise line, the Court emphasized that no territorial slave boundary was ever constitutionally valid. Essentially, the Court decided that the right to own property and slaves transcended geographical boundaries and was above government intervention. More audaciously, Taney proclaimed that blacks had “no rights which the white man was bound to respect.”⁷ By denouncing decades of legislation, a single instance of judicial activism crippled the legislators’ ability to forge any future compromises and shifted the slavery debate heavily in the South’s favor. The repudiation of popular compromises created doubt and paranoia in both the North and South as public opinion rapidly became regionally polarized.

In the presidential election of 1856, the emerging Republican Party exceeded expectations, winning one third of the popular vote and 45 percent of the vote in free states.⁸ Although the Republicans did not win the election, the success of the party, which drew from the former constituencies of the Liberty and Free Soil parties, inspired black activism and alarmed Southern plantation owners, who openly resented a party they perceived as rabble-rousers.⁹ Whereas Southerners demonized the so-called “Black Republicans” as abolitionist radicals and violent extremists intent on subjugating the South, the Dred Scott decision incensed Republican supporters, who alluded to a “slave power” conspiracy in the federal government, exemplified by the Southern-dominated Court. With the death of compromise now apparent, Abraham Lincoln vehemently opposed the decision and remarked that the Court could later decide that “the Constitution...does not permit a *state* to exclude slavery.”¹⁰ Indeed, only the unanimously-decided precedent of Barron v. Baltimore (1833), which limited enforcement of the Bill of Rights to federal jurisdictions, prevented the Court from immediately applying the Fifth Amendment prohibition on free-soil in federal territories on the state level.¹¹ Lincoln’s vow to place slavery “in the course of its ultimate extinction” rallied an increasingly vocal abolitionist base and made the Republican Party a Northern sectional institution, while the core of the

⁴ Bruce Levine, *Half Slave and Half Free*, p. 192-194.

⁵ Levine, p. 196-198.

⁶ Gienapp, p. 41-43.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41-43.

⁸ Levine, p. 206.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 206-209.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 210-213.

¹¹ Paul Brest, et al., *Processes of Constitutional Decisionmaking* (New York: Aspen Publishers, 2006), p. 217.

Democratic Party fragmented and realigned in the South.¹² Northern bitterness against the Dred Scott decision radically transformed its anti-slavery ideology into a sectional struggle opposed to the Southern-sympathizing Supreme Court's intervention.

In sharp contrast to the Northern Republicans, Southern Democrats reveled in the Supreme Court's proslavery decision and its promise of slavery's continued expansion. Confident in the strength of an agrarian slave "empire," South Carolina Senator James Henry Hammond declared that "the South is perfectly competent to go on...Cotton is king."¹³ Southern planters, emboldened by their victory in Court, viciously opposed any attempts to diminish the role of slavery, including those made from within their own political party. In the North, Democrat Stephen A. Douglas continued to champion popular sovereignty despite the Court's precedent. In his famous "Freeport Doctrine," Douglas argued, "It matters not what way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide."¹⁴ Although Douglas won the 1858 senatorial race against Abraham Lincoln, his advocacy of popular sovereignty and opposition to the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution in Kansas angered his Southern constituency, who gladly accepted the Dred Scott decision. Tensions heightened as Southerners blamed Republican abolitionists for John Brown's 1859 raid on Harper's Ferry. The Democratic Party subsequently dissolved as disillusioned Southerners abandoned their Northern counterparts and rallied around John C. Breckinridge in the 1860 presidential election.¹⁵ Distrustful of federal intervention and wary of Lincoln's claim that the nation "will become all one thing or the other," Southern leaders began to propose secession as the 1860 election and the possibility of a Republican revolution loomed on the political horizon.¹⁶

Lincoln's narrow victory against candidates from the ruins of the old party coalitions confirmed the Southern planters' fears. On December 20, 1860, South Carolina voted to secede, signifying its contempt for the Republican Party and Northern opposition to Dred Scott and the spread of slavery.¹⁷ In response to the expectation that the Republicans would not accept what Southerners considered "the proper status of the negro," leaders from the Deep South sent 52 commissioners across the region to incite other states to secede.¹⁸ Illustrating the mentality of the eleven states that eventually left the Union, William L. Harris, a commissioner from Mississippi, announced that the South "*will never submit* to the principles and policy of this Black Republican Administration."¹⁹ The failure of political compromise and the election of Lincoln convinced radical Southern politicians to break from the Union instead of trying to revive the tradition of compromise. When Senator John J. Crittenden attempted to placate the South with an irrevocable Constitutional amendment guaranteeing slavery forever, the South's lack of faith in Northern promises doomed this final proposal.²⁰ On April 12, 1861, the newly

¹² Levine, p. 212.

¹³ Gienapp, p. 46-47.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 51-52.

¹⁵ Levine, p. 214-217.

¹⁶ Abraham Lincoln, "A House Divided' Speech at Springfield, Illinois," in *Abraham Lincoln, Slavery, and the Civil War: Selected Writings and Speeches*, ed. Michael P. Johnson (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2001), p. 63-69.

¹⁷ Levine, p. 225.

¹⁸ Charles B. Dew, *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2001), p. 12-13, 18-19.

¹⁹ Charles B. Dew, *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War*, p. 27-29.

²⁰ Levine, p. 229-231.

formed Confederate States of America attacked Fort Sumter, ending hopes of compromise as the nation went to war.²¹

As the Civil War raged across the countryside, Abraham Lincoln noted in his second inaugural address that “all dreaded [war] – all sought to avert it.”²² The Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and, finally, the ill-fated Crittenden Amendment each represented an increasingly desperate attempts to forestall the impending war.²³ However, as these treaties became more frequent, sectional orators doubted their permanency and warned that a partisan government would unfairly intervene to solve the slave crisis. Until Dred Scott provided the South with a major political victory, compromises preserved a degree of stability contingent upon an equal balance of regional power. The Court’s decision crippled American compromise and fostered a culture of distrust and cynicism, rendering future negotiations nearly impossible. While Northerners feared the future nationalization of slavery, Southerners dreaded the election of an anti-slavery Republican government that would overturn the Court’s decision. If the Dred Scott decision had not drastically hindered the compromise process, the halt of western expansion or the passage of a Constitutional amendment might have led to more lasting agreements and greater national unity. Ultimately, Dred Scott marked the failure of American compromise and the rise of fierce sectionalism, convincing Southern leaders that the only way to save slavery from Northern activism was through secession and civil war.

²¹ Dew, p. 5.

²² Abraham Lincoln, “Second Inaugural Address,” in Bruce Levine, *Half Slave and Half Free* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), 236.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 229-231.

Outside of Yale

Laying Bridges: Rostovtzeff and the Russo-Roman Bourgeoisie

John Riley, Harvard 2010

Rule in Classical Antiquity

Professor Emma Dench

Faculty Advisor: Professor Joseph Manning

2009

The Outside category publishes a paper written by a student at another university. This issue features an essay by John Riley, a graduating senior at Harvard University studying History and the Classics. A native of Lake Forest, Illinois, he is the son of Bob and Deborah Riley. Riley plays goaltender for the Harvard ice hockey team and aspires to pursue a career in medicine as a trauma surgeon.

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The sole pledge of success is faith in the righteousness of the cause, the capacity to forget the temporal and remember the eternal.

–Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff, 1920¹

Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff is a Russian author whose work has yet to be considered in the scholarship of Russian classicism in the Soviet period. This is primarily due to the fact that neither Zara Torlone nor Judith Kalb, in their seminal works on the subject, has deemed the writing of history a genre of classically inspired literature. The inclusion of this genre has precedent in the study of Russian classicism in the nineteenth century, specifically Andrew Kahn's "Readings of Imperial Rome from Lomonosov to Pushkin," wherein the author investigates the influence of Tacitus upon Pushkin's history of sixteenth-century Russia. However, the existing scholarship on Rostovtzeff has yet to address him with the same methodology. Current studies on Rostovtzeff offer a complete biographical sketch as well as superficial assertions about the impact of his personal experience as an exile upon his writing. However, they fail to investigate, in detail, how Rostovtzeff engaged with the classics as a means to express his opposition to the Bolshevik takeover of Russia in 1917 and the subsequent formation of the Soviet state. An in-depth study of the intersection between his life and his historical arguments demonstrates his utilization of ancient history to criticize contemporary Russian politics. In particular, it offers crucial insight into the role of the class-based motivations of the Russian bourgeois intelligentsia in shaping his historical writing before and after the Russian revolution of 1917.

Marinus Wes has called M.I. Rostovtzeff, "a historian in exile," and indeed this title characterizes him well.² Rostovtzeff was born near Kiev, Russia in 1870. His father was a renowned teacher of Latin, a principal of one of Russia's classical *gymnasia*, and later a director of state education for the imperial government in the Ukraine. Rostovtzeff received a first-rate education in classical languages and archaeology in Kiev and St. Petersburg.³ After completing his education, he traveled widely, visiting ancient sites in Greece, Turkey, North Africa, Spain, and Italy – all between 1895 and 1898.⁴ As G.W. Bowersock notes, Rostovtzeff believed that a complete understanding of the past required more than textual study:

He knew from the start that a historian of the ancient world had to learn topography through his feet and to sense the climate through his pores. He never lost his fascination with the stones of the past, whether they were inscribed or not, whether they belonged to shops, temples, theatres, or military camps.⁵

¹ Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff, "The Worship of Success," *The New Russia* 1, no. 1 (Feb. 1920): 10-11.

² Marinus Antony Wes, *Michael Rostovtzeff, Historian in Exile: Russian Roots in an American Context*, Vol. Heft 65 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1990).

³ C. Bradford Welles, "Michael I. Rostovtzeff," in *Architects and Craftsmen in History*, ed. Joseph T. Lambie (Tübingen: Mohr Publishers, 1956), 57.

⁴ G. W. Bowersock, "'The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire' by Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff," *Daedalus* 103, no. 1 (Winter, 1974), 16.

⁵ Bowersock, 16.

Rostovtzeff, from an early point in his career, strove to place himself within the world of the ancients, to walk their footpaths and feel the atmosphere of their lives. This approach demonstrates Rostovtzeff's belief in living history— the possibility of enduring connections of human experience across vast expanses of time.

Early in his career, Rostovtzeff made concerted efforts at engagement with classical scholars across the world. Notably, he corresponded with leading German historians in the field of papyrology, among them Grenfell and Wilcken, and from these engagements Rostovtzeff developed a strong interest in this kind of evidence.⁶ In 1908, Rostovtzeff realized a great dream of his by traveling to Egypt to study and purchase papyri.⁷ In letters written in Egypt, Rostovtzeff reveals the inspiration behind his journey. First, he sought to find the connections between the ancient kingdom and the present; in an analysis of a particular letter, Litvinenko recalls, “Looking for the origins of the antique civilization and – in a broader sense – of the Western one, Rostovtzeff elaborates his favorite method of ‘laying bridges’ between the past and present and does it on the example of Alexandria.”⁸ For Rostovtzeff, ties to the modern world were alive in the remnants of past societies.

The second motivation for Rostovtzeff on the journey was his desire to return to Russia with a store of papyri to establish the discipline within his home nation. Again, Litvinenko writes, “These documents and some pre-war publications of the historian show his strong will to create a papyrological centre in Saint-Petersburg and thus add Russia to the ‘chorus of European cultural nations’ in the field of papyrology.”⁹ This eagerness to imbue Russia with Western culture through the expansion of its institutions for classical study is interesting in that it reflects the cultural motivations of contemporary classical poets, best represented by the Symbolists. These poets promoted Russia's cultural ties to the West amid growing political and religious conservatism, and Rostovtzeff shared in that purpose.

Rostovtzeff's desire to “lay bridges” between his modern Russian homeland and the classical past took concrete form in his early writing. Five years after his trip to Egypt, Rostovtzeff published a series of studies on the ancient inhabitants of South Russia. For Rostovtzeff, this was an extremely interesting topic, much as it had been for tsars Catherine the Great and Alexander I, who had made conquests in the Black Sea region and celebrated these lands as relics of the ancient Greek world.¹⁰ Rostovtzeff's choice to study and publish works on the ancient peoples of South Russia suggests that he, like the tsars of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, wanted Russia to share in the glory of antiquity. At the very least, it reflects the interests of his

⁶ Bowersock, 17; papyrology is the study of papyri, or ancient Egyptian inscriptions upon paper made from papyrus.

⁷ Yuri Litvinenko, “Travels of M.I. Rostovtzeff in Egypt,” in Wladimir Bérélowitch and Jean Andreau, *Michel Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff*, Vol. 14 (Bari: Edipuglia, 2008), 116.

⁸ Rostovtzeff, “Aleksandria (putevyje zametki) (Alexandrie; les notes de voyage),” in *Ghermes (Hemes)*, 2 (1908), in Litvinenko, 118.

⁹ Litvinenko, 119.

¹⁰ Zara Torlone, *Russia and the Classics: Poetry's Foreign Muse* (London: Duckworth, 2009), 19.

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Russian readership, as Rostovtzeff was known – at this point in his career – to write about topics with popular appeal.¹¹

The *Journal of the Ministry of Public Education* published these studies in Russian in 1913, and Rostovtzeff personally presented plates of the art of South Russia to Tsar Nicholas II in 1914. Much of this material later appeared in the Oxford University Press's subsequent English publication of Rostovtzeff's *Iranian and Greeks in South Russia*. In his study of South Russia, Rostovtzeff investigates the impact of ancient Greek culture upon the native peoples of the region.¹² The author characterizes the cultural identity of the ancient inhabitants of South Russia as a unique mixture of Greek and Oriental elements:

I do not deny the importance of the Greek influences in South Russia, but at the same time I do not regard South Russia as one of the provinces of the Greek world. South Russia has always been, and remained even in the Greek period, an Oriental land. Greek influence in South Russia was strong, it is true, but the current of Hellenism met another current there, an Oriental one, and it was this which finally carried the day, and in the period of the migrations spread all over Western Europe.¹³

This argument for the dual nature of South Russia's inheritance, Greek and Oriental, represents a historical argument for reconciliation between West and East in Russia's culture and national identity. Russia – or at least South Russia – had been, from the fifth century BCE onward, both Greek and Oriental, and therefore Russia should strive to reconcile its two equally important ties to the West and the East. Rostovtzeff's historical work on South Russia, originally published in 1913, reflects the motivations of early twentieth-century classical literature as a whole, which sought to preserve and reconcile Western enlightenment with Russia's Eastern emotionalism.

These examples from Rostovtzeff's early career – his education, work with Egyptian papyri, desire to create institutions for classical study in Russia, and early writing on South Russia – illustrate his formation as a historian and his positive relationship with the Russian imperial government between 1905-1917. He had directed his career thus far to the glorification of Russia's ties to the ancient world, presenting his work to Tsar Nicholas II himself, and to the preservation of Western culture in Russia's twofold heritage. However, amid the growing civil unrest in Russia that produced the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent civil war,

¹¹ Bowersock, 17.

¹² M.I. Rostovtzeff, *Iranian and Greeks in South Russia* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1922), 61, 67, 150, 155; Chapter four of his book traces the origins of Greek influence to the Greek trading colonies which arose on the Black Sea in the early part of the first millennium century BCE, which were maintained through the establishment of military strongholds by Athens in the fifth century. Chapter seven traces the enduring influence of Greek civilization – in the forms Greek ancestry (from earlier intermarriage), fighting styles, and the Greek language during periods of Roman and later Byzantine power in the region. For an interesting image of fourth century BCE Greek hoplite armor discovered in south Russia, see Plate XIV, opposite page 66.

¹³ Rostovtzeff, 1922, viiiff.

Rostovtzeff's relationship to the government and cultural atmosphere of Russia fundamentally changed, and it had a profound effect upon his historical writing.

On the night of October 24-25, 1917, during which the Bolshevik party overthrew the provisional government, Rostovtzeff was in his apartment, 34 Morskaya St., St. Petersburg, although he was supposed to have been in a meeting in the Winter Palace.¹⁴ The streets around him swarmed with confused civilians, armed patrols, and sounds of gunfire from the Winter Palace.¹⁵ For the next several months, his life and work were increasingly hampered by unrest in the city. The Bolsheviks maintained a tenuous grasp on authority, while the German army – positioned a mere twenty-five miles from the city – threatened to overrun St. Petersburg. Famine raged among the urban population, and the infrastructure of the city crumbled, adding to the hopelessness of the time.¹⁶

Amid this atmosphere, Rostovtzeff sought repose abroad in Sweden, ostensibly to continue his research on South Russia, which was becoming immensely difficult at home. Through the aid of his friend and colleague, Oscar Montelius, Rostovtzeff acquired a visa for his desired destination in May of 1918.¹⁷ It is unclear whether Rostovtzeff knew that this journey would be the start of a life-long exile from his homeland. What is clear, however, is that his escape in the summer of 1918 came at a fortuitous moment in that it narrowly preceded the commencement of the Red Terror, which began at the end of that August.¹⁸

Although he managed to leave Russia before the Terror began – making his way to Eastern Europe through bribery and across U-boat infested waters – Rostovtzeff was deeply impacted by the state-imposed violence of the Red Terror, particularly its treatment of Russia's intellectuals.¹⁹ He voiced his rejection of Bolshevik rule in his 1922 article "Amnesty." In entitling and structuring his article, the classically trained Rostovtzeff looked conscientiously to the Roman past, specifically to the year 44 BCE. In that year, a faction of Roman senators, led by Brutus and Cassius, murdered Julius Caesar, and Cicero delivered the first of his *Philippics*, speeches directed against Marc Antony. *Philippics* 1.1, the opening of Cicero's speech, was particularly useful for Rostovtzeff because it contains Cicero's own engagement with the notion of "Amnesty":

I, as far as was in my power, laid the foundations of peace, and renewed the ancient precedent set by the Athenians; I even used the Greek word, which that city employed in

¹⁴ Wes, 13, citing the account of Valentin Zubov. Although the exact nature of the meeting is unknown, scholars generally agree that it was not related to impending events of the evening.

¹⁵ A. Tyrkova-Williams, *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk: The First Year of the Russian Revolution* (London: Macmillan, 1919), 257, in Wes, 13.

¹⁶ Leon Trotsky, *My Life* (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1930), 395-6, in Wes, 16.

¹⁷ Wes, 17.

¹⁸ Wes, 17; Petrograd was the new name given to St. Petersburg after the Bolshevik take-over. The "Cheka" was the name of the Soviet state security organization.

¹⁹ For the means by which Rostovtzeff escaped Russia, see Wes, 18.

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those times in allaying discords, and gave my vote that all recollection of the existing dissensions ought to be effaced by everlasting oblivion.²⁰

Here Cicero is describing his role in the granting of amnesty to the murderers of Caesar at a meeting that took place two days after the event. He describes how he chose the Greek word ἀμνηστειά, meaning “a not-remembering” or “amnesty,” to evoke the Athenian precedent of wiping away all memory or guilt for past wrongs committed when making peace.

Unlike Cicero in his *Philippics*, Rostovtzeff does not adopt the Greek precedent of granting “amnesty” for past injury:

What has compelled us to leave Russia? ... They reduced to naught all the achievements of the past, they smashed all that was and remains sacred to us, mercilessly exterminated Russia's best sons, and forced everyone to become the unwilling slaves of their work of destruction. We left Russia because we did not wish to partake in the ruin and plunder of our country, or in the task of demoralizing the people which the Bolsheviks have so successfully performed ... We read every day in the papers that new so-called conspiracies are being discovered, endless executions and shootings carried out ... In these circumstances we cannot and must not grant an amnesty to the Bolsheviks.²¹

This passionate diatribe demonstrates several of Rostovtzeff's criticisms of Bolshevik wrongdoing, all of which make them unworthy of “amnesty” in the vein of Cicero's *Philippics*.

First, Rostovtzeff resents the Bolsheviks' attack on Russia's traditional culture and imperial past. As demonstrated previously, Rostovtzeff took pride in elevating imperial Russia's image as an elite cultural center through his work in the classics – namely his hopes for a papyrological institute in St. Petersburg and his work on South Russia, which he presented to the tsar personally. As W. L. Westermann recalls from a conversation with Rostovtzeff in June 1919, Rostovtzeff called himself “an intense nationalist in all his work.”²² For Rostovtzeff, the Bolsheviks dashed to pieces the national legacy and heritage he sought to glorify through his writings.

Second, Rostovtzeff laments the extermination of Russia's elites, or “best sons.” Rostovtzeff harbored a deep-seated belief in aristocracy and the cultural contributions of the intelligentsia. Indeed, scholars have argued convincingly that Rostovtzeff believed that, rather than a dictatorship of the people, the desirable solution to Russia's political turmoil since 1905

²⁰ Cicero, *Philippics* 1.1, trans. C. D. Yonge (London: George Bell and Sons, 1903). Cicero delivered this speech on September 2, 44 BCE. He uses the past tense as he is referring to his earlier speech on March 17 (two days after Caesar's murder), entitled “De Pacis” or “On Peace.” This speech has not survived for the modern reader to examine.

²¹ Michael I. Rostovtzeff, “Amnesty,” in *Russian Life*, edited by Pavel Miliukov, no. 5 (London, 1922), 427-8, in Wes, 61.

²² W. L. Westermann, *Westermann Diary*, June 29th 1919, translated and presented in Wes, 40.

was an “enlightened monarchy”²³ or, as Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams put it, the creation of “a ruling class.”²⁴ With the victory of the Bolsheviks over the opposition forces, Rostovtzeff’s hopes for the creation of an enlightened monarchy in the wake of the 1905 Revolution – like those of his fellow classically-inspired authors of the bourgeois intelligentsia – quickly dissolved.

The third element of this quotation from “Amnesty” is Rostovtzeff’s loathing for the Bolshevik domination of educational institutions. Again, Westermann recalls Rostovtzeff’s account of events in Petrograd in 1919:

When the Bolsheviks came they passed a law that the Universities had to admit everybody to lectures. The bourgeoisie from whom their students came were forced out to gain a living as they could; by sweeping streets and cleaning latrines. The proletariat was not interested in higher education. So the classes were abandoned and the Universities had to close.²⁵

Rostovtzeff was unwilling to participate in this educational atmosphere, as it had been put into service of the Bolsheviks in their dissemination of propagandist scholarship. This sentiment appears in another article written by Rostovtzeff in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, namely in his April 22, 1920, contribution to *The New Russia* entitled “Bolsheviks as Educationalists.” In this article, he writes, “Politics have been introduced into the schools. The Bolsheviks are everywhere to organize a compact group of Bolshevik pupils.”²⁶ For this classical historian, the displacement of the bourgeoisie from its rightful place in education by the politically oriented educational system of the Bolsheviks was an unforgivable crime.

Finally, Rostovtzeff condemned the Bolsheviks for their accusations of conspiracy and the unjust executions that followed. Indeed, his close friend and colleague Pitirim Aleksandrovich Sorokin only narrowly escaped death because Lenin intervened after he was arrested and sentenced to death by the Bolsheviks in 1922.²⁷ The targeting of the bourgeois intelligentsia by the regime was perhaps the greatest wrong committed by the Bolsheviks, as Rostovtzeff firmly believed that this class was the source of Russian culture.

By the time he wrote “Amnesty,” Rostovtzeff had found employment first at Oxford University and then, in the fall of 1921, at the University of Wisconsin. While in England, Rostovtzeff had founded the *Komitet Osvobozhdeniya Rossi*, or the Russian Liberation Committee (RLC). It was, in essence, an organization for the dissemination propaganda that supported the White Army, which was composed of nobles, veterans of the imperial army, and a subset of the

²³ Welles, 66, citing Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff 1870-1952., *The Social & Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1926), viii.

²⁴ Wes, 60-61, citing Tyrkova-Williams, 88.

²⁵ *Westermann Diary* in Wes, 40.

²⁶ Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff, “Bolsheviks as Educationalists,” *The New Russia* 1 no. 12 (Apr. 1920): 366.

²⁷ Wes, 57-8.

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peasantry who opposed the Bolshevik Red Army. The RLC existed until 1923 and clearly illustrates Rostovtzeff's allegiance to pro-monarchist leaders who resisted the Bolshevik takeover.²⁸ While in America, he also aided the American Committee for the Education of Russian Youth in Exile, which sought to protect traditional Russian education after the diaspora of intellectuals that occurred during the revolution. With his involvement, Rostovtzeff continued his deep connection to the Russian intelligentsia and promoted the preservation of pre-revolutionary Russian culture even while in exile.²⁹

Many scholars, in writing about Rostovtzeff's historical work, have made sweeping comments about the influence of Rostovtzeff's experience as an exile upon his imagination of ancient history. For instance, C. Bradford Welles wrote concerning Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, "It shows obvious influences of both traditional economic doctrine, nineteenth century socialism, and the shock of seeing the Russian world in which he had grown up disintegrate before his eyes."³⁰ However, such an analysis of the role of his personal history upon his work is superficial; it cannot grasp the nuance or the changing attitudes represented across thirty years of Rostovtzeff's own scholarship.

Between his pre-revolutionary work – which has been assessed above – and his post-revolutionary writings, there was a marked change in Rostovtzeff's attitude, from positive characterizations of Russia through its links to antiquity to generally negative associations between the two histories, Russian and classical. Only with the detailed account, presented above, of Rostovtzeff's experience with and attitudes toward the Bolshevik takeover and Soviet rule can one grasp the full and intricate impact of his personal experience as a Russian exile upon his imagination of the Greek and Roman past. It is only because of this deep-seated, meaningful impact that his histories constitute examples of classically inspired Russian literature.

Rostovtzeff, a historian inclined to "laying bridges" between the past and the present, focused his studies of Roman and Hellenistic history on the class conflicts that surround the bourgeoisie. This paper addresses his two principal fields, Roman and Hellenistic history, in the order in which Rostovtzeff addressed them during his lifetime, beginning with his central works on Rome and then moving on to his Hellenistic histories. This analysis will demonstrate how Rostovtzeff's connection to the Russian bourgeois intelligentsia shaped his unique theories about the role of the bourgeoisie in antiquity. Specifically, it will show how his treatment of the bourgeoisie, Roman and Hellenistic, reflected his reaction to the changing face of Soviet power between 1917 and 1941.

The crisis of the third century CE dominates Rostovtzeff's treatment of the fall of the Roman empire, particularly in three of his works – "The Social and Political Crisis of the Roman Empire in the Third Century CE" (1923), *The Social and Economic History of Empire* (1926). Within these writings, the two classes of the proletariat/peasantry and the bourgeoisie are of great

²⁸ Wes, 28; the RLC published *The New Russia*, the weekly review to which Rostovtzeff contributed.

²⁹ Wes, 55.

³⁰ Welles, 67.

importance. Rostovtzeff's Roman bourgeoisie emerged as a class in the second century BCE as inheritors of a lifestyle well established in the Hellenistic world. This bourgeoisie was not a professional class of tradesmen – as the term “bourgeoisie” is sometimes employed to describe. Rather, in Rostovtzeff's histories the Roman bourgeoisie were men with capital who invested principally in land as well as in industry.³¹ As he describes them, “Most of them were landowners; some were owners of houses, let at rent, and of various shops; some carried on money-lending and banking operations.”³² As they subsisted on their investments, the bourgeoisie had the freedom to follow other pursuits, including the arts. In the social and political sphere, they were a class whose influence and power rested principally upon their wealth, rather than upon political privileges or rank, as was the case of the senatorial order.

The proletariat, in contrast, consisted of those who worked for a living; a proletarian might be “a soldier or a business agent, an artisan or a menial workman.”³³ They were not wealthy enough to live solely off their investments, as did the bourgeoisie, and they held no significant social or political status in Roman cities. Their rural counterpart was the peasantry – farmers who worked the estates of others, rented land, or, in certain periods, were tied to the land through a system of debt-slavery.³⁴ Their exact relation to the land – or whether they were enslaved – depended on the period of Roman history in question.³⁵ In essence, however, Rostovtzeff's depictions of class conflict in Roman history aligned the position and political aims of the peasantry and proletariat.

According to Rostovtzeff, tensions between these two classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat/peasantry, were the central cause of the crisis of the third century CE. Following the triumph of Augustus and the creation of the imperial state in the first century BCE, the bourgeoisie gained newfound wealth and political influence. On the one hand, the bourgeoisie expanded in number because of the redistribution of land that followed the rise of Augustus; on the other hand, members of the Italian bourgeoisie replaced many of the existing senators and urban officials as recompense for their support of first Julius Caesar and later Augustus in their respective victories during civil wars.³⁶ In his construction of the new Roman state, therefore, Augustus favored this expanded and increasingly urban bourgeoisie over the old ruling aristocracy.³⁷

³¹ Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff, *The Social & Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1926), 19.

³² Rostovtzeff, 1926, 31.

³³ Rostovtzeff, 1926, 33; while Rostovtzeff's use of the term “bourgeoisie” was a projection of an originally French word upon antiquity, the term “proletariat” comes from the Latin word *proletarii*, meaning “child-bearers,” which emphasized that their only substantial property came from their ability to have children.

³⁴ In Latin, debt-slavery is called *nexum*.

³⁵ Indeed, this question of the changing status of the peasantry is at the heart of Rostovtzeff's theorizations on the evolution of class-conflict in the imperial periods, and it served as the central topic of his article “The Problem of the Origin of Serfdom in the Roman Empire,” *The Journal of Land & Public Utility Economics* 2, no. 2 (Apr., 1926): 198-207.

³⁶ Rostovtzeff, 1926, viii.

³⁷ Rostovtzeff, Apr. 1926, 201.

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However, over the following three centuries, the municipal bourgeoisie's oppression of the proletariat and peasantry, who farmed their landholdings and worked on their properties, fostered festering hatred among the lower orders for their bourgeois masters.³⁸ This social tension entered into a new phase at the end of the second century CE, wherein the composition of the Roman army began to change:

The urban classes disappeared from the army; the bulk of the army was composed of peasants and especially peasants from the least Romanized or Hellenized provinces ... Additionally, the army was no longer an army of volunteers. After the great wars of Domitian and Trajan and especially of Marcus Aurelius, it had become a conscript army. As the urban classes became less interested in military service ... the Roman army at the end of the second century and in the third century represented almost exclusively the peasant classes of the Roman Empire.³⁹

As the army, by the third century CE, was composed almost exclusively of the rural peasantry, the lower orders now had the means to seek revenge upon the bourgeoisie.

According to Rostovtzeff, they did just that. The "army of the peasant class" took bloody revenge upon the bourgeoisie during fifty years of civil war in the late third century CE.⁴⁰ Because the emperors were sympathetic to the peasant army at the helm of the Roman state, the destruction of bourgeois lives, wealth, and political privilege was immense.⁴¹ This persecution of the bourgeoisie was devastating to the Roman state and its future, just as it had been for Russia during the 1917 Revolution:

When the Empire, after fifty years of such life – and we know what fifty years might mean, we who have lived through the World War and the acute social revolution of

³⁸ Rostovtzeff asserts that source of the growing animosity of the lower classes toward the bourgeoisie stemmed from a development in the peasantry's relationship to the land. With the end of the Empire's expansion came a halt to its principal labor source, slaves. As a result, the bourgeoisie increasingly relied on tenants – as free labor was limited by worker migration – to work their lands. The relationship between the bourgeois landowner and the tenant was oppressive, and therefore the peasantry grew to hate their masters. See Rostovtzeff, Apr. 1926, 203-205.

³⁹ Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff, "The Social and Political Crisis of the Roman Empire in the 3rd Century CE," *Musée Belge* (1923): 6, translated by Andrew C. Johnston.

⁴⁰ Rostovtzeff, 1923, 7; Arnaldo Momigliano, in his study of Rostovtzeff, asserts that Rostovtzeff's characterization of the third century army can be called the "Red army of the peasantry." However, this explicit title appears nowhere in Rostovtzeff's work, whether his characterization of the army deserved such a title or not. See *A. D. Momigliano: Studies on Modern Scholarship*, ed G. Bowersock and Tim Cornell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 40ff., for the "Red army of the peasantry" and further details of his treatise on Rostovtzeff's Roman histories.

⁴¹ Rostovtzeff, 1923, 4.

Russia – came to its senses, it lay practically in ruins. The bourgeoisie was decimated and utterly demoralized; the worst elements only had survived.⁴²

With the bourgeoisie destroyed, the Roman Emperors faced the problem of reorganizing the struggling economy. They used violence, coercion, and oppression to extract resources from the population. Rostovtzeff writes, “The state enslaved the whole population,” and the people were desperate enough for some sort of peace to yield to its control.⁴³

It was this degraded state, which was devoid of a strong bourgeoisie, the economic and culture heart of the Empire, that ruled Rome until its eventual destruction by barbarian invaders. For Rostovtzeff, however, the death of Rome occurred long before in the third century CE. This period - so starkly similar in Rostovtzeff’s mind to Russia’s experience of revolution, civil war, violent class reprisal, and state coercion between 1917 and 1926 - heralded the doom of Roman civilization. For these events, indeed, had signaled the death of his beloved Russia.

In formulating this theory, Rostovtzeff took a small amount of material evidence and used it to characterize a notoriously mysterious period of Roman history. He wrote in his “The Social and Political Crisis of the Roman Empire in the Third Century CE,” “We have thus a direct proof of the relations between the countryside and the army, we have testimonies of the aspirations of the peasants and the hopes founded by them upon the army and upon the emperor.”⁴⁴ However, his evidence includes only two of eleven surviving petitions, which clearly identify the writer as a soldier complaining of the economic oppression of the peasantry. Therefore, Rostovtzeff extrapolated from this meager evidence a recount of Roman history colored largely by his perception of Russian history.

In addition to his writing on ancient Rome, Rostovtzeff’s histories of the Hellenistic world likewise show evidence of the author’s projection of Russian politics on antiquity. However, some scholarly assertions argue differently. As Arnaldo Momigliano wrote:

When Rostovtzeff turned to the completion of the *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, he was peacefully established in America. I was perhaps not the only reader to miss in the Hellenistic history the generous impatience, the emotional intensity of the book on Rome. Something of the old fire had gone out, but the new history was a much more careful piece of research. Rostovtzeff had learned to examine the evidence more prudently and patiently.⁴⁵

⁴² Rostovtzeff, Apr. 1926, 206.

⁴³ Rostovtzeff, Apr. 1926, 206.

⁴⁴ Rostovtzeff, 1923, 8.

⁴⁵ Momigliano, 41; Momigliano was himself an accredited classical historian whose work showed reflections of his experience as a Jew in fascist Italy. This made him a keen observer of such a tendency in other historians.

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While Rostovtzeff's examination of evidence did strengthen and his tone become more subdued, it is misguided to assert that the passage of time and his established residence in America lessened the author's emotional inclination to lay bridges between the ancient past and early 20th century Russia. An investigation of the his major treatise on the Hellenistic world, completed in 1941, as well as events in Russia contemporary to his writing, demonstrates Rostovtzeff's continued use of ancient history to critique the Soviet state.

In his *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, Rostovtzeff asserts a fundamental conflict between the Hellenistic kingdoms' two-fold cultural, social, and economic inheritance:

[The Hellenistic kings] never found a way of escape from the great ... conflict between the two leading forms of civilized life, the Eastern and the Western, between Greek city-states and Oriental monarchies – between Greek 'politai' and Oriental subjects; between the Greek economic system, based on freedom and private initiative, and the state economy of the East, supervised, guided and controlled. And finally, they were faced with the great eternal problem of human society, as acute in the ancient world *as in the modern*; the antimony between the rulers and the ruled, the 'haves' and the 'have-nots,' the bourgeoisie and the working classes, the city and the country.⁴⁶

The Hellenistic kings faced the same fundamental question that characterized Russia's search for a national identity across the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. In particular, Rostovtzeff's treatment of the plight of the Hellenistic bourgeoisie reflects this common experience of this class in Russian history.

Rostovtzeff calls the bourgeoisie "the backbone of the Hellenistic cities."⁴⁷ They were important for their economic contribution as the main investors and developers, as well as for their cultural and artistic contributions to the urban environment. The Hellenistic kings understood the value of this class and protected them; thus Hellenistic society thrived until the second century BCE. At this time, political turmoil – produced by internal conflict and the external pressures of Roman expansion – devastated the Hellenistic bourgeoisie. As Rostovtzeff writes, "the ordeals of the second and first century BCE ... decimated, humiliated, and demoralized its members, and caused their general impoverishment and in some instances their ruin."⁴⁸ With the fall of the bourgeoisie, so came the ruin of Hellenistic culture.

While Rostovtzeff was writing his *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* in the late 1930s, Stalin was writing the death sentences of the last remnants of the Russian bourgeois in his Great Purge of 1937-1938.⁴⁹ While Rostovtzeff described the Hellenistic

⁴⁶ Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff, *The Social & Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1941), 1031; my emphasis.

⁴⁷ Rostovtzeff, 1119.

⁴⁸ Rostovtzeff, 1941, 1306.

⁴⁹ For more on the Great Purge, see Suny, 230.

bourgeoisie as the backbone of society, Stalin buried their equivalent, the Russian intelligentsia, in mass graves. And while Rostovtzeff asserted that the destruction of the bourgeoisie equaled the ruin of Hellenistic culture and society, Stalin celebrated the elimination of the old Russian bourgeois intelligentsia as progress toward a new Soviet culture.⁵⁰ Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* was therefore a vivid rejection of Stalinism, voiced through a portrayal of the ancient world. Although in exile, although tempered in his scholarship by age and experience, and although twenty years removed from his old life in Russia, Rostovtzeff continued to employ the classics to express his opinion of a lost Russia.

Taken as a whole, Rostovtzeff's histories of the ancient world revolved around class conflict between the bourgeoisie, the peasantry/proletariat, and the state. However, despite the apparent similarity to Marxist history – which also places class at the center of all conflict – Rostovtzeff explicitly rejected a Marxist categorization of his histories. In this way he continued his denunciation of Soviet government. He asserted that Marxism fails to capture the history of the ancient world for two reasons. First, he wrote, “The economic explanation of the decay of the ancient world must be rejected completely.”⁵¹ As this study has demonstrated, Rostovtzeff identified social tension and upheaval as the impetuses for revolutions and civil wars, not economic factors. Second, he argued against Marxism's assertion of long periods of progress followed by long periods of return that, taken as a whole, progressed toward a “house economy.” For Rostovtzeff, economic development was nonlinear; the ancient world experienced periods of increasing capitalism as well as frequent returns to state control.⁵²

Rostovtzeff's writing on the emperor Augustus complicates the assertion that his reading of ancient history differed from that of Marx. In his 1922 article “Augustus,” Rostovtzeff asserted that “The force of Augustus lies in his fine understanding of the main social features of his own time, of the psychology of the masses ...” and that Augustus was “a master in the domain of cruel and ruthless extermination of his enemies.”⁵³ Augustus was able to convince the people of the legitimacy of his rule and the blessings of peace while using political violence and suppressing personal freedoms. The seventeen year-old Karl Marx shared this perception of the emperor Augustus: as he wrote in an exit exam from the *gymnasium* at Trier in 1835, “The Augustan Age was no Utopia, being inferior to early times in terms of freedom and morality ... The emperor himself could dissimulate when it suited him, but was a genius at making autocracy seem beneficial.”⁵⁴ Both authors understood that in first century BCE Rome, an autocratic regime could convince the masses that the people were the real rulers of the state.

⁵⁰ Joseph Stalin, “Report to the Eighteenth Congress,” *The Essential Stalin: Major Theoretical Writings, 1905-52*, ed. and trans. H. B. Franklin (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1972), 387.

⁵¹ Rostovtzeff, 1926, 482.

⁵² Rostovtzeff, 1926, 483.

⁵³ Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff, “Augustus,” *University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature* 15 (1922): 134.

⁵⁴ Translated and presented in Barry Baldwin, “Marxist Classical Classics,” *Shattercolors Literary Review*, 2006, online at <http://www.shattercolors.com/nonfiction/baldwin_marxistclassical.htm>.

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In light of these similarities between Marx's early study of the Roman emperor and Rostovtzeff's "Augustus," Rostovtzeff's assertion that his histories were explicitly non-Marxist requires revision. While Rostovtzeff accurately points out that his histories focus on social tensions rather than economic evolution, Marx's own reading of history did not deny that the "rule of the people" was a thin disguise for autocracy. Therefore, Rostovtzeff's histories serve not as a rejection of pure Marxism, but rather as a denunciation of the Soviet reading of the ancient world. Soviet scholarship on classic civilizations glorified isolated incidences of class conflict and popular reform – such as under the Gracchi – while obliterating the Roman emperors from the historical record.⁵⁵ Thus, Rostovtzeff's presentation of Augustus as a masterful autocrat adept at deceiving the people not only conflicted sharply with Soviet renderings of Roman history, but also challenged the facade of Soviet leadership itself.

Rostovtzeff's writings, unlike Soviet histories, asserted that a takeover of the proletariat must inevitably lead to turmoil and chaos and thus evolve – through efforts to maintain order – into state oppression and tyranny. Rostovtzeff learned this lesson through his experience with revolutionary Russia, and it was integral to his formulation of the fall of the Roman Empire, where a Red army of the peasantry took revenge against their bourgeoisie oppressors. This notion of state oppression by the peasantry carried through to his later work on the fall of the Hellenistic kingdoms, where the creative power of the bourgeoisie was stifled by state interference.

Rostovtzeff's histories, therefore, represent a distinct form of Russian classical literature. On the one hand, Rostovtzeff presents ancient history in a way that reflects his critique of Soviet government; the Communist leaders destroyed the bourgeois intelligentsia, a class responsible for creating Russia's cultural identity. On the other hand, his histories reject Soviet historical scholarship on the Roman Empire, emphasizing that the role of the proletariat and peasantry was a fundamentally destructive force. Michael Ivanovitch Rostovtzeff's contribution to the field captures the importance of class-based motivations in shaping the political orientation of classically inspired Russian literature in the pre- and post-revolutionary periods. Rostovtzeff's voice stands out in the chorus of Russian authors in that his nostalgia for a lost Russia is perhaps the most poignant. Twenty years after his flight from his homeland, he continued to hold Russia in his heart, rejecting its transformation with the stalwart conviction that the value of freedom is timeless and eternal.

⁵⁵ Konstantin F. Shteppa, *Russian Historians and the Soviet State* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1962), 33.

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Note from the seniors

To the Historian...

Ryan Lowe and Joshua Silverstein
2010

The senior essay is the capstone of the history major's experience at Yale. After a full year of original research, our senior editors have recently completed their essays. Now we ask them to reflect on their time at Yale: specifically what being a history major has meant to them in college, and what college has meant to them as a history major. Both editors are accomplished writers and scholars, and we will miss their quick wit and skilled editing. In this tradition of good historical writing, let us turn to their stories so that we may better inform our present mindset and future actions.

To the Historian,

History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days.

-Winston Churchill

We are not the first people to try to communicate the essence of history and the purpose of its study. Wiser men and women have come before us and will surely come after us to pursue the same task with greater eloquence and insight. However, as senior history majors in our last few weeks at Yale, we decided the time was ripe to pen our thoughts on what our major means to us, and why we believe it should mean something to you.

History is not and has never been the simple recollection of past events, nor is it a calendar that can be confined to a simple timeline of dates. In the words of Winston Churchill, history is the attempt to capture and *rekindle* “the passion of former days.” History is the concerted attempt, through engagement with documents and artifacts of the past, to narrate a story. Historians are different from chronographers and archivists. They do not simply seek to record a progression of events or organize the contents of an archive. Their mandate extends beyond these scientific activities.

The mandate of the historian is artistic – it is the creation of narrative and drama and conflict from evidence that often lacks these elementally human characteristics. The sensations we feel as Americans when we recall the Civil War, the American Revolution, the assassination of JFK, or the resignation of Richard Nixon have been created and crafted by men and women who have scrutinized the extant evidence of those times to bring these historic moments back to life. Our “memory” of those formative events has been gifted to us not by their participants, but rather by generations of historians. In this sense, history is a truly cultural and interactive discipline, even if it often confines the researcher for weeks on end to the lonely heights of the Stacks. A historian allows a community to better understand itself.

Our generation of historians is in the process of discovering and crafting our past, explaining our present and predicting our future. Without history one can have no identity that extends beyond the individual and the immediate family. The collective immortality of humankind, the continued existence of Hannah Arendt’s “common world,” is in part the responsibility of the historian, for he or she allows our generation to better grasp our origins and prepares future posterity to appreciate our accomplishments. A history ties the individual to a larger “imagined community” that extends far beyond his own sight in time and space. The historian gives his people grounding in something larger than themselves, providing hope for the future, pride and wisdom in the past, and comprehension and humility in the present.

The goal of a Yale history student is to grow progressively more adept at embodying Churchill’s quotation. Our objective, as taught by our professors, is to analyze historical evidence with an open mind, engage with scholars, make an argument, and find the story buried beneath the sediments of time. The practical element of our training concerns the gradual advance from

secondary sources to an immersion in the actual texts of a specific time and place. It is not enough to study the Reformation; one must read the writings of its actors. A true understanding of events can only come from a direct engagement with the words, images, sounds, and stories of that period. This wisdom is inculcated into students in survey lectures, Junior Seminars, and the monumental Senior Essay. This full-year, fifty-page, primary resource driven work is intended to be the culmination of the student's time at Yale, an expression of his or her unique knowledge in a specified field and an introduction to what it truly means to be a historian.

However, in focusing on these empirical elements, the size of our bibliographies, the extensiveness of our footnotes, and our unquestioned knowledge of dates and names, it is easy to forget *the lessons* the Yale history major is truly intended to teach. We have both felt over our years at Yale that the necessary, mundane elements of our discipline have come to overshadow the heart of the craft. How often have you focused on memorizing a list of treaties, a progression of battles, or a series of congressional acts, only to realize around four in the morning that you had no idea why or for what overriding purpose? We have both experienced those moments of doubt and uncertainty, when we echoed the questions that our friends majoring in Economics, Biology or Computer Science perennially pose – what is the point? Why do these dates matter? Why does this event matter? They were right to ask such questions because in focusing on the minutiae, we can lose sight of the larger picture.

We must remember why we chose this major and why we love history: the stories. If there is one lesson we think the history major should learn at Yale, it is that this discipline is an art more than it is a science. It is a craft that requires diligent research and extensive knowledge in the service of elucidating the narrative of the human condition, its triumph, tragedy, variety, villainy, grotesquery, comedy, joy, courage, cowardice, and honor. This is our charge as history majors and individuals who care about our past and our future. All of the detail, the research, and the tedious collation of facts and figures is done in the service of this mission.

Our professors realize the nature of the craft. It is their passion for stories that drove us to the major in the first place. Our professors *want* us to look within and beyond the dates. They want us to create a narrative, to understand what the details mean. Professor David Blight does not ramble on about a sequence of battles. He tells sonorous tales of courage, suffering and tragedy. He invites his audience to experience the Civil War with him as a historical reality that continues to be relevant today. Professor Jonathan Schell does not lecture on the order in which nations acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty; he invites his students to ask *themselves* the terrifying questions wrought by the atomic bomb and appreciate the meaning of a world without man. Professor John Gaddis, the advisor for both of our Senior Essays, has asked us, above all else, to explain why our theses topics are relevant – what are the larger implications of the stories we tell?

As senior history majors, we are mere weeks away from graduation and have recently submitted our Senior Essays. Although we have no immediate intentions of becoming professional historians, we leave Yale committed to the craft. We are more aware of the pasts we have received and of the significance those stories hold in our own lives. We are prepared,

confident, and ready to play a part in creating, and, when necessary, altering the histories that we have been taught not to accept at face value. We revel in the ideals of our craft and hope that all students aspiring to and in the midst of Yale's history major will consider "the passion of former days" when they themselves have lost their own zeal.

We will look back fondly on our years as history majors at Yale and thank the entire team of the Yale Historical Review for making this a truly wonderful senior year.

Sincerely,
Ryan Lowe
Joshua Silverstein

