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Attic Salt, 2020

Loyola Marymount University, The Honors Program


LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY
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ATTIC SALT 2020
VOLUME XI

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Attic Salt

noun (Latin, Sal Atticum)

1 Graceful, piercing, Athenian wit.

2 An interdisciplinary journal which accepts submissions in any genre, format, or medium—essays, original research, creative writing, videos, artwork, etc.—from the entire LMU undergraduate and graduate community —and now from the Honors programs of AJCU institutions nationwide.

Visit www.atticsaltlmu.com for full-length works, past journals, and other information.

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FROM THE EDITORS

Dear readers,

Every year, *Attic Salt* surprises us with the new opportunities and challenges. Two years ago we began accepting submissions from AJCU institutions across the country and this year, we received over 200 submissions, with more from other universities than ever before. This year felt like a major stepping stone towards our mission of creating a journal that showcases work across disciplines, professions, schools, and backgrounds. This year has also been a challenging one. COVID-19 has not only forced all of us to restructure our systems of education and community, but it has fundamentally changed many of our futures. Now more than ever, we feel that it is important to honor and celebrate the accomplishments of everyone that has submitted, worked on, and supported this journal. Even during campus closures and mass quarantine, we want to offer a space to share student voices and present their work. We feel that the interdisciplinary collaboration of *Attic Salt* makes a statement of unity and connection in a time of necessary physical distance.

Each individual piece provides a slightly different perspective—a window into a different discipline. This edition has pieces ranging from photographs of far-flung places to an essay detailing the history of the oyster trade in New York City. We also accepted a documentary—our first video piece in a few years. We hope that the vast range of work in the journal can inspire readers at home to continue to be creative throughout this time, whether that looks like picking up a paintbrush, a pen, or a calculator.

We have been so honored to helm the journal these past three years, but we could not have done it alone. As we transition out of both *Attic Salt* and LMU, we look forward to handing the reins to our Assistant Editors Zach Irving and Julia Horton. We would also like to thank Dr. Alexandra Neel, our faculty mentor, for her support these last four years. We wish her a happy sabbatical for the 2020-2021 school year! We also want to express our gratitude to the University Honors Program's leadership, Dr. Vandana Thadani, Dr. John Dionisio, Dr. Daniel Speak, Dr. Sue Scheibler, Nubia Valenzuela, and Elizabeth Kalbers. An extra special thank you to Dr. Thadani, who in her last year as Program Director has been our biggest advocate. Thank you as well to Madeline Hogan for designing such a beautiful journal to showcase these works. Finally, thank you to all our staff and to everyone who submitted to our journal; your work is what truly gives *Attic Salt* its heart.

We hope you enjoy what the journal has to offer. Thank you for reading.

Stay Salty,

Cameron Bellamoroso and Carrie Callaway
Editors-in-Chief

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BRIAN GILMARTIN

Mirador

photography

Brian Gilmartin is a senior at LMU.

Central Coast

CALLA KELLEY-RENDA

documentary

Calla Kelley-Renda was born in China, but her childhood took root in Long Island, NY. This semester, she will finish her undergraduate degree at Loyola Marymount University with a B.A. in Film and TV Production and a minor in Asian and Pacific Studies. As she enters the entertainment industry, she hopes to use her platform to support Asian-Americans both in front of and behind the camera. Post-graduation, she hopes to go into talent management and producing, but if her Instagram hot chocolate reviews blow up, that would be another story.

Found

The following images are taken from Kelley-Renda's documentary. To view the film, scan the QR code below or visit http://atticsaltlmu.com


7:14:46PM
DEC 10 2002


4:40:20PM
MAY 12 2001

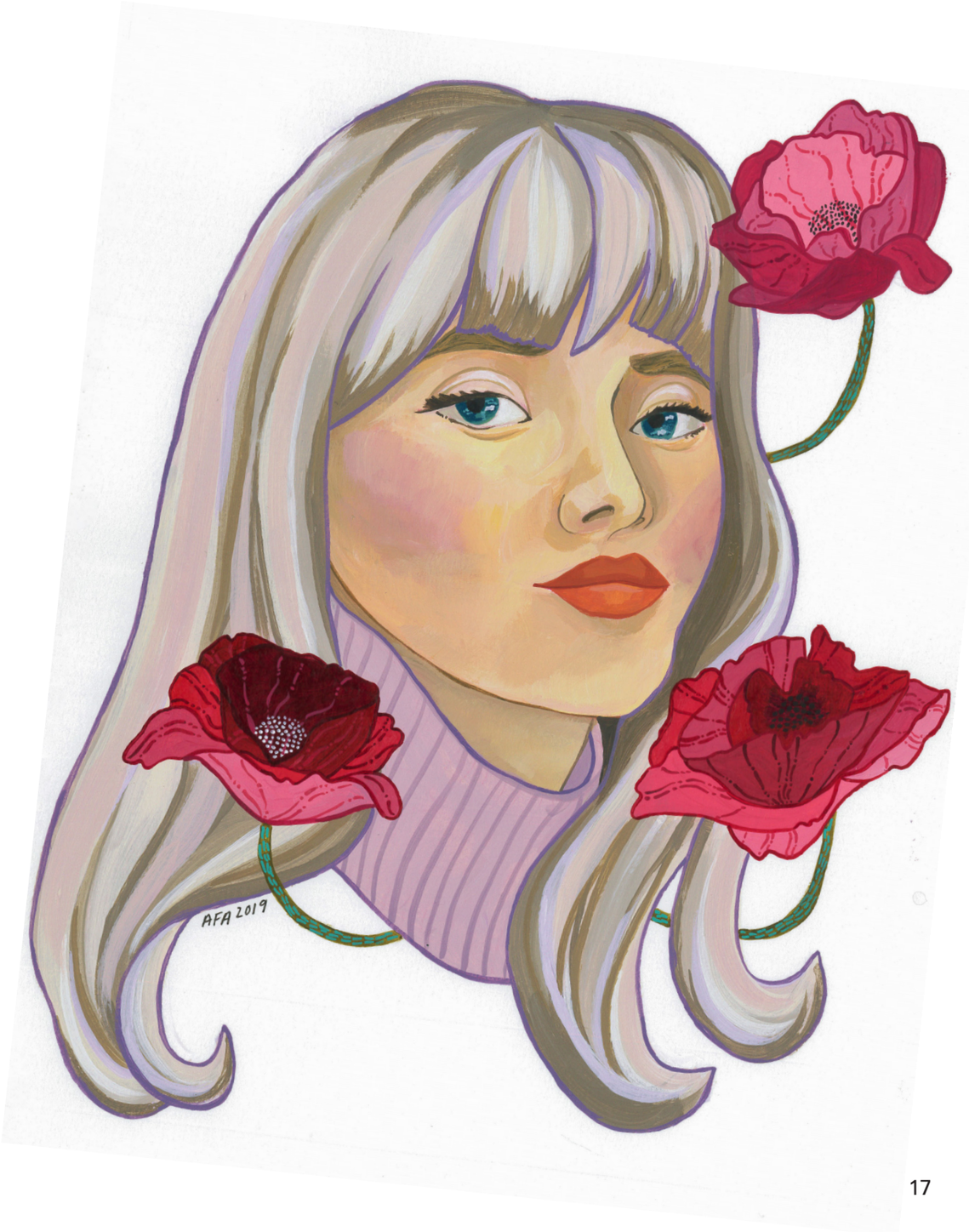

广告位招租

AUDREY FREDERICK AKOTS

acrylic painting

Audrey Akots is a third-year student at Seattle University. She is an International Studies major and Economics minor, but visual art, especially painting, has been her passion since she was a toddler. She is most familiar with acrylic and watercolor work but is also eager to learn more about gouache. She enjoys painting people and faces in particular. Audrey is passionate about using art to communicate with people across many different backgrounds; she thinks it is beautiful how a single image can speak to many people in many different ways, and that in this way art holds real potential for meaningful communication across boundaries. Her work Poppies is loosely based on a reference image of model Anika Braun, on Instagram as @anika_braun__. Braun is a multimedia artist originally from Portland, Oregon.

Poppies



LINDSAY McCONNELL

The Road Home

photograph

Lindsay McConnell is a junior majoring in English and History from Mesa, Arizona. When she's not taking pictures of the desert, she enjoys petting her cats and reading a good book.

MATTHEW WILLIAMS

essay

Matthew Williams is a student at Loyola Marymount University studying English with a minor in Journalism. His academic interests include gay and bisexual men's literature, queer Italian literature, and queer Brazilian literature. Furthermore, he is deeply interested in language and has studied Italian, Portuguese, Latin, French, Romanian, and Spanish. Matthew also serves as the president of Sigma Tau Delta as well as a manager of LMU's Intercultural Suite, where he works with LMU's LGBTQ, international, and ethnic populations on campus.

Saint Sebastian at the Bacchanalia: Two Figurations of Homoerotic Desire in the Gay and Bisexual Men's Literary Tradition

In André Aciman's 2007 novel *Call Me by Your Name*, the following scene occurs after the protagonist Elio masturbates into a peach:

> I lunged out to grab the fruit from his hand, but with his other hand he caught hold of my wrist and squeezed it hard, as they do in movies, when one man forces another to let go of a knife.
> "You're hurting me."
> "Then let go."
> I watched him put the peach in his mouth and slowly begin to eat it, staring at me so intensely that I thought even lovemaking didn't go so far. (Aciman 149)

A graphic mixture of sex and violence, the physical interaction between Elio and his lover Oliver is not only compared to a fight between two men, but also staged as a sex scene as Oliver explicitly ingests Elio's semen through the vehicle of the peach. However, the 2017 film adaption of the novel does not depict this consumption of semen and peach, stopping short of displaying this transgressive sex act. The scene is censored, erased from the visual medium and the sight of a mainstream audience. In short, this translation from text to film points to the issue of censorship in the discussions and representations of gay and bisexual men's literature. Despite the progress allowing for discourse to emerge in the gay and bisexual men's literary tradition—outlined by Gregory Woods in his book *A History of Gay Literature: The Male Tradition*—many of the more "unsavory" qualities of the tradition—such as the violence in this scene from Aciman's novel—remain under-examined. However, throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, a violence rooted in Dionysian fantasy[1] manifests throughout gay and bisexual men's literature. This violence is often focalized through the iconography of the Saint Sebastian figure[2], which is rarely discussed in context to Dionysian symbolism, despite the two literary tropes representing two major schools of writing homoerotic desire. The dichotomy between these two figures is highly representative of the gay male experience in literature—while both figures appear within traditions that are both violent and highly aesthetic, the figure of Dionysus and his cult represents an active, unbridled expression of desire while the icon of Saint Sebastian symbolizes one which is passive and languid. Through the examination of violence shaped by these figures, one can witness the subversive nature of the gay male literary tradition and what has been censored from mainstream discussions and reproductions.

While allusions to Greek and Roman mythology appear throughout gay literature both before and after Oscar Wilde's trial for acts of gross

1. Elements of this tradition include intense expressions of sexuality, orgiastic violence, and consumption and destruction of flesh.

2. In particular, the image of a physically attractive male body passively submitting to violence, especially in the form of arrows or other sharp objects penetrating the skin.

indecency in 1895—a pivotal turning point for gay and bisexual men's literature along with the publication of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* — Dionysian violence bursts into the tradition with the 1912 publication of Thomas Mann's novella *Death in Venice*. Throughout the story, the protagonist Gustav Aschenbach cannot speak to the object of his desire —a young boy named Tadzio—and this silent longing eventually erupts into an incredibly violent and licentious dream:

> The dream began with anxiety, anxiety and pleasure and a terrible curiosity about what would ensue…the noise, the howling, multiplied by the echoing of the mountainside, grew, took control, escalated into overpowering madness….anger seized him, delusion, numbing lust; and his soul desired to join in the dance of the [foreign] god… Foam on their lips, they raged, stimulated one another with lascivious gestures and groping hands, laughing and moaning; they poked the goads into one another's flesh and licked the blood from their limbs…they were his own self as they flung themselves upon the animals, tearing and killing, swallowing scraps of flesh that were still smoking, while an unbridled coupling began on the trampled, mossy ground, as an offering to the god. And his soul tasted the lewdness and frenzy of extinction. (Mann 55-56)

Gary Astrachan writes in his article "Dionysos in Thomas Mann's Novella, '*Death in Venice*,'" that Aschenbach's dream depicts "the savage ritual of the stranger god, Dionysos" (Astrachan 61). Though Aschenbach is initially nervous about the impending outpouring of ecstasy associated with Dionysian ritual, he is completely consumed by "anger, delusion, [and a] numbing lust" by the time his dream concludes. He cannot resist the seductive call of "overpowering madness" and participates in the "lascivious gestures" performed by those ensnared within the bacchanalian fantasy. Additionally, he demonstrates an incredible interest in the violence of the situation, "tearing and killing, swallowing scraps of flesh" all while embracing the morbidly described "frenzy of extinction." Here, the issue of repressed sexuality emerges, and the Dionysian appears as a literary tool for liberating that sexuality. Though the Bacchants in Euripides' play *The Bacchae* are primarily female, the historical cult of Bacchus was claimed by Livy in his *History of Rome* to also consist of men who were initiated into the group by having sex with other men. Though the validity of Livy's account is called into question by several scholars, it still serves to demonstrate how the usage of the Dionysia invokes a classical conduit for homosexuality (Livius 39.13)

Here, one must also note the historical context out of which this dream within Mann's novel is emerging. While Michel Foucault notes in his book *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction* that a society existed within the 19th century "of blatant and fragmented perversion" (Foucault 47) in which sex was a topic frequently discussed, the previous century had also witnessed a rise in the "policing of sex: that is, not the rigor of a taboo, but the necessity of regulating sex through useful and public discourses" (Foucault 25). Because homosexuality was considered an abnormality, the discourse surrounding it was limited,

framed primarily in negative terms which made authors such as Aschenbach hesitant to use explicit terminology to define homosexuality within their novels. Thus, the outburst of Dionysian violence within Mann's novel and following publications by other authors within the gay and bisexual men's literary canon can be interpreted as both a result of and a coded response to the discourse on sexuality in the 18th and 19th centuries. While the proliferation of sexual discourse allows for such works to be written, their explicit nature suggests a frustration with the regulations placed upon discussing homosexual identity—a theme which is explored in works throughout the tradition.

However, a brief gap occurs in the tradition between Mann's novel and the next noteworthy publication, Gore Vidal's 1948 novel *The City and the Pillar*.[3] Unlike Mann's Aschenbach, Vidal's protagonist, Jim, is openly homosexual and acts upon his desires to have sex with men. While the story begins with Jim discovering his homosexuality in a pastoral sex scene with his best friend Bob, the two have a far more violent experience of intercourse towards the end of the novel:

> Suddenly, overwhelmed equally by rage and desire, Jim threw himself at Bob…Grunting and grasping, they twisted and turned, struck out with arms, legs, but Bob was no match for Jim and, at the end, he lay facedown on the bed, arm bent behind him, sweating and groaning. Jim looked down at the helpless body, wanting to do murder. Deliberately he twisted the arm he held. Bob cried out. Jim was excited at the other's pain…Drink made concentration difficult. He looked at the heaving body beneath him, the broad back, ripped shorts, long muscled legs. One final humiliation: with his free hand, Jim pulled down the shorts, revealing white, hard, hairless buttocks. "Jesus," Bob whispered. "Don't. Don't." (Vidal 203)

Driven by madness, desire, and drunkenness, Jim brutally rapes Bob. As Friedrich Ulfers writes in his introduction to *The Dionysian Vision of the World*, Jim's "intoxication is 'ecstasy' taking place under the aegis of Dionysus as *ho lysios* —the 'liberator'— who undoes boundaries" (Ulfers 6). Jim delights in the physical pain he causes Bob, with whom he desperately longs to reunite throughout the novel. This sudden flip in Jim's desire from wishing to return to the idyllic scene of intercourse to a craving for violent release suggests Jim has been denying himself sexual expression, which is not surprising considering the lack of interest Jim demonstrates in the multitude of short-lived relationships he develops throughout the novel. Though this passage does not celebrate rape, it encapsulates the extremes of sexual violence within both the Dionysian and St. Sebastian traditions, pointing to how the gay male literary tradition subverts acceptable norms of sexual discourse in its attempt to bring attention to the repression of homoerotic desire.

In addition to recalling the violence of the Bacchae, Jim's rape of Bob also alludes to the sensuality that occurs within the orgiastic ritual. His aesthetic appreciation of Bob's physicality—his "heaving body, broad back, long-muscled legs" (Vidal 203)—speaks to the imagery of the

3. While some literature was published during this intervening period—such as André Gide's 1926 novel *The Counterfeiters* and Foreman Brown's 1933 novel *Better Angel* — these works do not rely heavily upon the imagery of Dionysus and Saint Sebastian.

Dionysian rites. Yet, this sensuality occurs within the context of anal rape. Considering this phenomenon in regard to the post-war tragic fiction in which *The City of the Pillar* is situated, Woods writes, "Anal rape is a conclusive exertion of power, physical and mental; but it must also be symbolic of the fragility of masculinity: for every man has an anus. It is the seat of his manly anxieties" (Woods 275). Though Bob does not desire to be raped, the scene symbolizes the internalized homophobia that prevents him from acting upon his own homosexual desires to be penetrated by another man. Unlike the first time he and Jim had sex, Bob is unwilling to play the passive role because he has been conditioned to believe that "guys aren't supposed to do that with each other. It's not natural" (Vidal 30). While Jim has embraced his sexuality and the various sexual acts that are attached to it, Bob remains repressed by his fear that anal penetration will revoke his claim to masculinity. In part, this fear of Bob's also appears to emerge out of an unwillingness to subscribe to the more permanent identity of "homosexual" which had emerged in the 19th century—while "the sodomite [of previous centuries] had been a temporary aberration[,] the homosexual was now a species" (Foucault 43).

Published shortly after *The City and The Pillar* in 1949, Yukio Mishima's novel *Confessions of a Mask* also centers around a protagonist—Kochan—who is explicitly homosexual like Jim but also represses his desire like Bob. However, while Kochan never acts upon his homoerotic feelings, his fantasies are incredibly Dionysian in their devotion to violent imagery. One particularly vivid scene occurs after a doctor tells Kochan his anemia might be the result of masturbation:

> There, in my murder theater, young Roman gladiators offered up their lives for my amusement; and all the deaths that took place there not only had to overflow with blood but also had to be performed with all due ceremony…I was one of those savage marauders who, not knowing how to express their love, mistakenly kills the persons they love. I would kiss the lips of those who had fallen to the ground and were still moving spasmodically…I thrust the fork upright into the heart [of a boy prepared for a meal]. A fountain of blood struck me full in the face. Holding the knife in my right hand, I began carving the flesh of the breast, gently, thinly at first… (Mishima 92-97)

In this passage, Kochan moves from envisioning a slaughter fest to a cannibalistic feast. This response to repression—Kochan being shamed for embracing a sexual practice considered unhealthy by the medical discourse within the novel—is incredibly Dionysian in its absolute rejection of self-control. Kochan finds a sexual pleasure in the deaths that "overflow with blood," calling himself "savage" and murderous.

Furthermore, this passage from *Confessions of a Mask* invokes the consumption of flesh which also occurs within the dream sequence in Mann's *Death in Venice*, with Mishima's text venturing even further to the extreme of cannibalism. This portion of Kochan's fantasy liberally employs erotic imagery—the "thrust[ing of] the fork" and "fountain of blood" standing in for penile penetration and ejaculation respectively. Though this scene certainly falls within the debauchery of the Dionysian rights, *Homos* author Leo Bersani would also argue that the scene does not necessarily represent "a question of lifting the barriers to seething repressed drives, but of consciously, deliberately playing on the surfaces of our bodies with forms or intensities of pleasure not covered, so to speak, by the disciplinary classifications that have until now taught us what sex is" (Bersani 81). That is, Kochan's fantasy represents a challenge to the repression of acting upon homosexual desire rather than the suppression of a homosexual identity itself. Though the idea of the homosexual had been cemented into the discourse by the codification of sexuality in the 19th century, this identification presented the homosexual as a one-dimensional figure rather than acknowledging the multi-faceted sexual experiences of gay and bisexual men, leaving out of its categorization individuals like Kochan with non-traditional expressions of desire.

However, though Kochan's Dionysian imagination leads him to construct scenes of incredible violence and deviant sexuality, it also directs him to latch onto the imagery of Saint Sebastian as a main object of his sexual devotion. The figure of Saint Sebastian appears both in Mann's *Death in Venice* as the "intellectual and youthful masculinity that grits its teeth in proud modesty and stands by calmly while its body is pierced by swords and spears" (Mann 8) and in Vidal's *The City in the Pillar* as the smooth-skinned, deified, and later violated Bob. Yet, Mishima's novel contains the first truly vivid Saint Sebastian iconography. Kochan's first description of Saint Sebastian—a reproduction of Guido Reni's 1615 painting *Saint Sebastian*[4] —occurs shortly before he first discovers masturbation:

> A remarkably handsome youth was bound naked to the trunk of the tree…the only covering for the youth's nakedness was a coarse white cloth knotted loosely about his loins…It is not pain that hovers about his straining chest, his tense abdomen, his slightly contorted hips, but some flicker of melancholy pleasure like music. Were it not for the arrows with their shafts deeply sunk into his left armpit and right side, he would seem more a Roman athlete resting from fatigue, leaning against a dusky tree in a garden. (Mishima 38-39)

This image of Saint Sebastian—a young and attractive man bound to a tree and sensually pierced by arrows—is reconstructed throughout Mishima's text and the gay male tradition. Not only does this image suggest that suffering from physical harm is to be borne as if one is simply "resting from fatigue," but it also points to an association of violence and pain with pleasure, which continues to reinforce the Dionysian sentiment of unimpeded sexual debauchery expressed throughout the text. As Kochan explains, the figure of Saint Sebastian brings "with it a blinding intoxication" (Mishima 40) which will lead him to frame his desires in the violent narrative of the figure.

The manifestation of the Dionysia persists into John Rechy's 1963 novel *City of Night*. Though he only gradually comes to accept his homosexuality

4. Reni produced a few different versions of St. Sebastian paintings, but this version features St. Sebastian with two arrows piercing his flesh—one in his left armpit, the other into the right side of his ribcage—his hands bound above his head to a tree, and a low-slung white piece of fabric wrapped around his waist.

as the novel progresses, Rechy's protagonist repeatedly has sex with men in his role as a prostitute. Throughout his work, Rechy's protagonist participates in several scenes of Bacchanalian revelry; however, one of his more violent interaction occurs with a masochistic client:

> He had played with all my hungry needs (magnified by the hint of the withdrawing of attention), had twisted them in order to use them for his purposes, by unfettering the submerged cravings, carried to that inevitable extreme…that at this moment I could prove irrevocably to the hatefully initiating world that I could join its rot, its cruelty—I saw my foot rise over him, then grind violently down as if of its own kinetic volition into that now pleading, most vulnerable part of that man's body… (Rechy 323-324)

Much like how Ascenbach felt compelled to join the howling that "escalated into overpowering madness," (Mann 55) Rechy's protagonist succumbs to chaotic violence because of the "unfettering" of his "submerged cravings." Hiding his true emotions behind masks throughout the novel, Rechy's protagonist briefly reveals those desires, responding with malevolence in response to the cruelty which the world has enacted upon him. In this moment, the curtain of silence surrounding homosexual desire is violently drawn aside, demonstrating an unwillingness to conform to the 19th-century norms of sexual discourse which relegated sex to the realm of the clinical.

Following Rechy's *City of Night*, several publications occur which continue the tradition's foray into the absolute extremes of the violence and eroticism of the Dionysian rites. Two novels published in 1978 are noteworthy for their overall content: Larry Kramer's novel *Faggots* and Andrew Holleran's *Dancer from the Dance*. While *Faggots* is far more explicit, both these novels center around a cast of homosexual characters searching for love in a debauched and hypersexualized landscape. Not only do these novels—as wholes—represent an extended celebration of the Dionysia, but they contain several characters who take on the role of Saint Sebastian; thus, they continue to point to a coexistence of these two literary tropes within the gay and bisexual men's tradition.

Following after Kramer and Holleran, the 1989 novel *Closer* by Dennis Cooper further expands upon the uptake in violence that occurs within the tradition in the time period of his publication. One of the most visceral scenes in the book occurs when the novel's protagonist, George, barely escapes being murdered by a man named Tom:

> He'd begun to hallucinate slightly…He heard a clinking noise, and felt a tiny sharp pain in his ass. "It's just some Novocaine," Tom muttered, "so I can take you apart, sans your pointless emotions." "That's considerate," George thought. Just then his ass grew so numb he felt sliced in half…George was about to cry. He was right on the edge…When Tom indicated the floor, George went flat. He heard a series of sounds. The only thing they remotely resembled was somebody chopping a tree down…He realized he was being chopped down. He sort of wished he could know how it felt, but Tom was right. He'd be crying his eyes out and miss the good parts. It was enough to see his blood covering the floor like a magic rug. (Cooper 99)

Intoxicated by different substances throughout the novel, George's hallucinations in this scene are indicative of his Dionysian lifestyle, a common trait shared by many characters within Cooper's novel. He allows himself to be further numbed to his emotions and pain, enabling him to further throw himself into the debauchery of the sexual violence in which he is about to participate. Much like Pentheus—a character gruesomely murdered for falsely presenting himself as female and infiltrating a Dionysian celebration (Euripides 1124-1137)—George is quite literally savagely torn to pieces by Tom. While Tom is standing in for the incensed Bacchants in this scene, George represents the Saint Sebastian figure, a passive recipient of the violence being inflicted upon him. While the conflation of these two traditions represents the dichotomy between top and bottom—that is, penetrator and penetrated—it also points to an interesting indictment of the punishment of Pentheus. Unlike Pentheus, George escapes from his torture alive, suggesting a shift in the acceptance of the feminized male figure constantly presenting a challenge to gender stereotypes.

This visualization of sexual deviancy reoccurs throughout *Closer*, particularly through Cooper's use of the Saint Sebastian figure within the Dionysian fantasies he constructs in his text. In a moment devoid of all inhibition, an individual referred to as "the punk" asks one of the protagonists of Cooper's novel, John, to harm him physically:

> When John withdrew he saw some holes in the shape of an Xmas tree ornament. "That's it," he said. "I've got an idea. Get ready." The punk balled his fists. John bobbed his way down the back leaving bites in a regular pattern, four across, every few inches. Reaching the ass-slope he paused, massaged his sore jaw. The wounds were really a crass pink except the ones farther up, which had turned kind of violet. A few even leaked blood in long, thin strands that reminded him vaguely of tinsel. (Cooper 11)

Though John performs an act of physical violence upon the punk, the scene reads as erotic in its devotion to causing pain to a willing recipient, recalling the languidness with which the St. Sebastian figure from *Confessions of a Mask* accepts an approaching death. Furthermore, this scene subverts the perception of violence as ugly, while pointing to "the way in which the desire for an observable, physical beauty might become so analytically obsessive as to require the literal reduction of a boy to his constituent parts" (Woods 335). Though the wounds "leaked blood," they do little to disturb John's composition, dulling the brutality of the scene to allow for a more sensual perception of violence containing a modicum of beauty rather than simply being defined by its grotesqueness. The punk becomes an aesthetic piece to be appreciated rather than a human body suffering from violence, which meshes well with the holiday context of Christmas and its focus on ornamentation. Sexuality is impressed onto the body of the punk much like it is imposed onto the body of Saint Sebastian in the imagery which depicts his martyrdom. They are the passive recipients of an aesthetic tradition

which invokes homoerotic desire through the penetration and bleeding of the male body.

While the level of violence present within *Closer* is perhaps the most explicit example of violence within the gay male literary tradition, Aciman's *Call Me by Your Name* would continue to foster the inclusion of a Dionysian worldview within gay and bisexual's men literature. After Elio, the protagonist, and Oliver, his love interest, have sex, Elio masturbates with a peach as he waits for Oliver to return home:

> I got up and reached for one of the peaches, opened it halfway with my thumbs, pushed the pit out on my desk, and gently brought the fuzzy, blush-colored peach to my groin, and then began to press into it till the parted fruit slid down my cock…the peach was soft and firm, and when I finally succeeded in tearing it apart with my cock, I saw that its reddened core reminded me not just of an anus but of a vagina…I scanned my mind for images of Ovid…with one more stroke, I could come, which I finally did, carefully aiming the spurt into the reddened core of the open peach as if in a ritual of insemination…the bruised and damaged peach, like a rape victim, lay on its side on my desk…I had probably looked no different on his bed last night after he'd come inside me the first time. (Aciman 146-147)

In his "rape" of the peach, Elio is incredibly methodical, describing each step of the process as he masturbates with the fruit. His desire is uninhibited, bringing a blush to the skin of the anthropomorphized peach. By associating food with an object of sexual desire, Elio is working within the Dionysian tradition, his sexual molestation of an object for consumption inversely reflecting the cannibalistic performances tied to the world of the Dionysia. He also alludes to the Ovidian figure of the hermaphrodite, which, as Sarah Carter writes in her book *Ovidian Myth and Sexual Deviance in Early Modern English Literature*, "disrupts the binary opposition of male/female and masculine/feminine, potentially enabling multifarious interpretation and engagement with ideals of gendered behavior" (Carter 115) and thus falls into the Dionysian desire for "a troubled unity, a unity that does not synthesize without remainder" (Ulfers 7). After finishing his act of sexual violence, Elio leaves the peach lying used in an allusion to his own state of sexual exhaustion after having sex with Oliver.

Despite Elio playing the role of penetrated partner during intercourse, Oliver becomes the Saint Sebastian figure throughout the course of the novel. After falling from his bike, Oliver is left with a "huge scrape and bruise on his left hip [which Elio] would have touched, caressed, [and] worshipped" (Aciman 7). Elio, like Kochan from *Confessions of a Mask* and John from *Closer*, fantasizes about the brutalized flesh of Oliver, the object of his longing. Though the gash upon Oliver's hip is appalling, it does not diminish the elegance of his corporeal body and almost seems to increase that attractiveness. Violence to the physical body is displayed within an aesthetic context, pointing to earlier works in the tradition such a Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and Mishima's *Confessions of a Mask* where this sexualization of corporeal trauma serves as an outward manifestation of repressed sexuality.

Though this collection of literature by no means encapsulates the entirety of the 20th and 21st century gay male tradition, it provides an insightful look into how violence and desire have manifested through Dionysian fantasy and the iconography of Saint Sebastian. From the first challenges to the repression of homosexual individuals by Wilde and Mann to the more recent freedom found in Aciman, the tradition has been shaped by the desire of its authors to be subversive and challenge the oppressive discourse surrounding gay and bisexual male identities. However, much work remains in bringing exposure to this tradition, particularly to the more traditionally censored material. Though a conversation about homoerotic desire certainly exists within academia, the areas "if not of utter silence, [then] of tact and discretion" (Foucault 18) must also be razed from existence. As of the writing of this paper, the academic discourse surrounding the gritty bits of homosexuality—the sex, violence, and perversion—is severely lacking in quantity and diversity. Furthermore, the distillation of this tradition into other media must be done free of censorship, and it cannot fall into the trap of being flattened into narratives—such as the omnipresent "coming out" tale—that are purely constructed within a dominating heteronormative framework. If the gay male literary tradition is to flourish, then it must be told with all its complexities remaining fully constructed and in relation to the myriad of texts which constitute it. Academic discourse cannot blush at the opportunity to explore such a fascinating canon of literature.

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SAM YAZIJI

poem

Sam Yaziji is a current freshman English major at Loyola Marymount University. He is a writer, musician, composer, and co-editor of LA Miscellany, an LMU English Department journal. As the son of immigrants from Cuba and Syria, a great deal of his poetry examines the dissonant, yet intertwined connections between their respective cultures. His first album of original music, Impossible Exchange, was released in 2019, and a second album is forthcoming.

Final Images

(before the car bomb)

Home is where all of this wouldn't happen.
— Ghassan Kanafani *(Returning to Haifa)*

I feel Beirut's bite—

the atmosphere sharpens
its amber edge on the skin
separating my shoulder blades.

My shoes patter on the sidewalk coated in pigeon shit and candy wrappers,

apricot helixes nestling sweet
residue between wax-paper palms.

Lamees walks with me, I wish she stayed home with her mother. It's far too humid to run errands today—

the milk, probably spoiled, sloshes
in circles, dancing concentric whirl
like the rabid horse from Akka my father

shot, splintered cornea fragments arranged
across that chestnut valley my fingers loved
to graze. We could have never assumed
that the bullets would turn on us that summer,
when smoke flurried across dawn's starch charcoal
fibers, and Occupation's cyst began to balloon.

We find the street at last, the car's boxy frame sits, perched atop the curb. I briefly look about—

window frame nooks, speckled with stray
paint droppings, loom over planks threaded
like crude abaci, numerology flung awry

by air-raid sirens and tissue torn into pulpy
mash Mid-day prayers skitter along the street,
burrowing into gullies between bricks.

Car doors groan and slam. We sit for a moment, veiled from July's pallid, wafting ebb. I put the key into the ignition

(and see Lamees tracing shapes on the window,
her finger circumscribing the world's tiny rifts
and remote crinkles, sewn together into a tapestry
of what once might have been)

and turn—

my body, for a moment

rattles

then *cracks*

JOYCE FEHLAU

multimedia poetry

Joyce Fehlau graduated in December 2019 with a degree in Theological Studies. Recently Joyce has been learning to play the guitar, downsizing her life-belongings, and finding joy in making comics. In May, Joyce is moving back to Berlin where she spent a year in undergrad, fell in love with the city, and found an incredible community that is home.

waters. mirrors. skins.

I. Liquids

The temperature of the ocean water at Manhattan Beach
usually hovers around 18.5° C in any given October.

It must have been around five-thirty pm, or maybe it was closer
to six when we finally made it to the beach. Almost sunset,
but enough time to still wade into the waves and feel the cold water moving our
bodies and our bodies moving in the water.
Each our own. I take photos of your limbs beneath the water, but it is
shallow here and the waves are bold, tossing over you.
When you submerge under the water, a rush of fear runs through me, but as you raise, you wrap your arms around my waist & I feel a different rush: one of comfort. I don't know how you open your eyes
under water. Seasalt.
        until it grows too cold and we tug off
our wet suits and I knew to bring enough sweaters to keep us warm: for, we would be at the beach after the sun glow was orange and
then blue.
I slip my phone in your breast pocket so we can hear the music close to our faces while we kiss.
You shiver. I too am shaking.
I watch the moonlight
on the water as you hold me and feel the tides move in and out and I think about
how I played in these waters on this beach as a child.
How very intimate it is to bring you here.

A whole history of my youth I am trying to lay in your arms as I am no longer a child and our acts of tenderness are not so
naïve.
Growing up I spent almost every Thanksgiving coming to Manhattan Beach. My Aunt Shellie lived there on John Street, in the house to which we later return. But Shellie isn't there. She died two and a half years ago.
Breast Cancer. Stage four.
I wish you could know her. I wish she could know you.
I show you a photo by my lamp.
One year, maybe I was five or six, we took family
photos by the Manhattan Beach pier. My mom's hair was in ringlets after chemo.
My Aunt Susan too had curls growing out after treatment, but short. Dillon has a
bruise on his forehead because he ran into a coffee table.
The photo I hand you is all the women in my family lined up in the sand with their elbows propping up their torsos. Except for me – I am crouched beside my mom on the left end, my timid eyes full of love.
[right to left: Jacqueline, Jessica, Shellie, Susan, Courtney, Robin (my mom), and me.]
I love this photo.
We walk home to my cousin Jacqueline's old room in the basement where I live now,
with blue walls.
I sit on the wooden floor in sandy skin and minimal clothing, trying to type up a rather
mundane response for a class I am not very invested in, while you sort
through the sprawl of camping gear and clothing and food and sandy blankets we have left unattended from our week.
A beautiful moment where
I am doing my thing and you yours in this space we are in together. I watch you,
though I should be writing, as you move around my room and I feel quite
tender.
You are striking. You are wearing a pale blue turtleneck. Your eyes are so soft, so sincere. You won't kiss me
until I have finished. I ask you to make us some food.
You play Yo La Tango on my speakers.
I finish writing something passing. Submit it.
I ask you to sit with me on the floor and you bring plates of our leftover Indian food and yogurt from the night before. It melts in my mouth.
It is quite special to be tasting the same food as you.
I cry because I am exhausted. I cry
because you are with me. I cry because time is short and our love is felt and tender.
Later we shower and tangle our bodies close in my sheets.
Though I am not intending to fall into that cliché writing of love and sex and bodies, where there is a loss of understanding of where one body begins and the other ends; only, it is simple
that I love you. It's a Thursday night and we woke up early before the sun was up
and we fall asleep still tingling with sea water on our skin.

Today you told me that my love within you feels like seafoam, the white water after a wave crashes and the air is caught sitting just on the water. You didn't even know that I was writing this poem below this photo of these bubbles of air all around your body caught there.

II. Time-Lapses

"What is time made of ?" Geryon asks.

You wrote me once that I reminded you somehow, inexplicably, of Geryon;
maybe that is because *Autobiography of Red* came up that first day you came to my
house by Schlactensee and we laid in the sun and you were reading something by Anne Carson, or maybe Carson came up because you were reading something about Greek myths and philosophy.
I am not sure how I remind you of Geryon, but I write you in return that
I think that is one of the kindest things anyone has ever said to me.
Though Geryon is often naïve (is that word I want to describe him?)
and clumsy in his relationships – most of all with himself – I don't mind this,
I think Geryon is beautiful and I know
that for you there is something most tender there:
of this little red winged monster
a photographer writing his autobiography
early in the pangs of love and shame and rashness
in this desert-ous volcanic landscape, all red.

I blush even still, for I know
that for you there is something most tender there:

1. in telling me that I remind you of Geryon, and
2. in your history long before we met, but us having both read *Autobiography of Red* all the same.

Now I am asking you: "*What is time made of?*"
You briefly open your eyes as you turn over in your sheets, then close them again. The nine am light is in your room and I smile 5,636.76 miles away in my own bed, that never gets any sunlight, because it is in the basement, but it would be dark now anyway, because it has just become midnight here.
I have lost all track of what time feels like in my body alone.
That childhood feeling of time being singular, self-evident: An absolute and intimate presence known and lived.
This feeling is long gone. I have been accounting for what distance does to time for a long time now.
These days, it is as if time is alive and running up and down my veins.
I dream of seeing people I haven't seen in a while at a house I know but doesn't look familiar. I wake to find you in your kitchen and I mumble over my dreams before I fall again into sleep.
I crawl into bed and your face is caught in red light and you have hardly moved all night, but you told me at eight pm or so (my time) about a dream where you were in the states and were trying to find a way to catch a bus to LA, to find me.
It feels like I have slept a whole night and I am confused when I consider when I should wake up, to realize I haven't yet fallen asleep: that was you.
A few days ago you said "yesterday" as I walked to my bus stop.
We talked as you woke up and got ready for uni, and afterwards I fell into sleep until you came home and called me back and sat with me a while as I slept a little longer until I woke up and walked to the bus stop where you confused time: it was not your yesterday, but mine.
Time lapses.

Time-lapse photography is a technique of taking a sequence of frames at a constant interval in order to record changes that take place over time.
I lay out photos I have taken of you and wonder if they give witness to change over time and space. Do they say something about falling in love with you?
Time has lapsed, has been made different, has become composite.
The closer I am to the edges of sleep, time hyperbolizes, time fractals, time and space shock me and I melt.
You and I have generated our own economies of space and time where we can fall asleep together, smoke cigarettes together, watch Star Trek together (because I told you how much of my childhood was informed by Spock), find pleasure and tenderness together. We trade words in our mouths and wear each other's clothes and know too what each of our beds feel like.
You call me and I see your face and I feel my breathing shift: I am falling.
This is what time feels like: moments of ecstasy.
I am waiting for when our experiences of time is closer to something we both share: where sleep is in the same bed, and the numbers on the clock are the same for you as they are for me, and I will let go of these mad gaps (gasps?) of time – or so it feels like time, though it is getting harder to know what time is. For now, I will bask in this twisted-up dream and sit in the sun before my day begins, knowing all the while that you are rolling croissants some six thousand miles away.

The other day, I told you that I longed to fall into your eyes. These days we can only catch each other's eyes in computer screens. Eyes shifted a few inches below the camera to stare at you. My image too reflected back to me in the top left corner. Screens, mirrors: cyborg-lovers. I find this tenderness we share sublime. For even in time-lapsed love recorded in Facetime hours, I feel ecstasy run through me each time I see your face.

III. Endnotes

These are fragments of thoughts from October 2019:
photos from the first week of October when you visited me in LA & from just the other night after hanging up on the phone after a day (for me) of our talking: to you waking up and running off to uni and me quite deep into my night and smoking a last cigarette before bed. One set I take of you as we are together, the other set I take of myself as we have just parted and the lingering of something of time and our orbiting beings is still caught in my face looking back at me on my screen once our Facetime call has ended."

i. As I read *Autobiography of Red* aloud to you one autumn night, and our love was moving back and forth between us, I was caught by Carson's words of the pressures in a volcano and Geryon's curious redness. I felt as if like under pressure red magma bubbles inside a volcano, we too were mysteriously bubbling.

Read: Carson, Ann. "XXXII. Kiss." *Autobiography of Red: A Novel in Verse*. Toronto: Vintage Canada, 1999, pp. 105-107.

ii. That first afternoon after we had cam-sex, as I lay in my bed and you lay in yours, we talked about memories of summer, of laying by the river under the stars or every Tuesday the I would visit you at the bakery you worked at then, and how time has moved for us from then to now and to what we dream of the future. I pulled out Muñoz's *Cruising Utopia* off my shelf and as you closed your eyes, for it was late there, I read to you of his "queerness as horizon" and "ecstatic time", trying to find some language for the kind of ecstasy I felt in our love, in that moment, but in the motion of time itself. Words that still stay with me:

"We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality … Ecstatic time is signaled at the moment one feels ecstasy, announced perhaps in a scream or grunt of pleasure, and more importantly during moments of contemplation when one looks back at a scene from one's past, present or future."

Read: Muñoz, José Esteban. "Introduction: Feeling Utopia," and "Queerness as Horizon: Utopian Hermeneutics in the Face of Gay Pragmatism." *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, NYU Press, 2009, pp. 1, 32.

ANASTASIA GLUSHNEVA

photograph

Anastasia Glushneva is an international student from a small town in Siberia, Russia. She is a junior Communications and Journalism double major. Her experience at LMU has been closely tied with the international community. She currently works as a student programmer at the Intercultural Suite and as a Digital Assistant Editor at The Loyolan.

Laundry Day in Portofino

SUSANNE CARPENTER

Recess

pencil drawings

Susanne Carpenter is a senior Biology major, with minors in Studio Art and Biochemistry. She will be moving to San Francisco, CA this summer to attend University of the Pacific Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry. Susanne enjoys personal training at the gym, mastering DIY projects, petting strangers' dogs, and picnicking on the Playa sand dunes. Her goals in life are to become fluent in Spanish, to hike the Camino de Santiago, and to make a positive impact on the people around her.

Constructed Despair

TAYLOR FLANAGAN

research project

Taylor Flanagan is a junior Mathematics major with a minor in Computer Science at LMU. He promises he is not ill.

Sneeze Count

"Sneeze Count" documents the real yet tragically mundane existence of the average person, as a study in the visual representation of everyday life. The project began as a way to capture those moments which would otherwise be lost as meaningless background noise. It has since spiraled into a four-year-long data collection experiment. The data itself is simultaneously extremely personal and totally nondescript. The patterns in the data say so much about the subject and yet convey very little actual meaning. Thus is the sneeze, a dichotomy of significance.

The experiment is still ongoing.

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ANNE DE MATTOS
LAUREE

poem

Lauree Anne De Mattos is a junior English major and Theology minor from Hilo, Hawai'i, which she misses more than anything. At any given time, she is probably listening to a podcast or watching baseball. She believes in the abolition of prisons, and is indebted to the work of Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Danielle Sered, Dean Spade, Mariame Kaba, and the countless others, especially those on the inside, who fight for justice and peace.

Ode to Freedom

I worked as a clerk at a law office downtown,
across the street from 'oihana ho'okolokolo:
the judiciary of Hawai'i. One of my main jobs
was answering the phone, which rang often.

Hello, a robotic voice said, *this is a free call from*
— here, a bureaucratic silence —
an inmate at the Halawa County Jail. To accept
this call, press one. I always accepted the call,
picturing the state prison, decrepit panopticon,
how it clattered and shouted in the background.
Hello, I said, in my best receptionist voice,
this is The Law Office of My Grandfather's
High School Classmate. How can I help you?
The man on the other end had shot his wife.
He needed to speak with his lawyer. *I'm sorry*,
I said. *He's in court right now. I can take a message.*
I picked up my pen. Thank you, the man said.
His voice was very soft, like a singer of lullabies.
I really am very sorry to take up so much of your time.

Once, a man called from somewhere in Florida
all the way across the country. *Hello*, he said.
I am so grateful. My brother has been transferred
closer to me. Could you send me a copy of his records?
Today is such a good day. I pulled up the file.
His brother was in prison for the rape of children.
I didn't understand how he could be so happy.
I emailed it to him anyway. *Thank you*, he said.
I appreciate it. I hope you have a wonderful day.
I am going to visit my brother now. It has been so long
since I last saw him, and I miss him very much;
and I thought of my sister, how when we were young,
our parents punished us by way of separation.

Every day at about five o'clock I would hang up
the phone for good, send out the last of the mail,
and leave the building. *Capitalism is like a prison*,
I was known to say. But I was wrong. Nothing
is like a prison. Next to the office was a wide river.
It sparkled in the late afternoon sun, turned gold
and blue. Ducks flew over it, and old men fished.
As I drove home the reggae station always played
the top five songs of the day, and I would crank
my windows down to smell the cooking smoke.
I could drive a little ways past my own house,
hug my baby cousin. There is so much of his life
that I am unwilling to miss. Oh, America,
don't you agree that we are more than the worst
we have ever done? Even if it is unforgivable?
We are capable of being kind, and of being loved,
and even of putting people in cages, though we know
freedom is sweet as summer, and comes only once.

SOFIA MEISBURGER

poem

So-called writer Sofia Meisburger is a cyber cowboy and jungle gym olympian. When she's not catching up on 50+ hours of Love Island, Sofia can be found prowling the forums in search of the next big conspiracy theory. Some of her biggest inspirations are Oscar Wilde, Waluigi™, Keanu Reeves, and her parents. Sofia has travelled to over 30 countries and hopes that this writing thing works out so she can visit even more.

divinity is a fruit and she wants to see my family happy

I am four years old and heaven is a fruit.
The universe is also a fruit and
even the ground underneath
is my third favorite fruit!

Today the world is in season and mama is letting me taste it.

In the morning she gives me heaven fruit and a long list of chores.
I lock the peach in my baby teeth
while my baby hands feed the animals.
Sweet nectarine juice—celestial honey—
drips down my chin, beading like sweat.
Ambrosia.

At lunchtime I climb the trees and pelt Joey with limes.
Limes aren't important fruits, but they are good for throwing.
I hear the kitchen sink running
ice cold water over my afternoon guavas.
Mama calls for us. We run.

At night, we eat raspberries.
With each bite I erupt into a fiery, peach fuzz nebula
of fructose stars and whipped cream trails.
One by one I collect each sugary star
in my raspberry universe and crush
them between my fingers like holy oil.
A christening of the cosmos.

After dinner we call daddy like we always do.
Sometimes the world is not a fruit;
sometimes it is a war.

Daddy has been away in this fruitless world
for so long. I'm beginning to forget his face.
I cannot imagine that Rwanda
tastes sweet or Bosnia tangy
but these are the fruits daddy eats
so that me and Joey can have our guava.

Tonight, daddy gives us good news and mama cries,
but not because daddy is gone—this time,
it is because he is coming back.

To celebrate, we eat the universe for dessert.

MATTHEW LOW

essay

A member of Loyola Marymount University's Class of 2021, Matthew Low is dedicated to a major in Computer Engineering with minors in Physics, Applied Mathematics, and Computer Science. With this broad range of interests, he aims to integrate technical scientific advancements within a holistic, humanist approach. This featured piece explores the societal perceptions of an often overlooked feature of scientific history—the lasting Islamic contribution to mathematics and the sciences.

American Muslim Efforts to Define Islamic Scientific Contribution and the American Perception of Muslim Academics

1 Introduction

Islamic contributions to mathematics and science cannot be discounted. Pivotal works from many Islamic scholars of the 9th through 15th centuries drastically propelled forward the pursuit of exact, hard sciences. The Renaissance period in Europe largely resulted from the dissemination of knowledge from Muslim scholars and the Arabic world [Morgan, 2013]. Despite this enduring scientific presence throughout history, the appreciation for the legacy of Islamic science in America seems to be almost entirely absent. It is important to recognize the significance and achievement of these Muslim scholars, especially in an American political climate that seems to grow increasingly hostile towards its Muslim residents.

In this paper, I will argue for recognition of the critical Islamic contributions to science through a case study of the Muslim mathematician Muhammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī, widely considered to be the "father of algebra." The second portion of this paper will be dedicated to examining the ways in which contemporary American Muslims are attempting to tell the story of Islamic accomplishment in mathematics and science. In particular, this section will include examples and analysis of advocate groups for Muslim scholars and an interview with the president of the Institute of Medieval and Post Medieval Studies, Dr. Basheer Ahmed. As a whole, the objective of this essay is to investigate Islamic scientific achievement, how it is perceived by the American public, and how American Muslims are working to enforce or alter those perceptions.

2 Al-Khwarizmi

Muhammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī was a prolific and revolutionary scholar of mathematics in the 9th century, but he is largely unrecognized by the American public. This section will detail al-Khwārizmī's life, accomplishments, and the lasting impact of his work.

2.1 Career Overview

There is not much biographical data available pertaining to al-Khwārizmī's early life or his education [Sons, 2008]. It is believed that al-Khwārizmī was born around the year 780 AD in Qutrubbull, while his ancestors likely migrated from Khwārizm, from which al-Khwārizmī's name is derived. It is known that he joined the Dār al-Hikma, or "House of Wisdom"

sometime between 813 - 833 AD, under the reign of Caliph al-Ma'mūn. Under Caliph al-Ma'mūn, al-Khwārizmī produced his work on algebra, *al-Kitāb al-mukhtasar fī hisāb al-jabr wal-muqābala*, around the year 820 AD. From the pious introduction of this book, as well as his other writings, it is clearly apparent that al-Khwārizmī was a devout Muslim [Brezina, 2006]. Sometime after the publication of *al-Kitāb al-mukhtasar fī hisāb al-jabr wal-muqābala*, al-Khwārizmī wrote a book describing the use and representation of Hindu numerals. There is little information as to when this treatise on Hindu numerals was finished, however it must follow his writing on algebra, to which the exposition of Hindu numerals makes numerous references [Berggren and Berggren, 2017]. Al-Khwārizmī also authored scientific works in regard to astronomy (*Zīj al-Sindhind*), geography (*Kitāb Sūrat al-Ard*), and the Jewish calendar (*Risāla fi istikhrāj ta'rīkh al-yahūd*). Still though, the most persevering and profound of his books are those dealing with algebra and the Hindu numeral system.

2.2 Origin of Algebra

Algebra, as we refer to the mathematical discipline, comes out of the title of *al-Kitāb al-mukhtasar fī hisāb al-jabr wal-muqābala*, one of the earlier pieces from al-Khwārizmī. This book was divided into three sections: mathematical expressions, practical mensuration, and issues due to legacies or specific legalities [Sons, 2008]. The first section is of the greatest interest in terms of this paper and his lasting impact, as it is here that al-Khwārizmī deals with algebra proper and develops his solution expressions. The composition of this book is fairly intriguing in that al-Khwārizmī chooses to combine the innovative, theory elements with the very practically oriented, applicable situations and legal exceptions, all under the same cover. Throughout his entire book, al-Khwārizmī makes no use of mathematical notation. Instead, everything was described solely in words, with "shay'" corresponding to an unknown quantity (variable) of the first order, or simply x in modern notation. "Shay'" in Arabic translates literally into "thing," while the word for property, "māl", was used to denote a variable to the second power, or x^2 [Sons, 2008]. Modern notation is used in this paper for the more concise and familiar expression of mathematical terms and formulae.

From the title of al-Khwārizmī's treatise, the portion "al-jabr" is the source term for what we now refer to as algebra. The word "al-jabr" loosely means "the reunion of broken parts" according to the Oxford Dictionary [dic, 2004]. Algebra, or "al- jabr," in particular refers to the specific process of performing equivalent operations to both sides of an equation. This term algebra was not popularized until the 12th century, when al-Khwārizmī's work was translated into Latin and spread throughout Europe [Waerden, 1985]. The great mathematical and scientific breakthroughs of the Renaissance and the resulting Enlightenment Era would never have occurred had it not been for al-Khwārizmī and many other great Muslim scholars [Morgan, 2013]. The narrative of the Renaissance is often portrayed as a uniquely Eurocentric effort to

its Greco-Roman roots. However, such a description greatly discredits the vital contributions of the Islamic world, which was responsible for the translation and maintaining of many Greco-Roman texts into Arabic [Hogendijk and Sabra, 2003]. With these texts, knowledge from the past flowed from the Arabic world to Europe as these texts made their way into Latin.

When considering the vast, rich history of Islamic excellency in science and mathematics, it is shocking that so few Americans recognize the legacy of science in the Islamic world. The largely Eurocentric narrative seems to dominate school curriculum in the United States, at least through grade 12. Why is it that al-Khwārizmī is completely unknown when algebra is a universally upheld and practiced mathematical discipline across the United States? Basic algebra underlies nearly all mathematics and science, as the ability to manipulate equivalencies and relationships is paramount in every aspect of scientific thought. The tool by which abstract ideas and concepts can be altered and developed, while still maintaining their mathematical validity, is algebra.

2.3 Origin of Algorithm

The word algorithm describes a specific set of rules or process that can be systemically applied to achieve the desired outcome, given that the inputs fit the criteria of the algorithm. Today, the word is closely associated with computation, as computers are solely logical machines that simply process given data, perform a predetermined set of operations, then express the outcome in an appropriate fashion. Perhaps al-Khwārizmī's greatest contribution to science and mathematics was his formulation of a repeatable, explicit process which guaranteed a solution. Due to this achievement, some actually regard al-Khwārizmī as the "grandfather of computer science," as he laid the fundamental groundwork that eventually gave rise to algorithms of all kinds [Knuth, 1980]. As such, it is quite apt that the word algorithm itself comes from the Latinization of al-Khwārizmī's name as *Algorithmi* [Hogendijk and Sabra, 2003].

Within *al-Kitāb al-mukhtasar fī hisāb al-jabr wal-muqābala*, al-Khwārizmī rationally proves and demonstrates that any system composed of equations of the first or second order can be manipulated into one of six standard forms. Expressed in contemporary notation, those six forms are:

ax	=	bx	(1)
ax^2	=	b	(2)
ax	=	b	(3)
$ax^2 + bx$	=	c	(4)
$ax^2 + c$	=	bx	(5)
ax^2	=	$bx + c$	(6)

Where a, b, and c stand for positive coefficients.

The reason that these six forms were necessary stems from the fact that al-Khwārizmī did not consider the case of negative or zero coefficients. For each of these forms, al-Khwārizmī also provided a simplified solution expression to compute the value of the unknown "thing" or *x*. One such solution criteria for Equation (6) is given by:

$$x = \sqrt{\left[\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{b}{a}\right)\right]^2 + \frac{c}{a}} + \frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{b}{a}\right)$$

While these ideas may seem familiar or rudimentary today, this concept was a truly revolutionary step forward in mathematics. Writing on al-Khwārizmī's practice of systematic solutions to linear and quadratic equations, J.J. O'Conner and E.F. Robertson describe why this progression was so remarkable in the MacTutor History of Mathematics archive website [O'Connor and Robertson, 1999].

> Algebra was a unifying theory which allowed rational numbers, irrational numbers, geometrical magnitudes, etc., to all be treated as "algebraic objects." It gave mathematics a whole new development path so much broader in concept to that which had existed before and provided a vehicle for future development of the subject. Another important aspect of the introduction of algebraic ideas was that it allowed mathematics to be applied to itself in a way which had not happened before.

There are many parallels between modern day computer science and al-Khwārizmī's abstract, precise approach to mathematics which birthed the entire field of algebra. Computer science is so powerful because it allows for a great degree of abstraction [Knuth, 1980]. Al-Khwārizmī's work was the first, elemental step towards this level of representation. His book was the first to deal in terms of these "algebraic objects" that each carried unique, intrinsic properties.

2.4 Modern Applications of Algebra and Algorithms

It is no overstatement to say that out modern society literally runs on algebra and algorithms. Within the last century, the digitization revolution of the world has fundamentally altered nearly every aspect of life. From email to food production to space exploration, actions typically done by hand have been replaced by pure algorithms and automated to the greatest extent possible. Even artificial intelligence, or A.I., consists of a discrete set of rules which are applied to enormous databases (input) to recognize patterns and seemingly act with some form of adaptive reasoning.

Due to the central role of computation and its promising future, al-Khwārizmī's contribution to the sciences remains incredibly prominent. Such influence can be contrasted with the work of the well-known Isaac Newton. While brilliant, Newtonian mechanics is already considered archaic and out of date, only applicable in the simplest cases with well-defined constraints [Feynman et al., 2015]. Meanwhile, al-Khwārizmī's

presentation of procedural computation is a central theme in physics, computer science, and mathematics at large. His contributions have exponentially increased in relevance since the 9th century, while Newton's writing on classical physics from the 17th and 18th centuries have few applicable uses. Still though, Isaac Newton certainly still maintains a high degree of recognition in the United States, while al-Khwārizmī is nearly unheard of.

2.5 On Hindu Numerals

Another one of al-Khwārizmī's major contributions to mathematics and science is his treatise on Hindu numerals. Unfortunately, the original Arabic text has never surfaced, surviving only in the Latinized form titled *On the Calculation with Hindu Numerals*. As an early, if not the first, systematic demonstration and explanation of Hindu numerals, this piece by al-Khwārizmī holds substantial historical weight. The treatise is likely responsible for the popularization of the Hindu numeral system in Arabia and, eventually, Europe [Brezina, 2006]. These numerals (0, 1, 2, ...) are the same that we use today, along with the decimal place and carry system. Often these numerals are often mislabeled as Arabic numerals, because although they originate from India, the system was popularized by the Arabic world. Here again the legacy and influence of Islamic civilization can be seen. However, these close Islamic ties to science and mathematics seem to be lost in America as we fail to acknowledge the extent to which Europe and the Western world was shaped by Islamic science.

3 American Muslims: Retelling of Islamic Science

Despite many remarkable achievements of the Islamic world, it seems that the West, particularly America, still does not recognize the rich tradition of Islamic science. In fact, the notion of prolific, successful Muslim scholars is almost entirely absent from the American mainstream, which appears to be far too preoccupied with the increasingly hostile portrayals of Muslims in the media.

3.1 Exhibitions of Islamic Achievement in the Sciences

As a whole, Muslim academics are largely underrepresented in the United States' educational system. In order to raise awareness for the accomplishments of many Muslim scholars and Islamic contributions to science, several groups have formed to expand and clarify the narrative of Islamic science.

One such organization is the Institute of Medieval and Post Medieval Studies (IMPMS), headed by president and founder Dr. Basheer Ahmed. The IMPMS came into existence in the year 2001, as organizers of regional conferences for the Association of Muslim Social Scientists

connected in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. These members recognized the need to "[spread] information about the important contributions of Islamic civilization, especially during the medieval period" [Ahmed, 2019b]. Since then, the institute's goal has been to cultivate a culture of mutual understanding and respect between Muslim and non-Muslims. To accomplish this goal, the group focuses specifically on promoting the message of Muslim contribution to world civilization. Based in Texas, most of the IMPMS's efforts are focused on an American audience.

A major component of the organization's mission is to emphasize the intercultural history between Islam and the West, which is largely disregarded in current American curriculum. IMPMS even espouses that education pertaining to Islamic contributions be available as early as kindergarten, so that Islam's deep connection to the West can be better appreciated. The IMPMS website enumerates the specific actions and goals of the organization, which include: holding conferences and publishing papers; maintaining a website of educational material; establishing a library of learning resources on Medieval scholars; hosting events with current Muslim researchers and scholars; and finally through the collaboration with organizations of similar intentions.

Another group working to promote greater understanding of Islamic scientific history is the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT).

> To conduct and disseminate educational research to empower Muslim Societies with data-driven recommendations for transformative education policy and practice.

As their mission statement above indicates, the IIIT primarily deals with facilitating and propagating research involving education and Muslim values [Altalib, 2019]. Headquartered in Virginia, the IIIT was founded in 1981 and has grown rapidly since its establishment. The organization employs and sponsors much research into Islamic studies and the intersection of education and Islam. Spreading the legacy of Islamic achievement is but one component of IIIT's overarching goal to impact educational policy and advance education among Muslim societies. While American education policy is a core tenet of IIIT, the group still maintains a fairly broad scope and interacts with many different nations and international groups. IIIT is even responsible for the translation of over 400 scientific texts into 35 different languages.

3.2 Interview with Dr. Ahmed

To gain an enhanced understanding of the goals and practices of an active interest group advocating for the recognition of Muslim scholars, an interview Dr. Basheer Ahmed, the President and Founder of IMPMS, is included in the following section.

3.2.1 Dr. Ahmed Introduction and Background

Originally from Hyderabad Deccan, India, Dr. Basheer Ahmed has firsthand experience of being a Muslim immigrant to America. Since beginning his medical career in 1968 at the St. Louis State Hospital, Dr. Ahmed has led an incredibly impressive and productive career spanning multiple disciplines. One of his many civic involvements was founding the Institute of Medieval and Post Medieval Studies. Dr. Ahmed cites his Islamic heritage and religion as a powerful influence and source of inspiration during the earlier stages of his life [Ahmed, 2019a].

3.2.2 Discussion

The following discussion includes Dr. Ahmed's insights and beliefs about the legacy of Islamic science and Muslim progression of world civilizations. His answers to several interview questions are paraphrased and combined into a single exposition below in a narrative format [Ahmed, 2019c].

Around 25 years ago, Dr. Basheer Ahmed began to take an interest in Muslim contributions to the scientific world. While the time period encompassing the 7th to the 15th century is considered as the "Dark Ages" for Europe, it was a time of great prosperity and intellectual excellency in the Islamic world. Within this interval, Muslim scientists made significant advancements in nearly every major scientific field: medicine, surgery, physics, astronomy, and mathematics.

The rise of Islam itself can actually be regarded as a stimulus and driving force for this duration of remarkable scientific growth. As Prophet Muhammad spread his message and the domain of Islam rapidly expanded, knowledge was both introduced to and gleaned from all conquered lands. A major avenue for this integration of information was through the "House of Wisdom." This institution was established in the 8th century and was a major center for the translation of newly acquired Greek and Roman works into Arabic.

There are also some interesting tenets of Islam and the *Qur'an* which lend themselves toward scientific investigation. In fact, the very first word of the first revelation from the angel Gabriel is translated as "Read," which can be interpreted as upholding literacy and learning to be fundamental components of Islam. Throughout the *Qur'an*, there are approximately 700 verses which emphasize accumulating new knowledge and the mysteries of the world. One example would be verse (31:27), which describes that even if all the trees be made into pens and all the oceans to ink, the words of Allah (knowledge) would never be exhausted [Gohari, 2007]. Information is depicted as infinite or ever increasing, so it is impossible to learn everything, but there is always something to be learned. Dr. Ahmed upholds that early Muslims were motivated by these teachings of the *Qur'an* to pursue the sciences

and progress knowledge to greater heights, while understanding that complete, absolute comprehension is impossible. The Islamic excitement for science was a compelling force in bringing about the Renaissance.

This Islamic treatment and approach to scientific inquiry is a stark contrast to the Christian model in the 4th and 5th centuries. During these years, a conflict arose in Christianity regarding its dealing with scientific progress and pursuit. It was dogmatically decided by the church that science runs directly counter to Christian ideals and thus must be suppressed. This ideology persevered until the Renaissance, resulting in anti-scholarly activities such as the burning of libraries and the trial of Galileo Galilee.

Despite the prolific and critical developments in science, these achievements of Muslim scholars often go unrecognized, leading many to erroneously consider this period as a stagnation of world civilization. Dr. Ahmed observed this common oversight firsthand when he attended an international conference on medieval scholars at which not a single presentation or paper focused on Muslim contributions to science. The only papers relating to Islam focused on witchcraft, clothing styles, and other related social surveys. In an attempt to rectify this negligence, Dr. Ahmed presented a paper (in 1995) on the origin of surgery and crucial medical contributions of Ibn Sīnā, Latinized as Avicenna. Avicenna's findings and writings were so extensive and significant that his 30-volume medical encyclopedia titled *The Canon of Medicine* remained the standard medical textbook in Europe for over 500 years.

It was out of this conference, and others like it, that Dr. Ahmed committed to founding and leading the IMPMS to spread the message of Islamic contribution to the scientific community and world civilization at large. From the recognition that not even many Muslims know of this rich history, Dr. Ahmed concluded that students today, especially in America, have never had the opportunity to read about the contributions of Islamic scholars in textbooks. Even throughout medical school, Dr. Ahmed notes a severe lack of education regarding Ibn Sīnā, potentially the most influential physician of all time. Everyone has heard of Newton and the Wright brothers, but where is any mention of Abbas ibn Firnas, who attempted flight over a millennium before the Wright brothers? Specifically in fields such as chemistry, astronomy, and medicine, any coverage of the subject is arguably incomplete without including the history of vast Muslim contribution to these disciplines. This is a failing of the education system, even in Muslim majority countries like India or Pakistan. To this end, IMPMS attempts to distribute this information and understanding of Muslim contributions to world civilization through their website, by publishing articles, and through attending and hosting conferences on the subject.

While seriously concerned with the past, the IMPMS is also looking to the future by training the next generation of scientific thinkers. The institute teaches 10 to 15-year-old students to be scientists and innovators by hosting various events, competitions, and speakers geared toward

motivating Muslim youth to pursue a career in the sciences. Dr. Ahmed believes that the Muslim world is in turmoil, and it is time for Muslims to regain their status as equal partners in the world conversation after many years of stagnation.

4 Conclusion

The rich history of Islamic achievement in mathematics and science is largely ignored in the United States. Framing Medieval history as a clash between Western Europe and the Islamic East seems to have degraded the importance and status of prominent Islamic scholars. Further work can be done to investigate the best way to portray the complex relationship between the West and Islamic countries during the Middle Ages. Textbook construction and thematic emphasis will be central to this examination. In addition, Islamic science museums and exhibits can be analyzed to determine the distinct definitions and concepts of Islamic achievement that are being expressed. The identification of these themes can lead into an analysis of why these particular messages were chosen, and what might constitute the most effective method to disseminate a general understanding of Muslim contributions, not just to mathematics and science, but to the world as a whole.

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DYLAN HUSTON

essay

Dylan is a student of the classical guitar at Canisius College.

"Amo el canto del cenzontle,
pájaro de cuatrocientas voces.
Amo el color del jade
y el enervante perfume de las flores,
pero más amo a mi hermano: el hombre"

— Nezahualcóyotl

'With A Gun In One Hand, With A Guitar In The Other': Phil Ochs and the Destruction of an American Idealist

Part I: Introduction

A dark era was descending upon America and her people. The blithe Pax Americana of the 1950s was being cut short by napalm, flag-draped coffins, and police brutality. The 1959 Clear Lake, Iowa plane crash that took the lives of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and J. P. Richardson seemed to serve as a harbinger for a decade of strife, martyrdom, and turmoil.[2] Though America never knew a time devoid of violence, only now could the nation tune in to see it live and in color from the comfort of their own homes.

Within just the first few years of the decade, the 1960s already proved troubling for the nation. Each day, another family would lose a son to the war in Vietnam. As the country was embroiled in the war in Southeast Asia, Governor George Wallace proudly announced in his 1963 Inaugural Address "segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever."[3] At the University of Mississippi just a year before, two were left dead and dozens wounded in the wake of the Battle of Oxford.[4]

Considering the everyday horrors flooding the headlines, it was no secret that the bounds of American society appeared to be pushing their limit. For the first time in American music history, protest songs began to chart the Billboard Hot 100. Rediscovering Harry Smith's eclectic *Anthology of American Folk Music*, a new generation of songwriters, inspired by the fiery ballads of the early twentieth century, developed the genre and proved its relevance.[5]

With newfound prominence came artists such as Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, and Peter, Paul and Mary, joining the ranks of an already popular Pete Seeger, whose messages resonated with those disillusioned by the draft or marginalized by segregation. Folk lyrics were appreciated not just for being catchy melodies, but as powerful expressions of young people's anxieties.[6] Even Johnny Cash, an icon of country music stardom, displayed his sympathy with the somber *Man in Black*. Dion DiMucci, frontman of the successful doo-wop quartet, the 'Belmonts', would appear on *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* to perform "Abraham, Martin and John" shortly after the assassination of Robert Kennedy.[7] With increasing collective consciousness, American popular music began to undergo a powerful shift away from the conservative and apolitical lyrics of Ricky Nelson, Fabian Forte, and Frankie Avalon, whose anodyne content seldom

2. Rich. Everitt, *Falling Stars: Air Crashes That Filled Rock and Roll Heaven* (Augusta, Ga., 2004), p. 10.

3. Maggie Riechers, 'Racism to Redemption: The Path of George Wallace', *Humanities*, 21/2 (2000), p. 17.

4. Charles W. Eagles, 'The Fight for Men's Minds', in *The Price of Defiance*, Book, Section vols (2009) p. 1.

5. Neil V. Rosenberg, '"The Anthology of American Folk Music" and Working-Class Music', *Labour / Le Travail*, 42/Journal Article (1998), pp. 327–332.

6. William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II*, 7th ed (New York, 2011) p. 313.

7. Tom Smothers and others, *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour: The Best of Season 3* (United States, 2008).

broke away from the predictable teenage love song that defined the typical doo wop single.

The epicenter of bohemian counterculture, Manhattan's Greenwich Village, blossomed with a new generation of young and idealistic folk singers. Cabarets dedicated to the avant-garde made the neighborhood a home for the generation's most outspoken, developing art as a form of protest. One particular music club, Mike Porco's dingy and unassuming Gerde's Folk City, set the stage for a number of the generation's most successful folk and rock artists, including Bob Dylan,[8] Simon and Garfunkel,[9] David Crosby, and Judy Collins.[10] One notably outspoken artist to make his debut at Gerde's was a young leftist folk singer by the name of Phil Ochs.

Appreciated for his outspoken and caustic wit balanced by a humble and genuine love for America, Ochs became an instant hit among folk circles.[11] Gathering inspiration from newspapers and magazines, Ochs was as much a journalist as a songwriter. His first studio album, *All the News That's Fit to Sing*, included "Lou Marsh", a memorial ballad about a Christian social worker who was beaten to death in an attempt to prevent a gang fight.[12] Also included were "Too Many Martyrs", a song of praise for Medgar Evers' accomplishments, "Talkin' Vietnam", an anti-Vietnam War talking blues, and "Power and the Glory", a patriotic song celebrating America's natural beauty and commending her foundational dedication to liberty.[13]

In fact, one could say that Ochs' first album had everything required of a topical folk singer of his generation. A passion for justice and equality, an unmistakable love for America, and an innocent and humble demeanor gave Ochs' admirers all the appeal of Bob Dylan and Joan Baez packed into an attractive and acid-tongued enfant terrible. Though Dylan and Baez certainly soared in commercial success, Ochs' earnest character radiated far beyond his often criticized guitar-playing and vocal range. Ochs' verses spoke to his audience with a seductive and enthralling honesty that evoked thoughtful introspection and unwavering devotion. Mark Eliot, a biographer of Phil Ochs, placed it perfectly when he stated of Ochs' listeners that "the young men in the audience study him, their chins held in their hands. The women want to mother him."[14] Ochs was more than just a 'singing newspaper', as pejoratively dubbed by his critics; to his listeners, Ochs was an icon of the very spirit of America.

Ochs had his detractors, of course. He reveled in any kind of publicity, even featuring negative concert reviews in his 1971 'The War is Over' songbook.[15] Nevertheless, Ochs had been warned early on in his career about the risks undertaken by someone so outspoken. During a chat with his friend and fellow folk singer, Bob Gibson, Gibson eerily warned Ochs "Be careful though. When you do political material, it doesn't always matter if the song is really good or not. If the audience agrees with you, they'll love it. You can become impressed with yourself easily, and fall into a groove lasting as long as there's an issue to sing about." Ochs listened silently, gobsmacked at the words of his counterpart.

8. Clinton Heylin, *Bob Dylan: A Life in Stolen Moments: Day by Day, 1941-1995* (New York : London, 1996) p. 35.

9. Marc Eliot, *Paul Simon: A Life*, Book, Whole (Hoboken, N.J, 2010) p. 39.

10. Matthew Morowitz, 'Gerde's Folk City: The End of a Greenwich Village Icon', *GVSHP | Preservation | Off the Grid*, 2018 <https://gvshp.org/blog/2018/03/28/gerdes-folk-city-the-end-of-a-greenwich-village-icon/> [accessed 15 September 2019].

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16. Eliot, *Phil Ochs, Death of a Rebel* p. 30.

"Those who don't agree with you might want to silence you, so no one else can hear what you have to say."[16] Whether he knew it or not at the time, those words would follow Ochs to the grave.

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Full work is available online at:
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Oystermania in New York City

Introduction

I have never tasted an oyster. I have only ever seen them served at the occasional wedding cocktail party or listed as a menu item I would never personally order at an upscale restaurant. To me, the imperfect and disfigured shells seem uninviting, and the edible inside slimy and chewy. Therefore, it is hard to imagine that from the colonial era until the early 1900s, avoiding this mollusk would have been nearly impossible in New York City, the place I call home. Oysters were everywhere: they littered the shorelines couples strolled, filled the carts of peddlers on busy streets, and graced the dishes families placed on the dining room table. New York was defined by its relationship with oysters, especially the bivalve's use as a commodity in trade. Tracing the history of the oyster industry reveals how the capitalistic economic practices in New York City ultimately destroyed the same social and cultural trends it created.

The Rise of the Oyster

When the Dutch arrived to what would eventually become New York City, they found a flourishing environment teeming with a diversity of wildlife. Amongst the foliage and fauna, the Dutch discovered an abundance of oysters—so many, in fact, that it wasn't uncommon to walk to the seashore and pick an oyster off the water's edge.[1] New Amsterdam settlers used oysters for their cuisine, commercial exchange with local taverns, and trade with the Lenape, the indigenous people of the Northeastern Woodlands.[2] Even when the English seized New Amsterdam, renaming the colony New York, the oyster's commercial importance continued to grow. Throughout the colony, oysters were sold from carts on the streets and boats on the canals.[3] As New Yorkers learned how to harvest greater quantities of oysters, and as the city's harbor transformed into a bustling hub of mercantile activity, traders devised innovative ways to turn the oyster beds into a profitable, large scale trade commodity. Whether it was opening the first New York City based cannery in 1819 in order to send oysters long distances without spoiling or using Robert Fulton's steamboat to ship oysters up the Erie Canal, these innovations contributed to the oyster trade's rapid growth.[4]

1. Mark Kurlansky, *The Big Oyster: History on the Half Shell*, Random House Trade Pbk ed. ed. (Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2007), Bibliographies, Non-fiction, 36.

2. Kurlansky, 36-37.

3. Kurlansky, 65.

4. Kurlansky, 103-105.

Recovered minutes from business meetings conducted by the New Bridge Oyster Company, dated between 1863 and 1868, reveal just how large and profitable this industry had become. The beginning of the minute book includes articles and laws detailing the structure of the company. It lists the different necessary positions, including a President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, a Treasurer, and a board of seven managers who were elected to serve year-long terms.[5] This degree of organization clearly shows that the New Bridge Oyster Company was a serious, established, and respected business. The minutes also divulge discussions amongst the board about both internal and external company affairs. The board frequently talked about transactions with customers, such as with Mr. A Smith who purchased 25 bushels of oysters at $1.12 each. The board also debated company policy and employee compensation, for example, forwarding the motion "that the sum of eight centers per bushel be paid of taking up oysters from the beds and dumping in the creek."[6] This reveals the organized business structure, as well as the economic structures that were shaped by the oyster trade. While employees who dumped bushels in the creek were only paid eight cents per bushel, the "sum of ten cents per bushel be paid for culling oysters before dumping in the same creeks, [and] twelve cents for taking up those already freshened from the creek."[7] This shows the division of labor in the oyster trade, the competition between these jobs created by the company, and which skills were valued in the industry.

Oysters: A Cultural Phenomenon

Yet, oysters were much more than just a part of New York's natural environment, a commodity New Yorkers could take advantage of in order to turn over a profit in accordance with capitalist principles. Oysters were embedded in New York culture in the same way they were rooted to the reefs of the harbor. New York was the oyster capital of the world, and that meant cuisine, social settings, and even art centered around these beloved bivalves.

The Cuisine That Transcended Economic Class

Oysters became the preferred meal of all people, regardless of class. The bivalve was adored by the upper class but remained at prices affordable to the lower class since they were in such abundance.[8] However, the difference between socioeconomic classes was exemplified by how the oysters were prepared. Many lower and middle-class families followed simple, inexpensive recipes to prepare their oysters, as exhibited in recipe books recovered from the 1800s. Phila Delaplaine Reed, a woman from a merchant family, kept a meticulous record of her recipes in her personal cookbook. Among the directions for tasty treats and savory meals, Reed recorded two recipes for oysters. One recipe is to fry oysters, directing the cook to "make a batter of milk and eggs with flour, then dry your oysters, and dip them in the batter, then roll them in the crumbs of bread, a little pepper and mace, and fry them in very hot fat or butter."[9] The second recipe explains how to bake oysters, by "tak[ing] good oysters in a baking dish, put[ting] between every layer crumbled bread, a little pepper and mace, and fry[ing] them in a very hot fat or butter."[10] The simplicity and affordability of these ingredients allowed anyone to enjoy New York's favorite food. But oysters were prepared in different ways by the higher class. Many upscale restaurants and chefs published cookbooks on how to prepare elegant oyster dishes.[11] One chef, Pierre Blot, published recipes that were clearly not devised for the poor. His recipes called for ingredients that included liquor and gravy, and he required the dish be presented on scallop-shells or silver shells.[12]

A New Way to Dine

Oysters were more than just the main ingredients of different recipes — they became the center of social activity. Oyster bars and cellars began popping up across the city, offering menus centered around oyster dishes at all-you-can-eat prices, therefore encouraging the rapid consumption of this delicacy.[13] Various types of oysters were sold, from Bluepoints to Saddle Rocks to Prince's Bays.[14] Although the menus between these restaurants were similar, each cellar catered to the clientele of their neighborhood.[15] Some cellars were designed for downtown businessmen to discuss deals with clients and coworkers over seafood, while other cellars exploited the relationship between oysters and sex to create an erotic atmosphere.[16] Regardless, oyster cellars were a place where people could gather to guzzle down oysters over conversation, laughter, and drinks.

The Muse of Artists

Oysters even became the muses of writers, inspiring poetry and song. Between 1824 and 1829, J. M'Cleland printed and sold copies of a song titled "Oysters, sir!". The song uses a simple rhyme scheme to detail the story of an oyster seller roaming the streets, looking for someone to buy their oysters:

> *"I'll please you well with what I sell,*
> *And many an arch reply;*
> *My oysters they are fresh and good,*
> *Will you be pleas'd to try?"*[17]

The song was produced and sold through retail and wholesale, these large quantities indicating that it was quite popular.[18] The song's subject gave the audience something to connect to—oyster carts populated New York City's streets, so the sights and sounds of peddlers selling their oysters were very common. The song confirms the popularity of oysters in New York and reveals its greater impact on the culture of the city.

5. New Bridge Oyster Company, *Minutes (1863-1868)*, New York Historical Society, BV New Bridge Non-circulating.

6. New Bridge Oyster Company.

7. New Bridge Oyster Company.

8. Kurlansky, 214.

9. Phila Delaplaine Reed, *Phila Delaplaine Reed diary and cookbook* (1824-1834), New York Historical Society, Delaplaine family papers Non-circulating.

10. Phila Delaplaine Reed.

11. Kurlansky, 215.

12. Kurlansky, 217.

13. Kurlansky, 159.

14. Kurlansky, 162.

15. Kurlansky, 158.

16. Kurlansky, 159.

17. *Oysters, sir! And steam-boat row,* 1824, New York Historical Society, Broadsides SY1824 no. 85 Non-circulating.

18. *Oysters, sir! And steam-boat row.*

Oysters: A Bridge Between Racial Divides

The booming oyster industry even allowed African-American communities to profit. Nineteenth-century Staten Island was home to Sandy Ground, one of the oldest free black settlements in the United States. Sandy Ground was a rural community that many African Americans fled to in order to escape racial oppression.[19] Oystering in the reefs located off of Staten Island gave the settlers in Sandy Ground a means of supporting themselves. Captains, the local leaders of the oystering community, would then sell these oysters to Manhattan-based merchants. In the Sandy Ground community, four African Americans were Captains, and therefore part of the local elite.[20] Other oystermen operated on a much smaller scale compared to the businesses of the Captains. Sometimes, these oystermen were hired by Captains for an extra set of hands. In Sandy Ground, there were as many as forty common oystermen.[21] Industry regulation was determined by cultural norms and traditions. Natural oyster beds were seen as a common resource and therefore accessible to all local oystermen. Oystermen established claims to these beds as long as the same person reworked that particular bed every year. If it was neglected, other oystermen could claim it.[22] After an oysterman with claim to a bed conducted his harvest, other neighboring oystermen were allowed to search for overlooked remains. Oyster beds were sold through simple handshake agreements. If there were any disputes, a Captain was asked to help resolve the situation by following the cultural norms and traditions.[23]

These rules, based on mutual respect and amicability, allowed the Sandy Ground community to create relative equality between racial groups. African American and white oystermen worked side by side in the reefs. Their harmony acted as an example for the rest of the community, which included families, farmers, storeowners, artisans, and more.[24] All community members, regardless of race, took part in shared community events, from church events to clam-bakes. By the 1880s, Sandy Ground even had an inter-racial baseball team.[25] Furthermore, throughout the 1800s, the residential pattern and settlements became more integrated. African Americans and white Americans were now neighbors, facilitating a social space based on respect and commonality.[26]

The Fall of the Oyster

Clearly, the oyster industry not only influenced the economics of New York City, but established social and cultural institutions and trends. However, the oyster industry ultimately destroyed the culture it created because of its unregulated capitalist practices. By as early as 1810, New York City could not keep up with the demand for oysters, as the oyster beds were overharvested.[27] Scientists proposed oyster planting and seeding, which involved transplanting immature "seed" oysters from their natural beds to protected beds where they could grow to maturity.[28] However, this short-term solution only led to more problems. The natural oyster beds had been available for public use, but artificial beds required

19. William Askins, "Oysters and Equality: Nineteenth Century Cultural Resistance in Sandy Ground, Staten Island, New York," 8.

20. Askins, 8.

21. Askins, 8.

22. Askins, 8.

23. Askins, 8.

24. Askins, 8.

25. Askins, 8.

26. Askins, 9.

27. Kurlansky, 116.

28. Kurlansky, 121.

that planters used their own capital to plant and maintain the oyster population. Therefore, quarrels began between oystermen for claim over certain beds, which inspired fights over the right to file licenses for beds.[29] Additionally, by the 1870s, oyster seeds were becoming difficult to find, which affected the rate at which artificial beds could be seeded and planted.[30]

Furthermore, by the mid nineteenth century, New York oyster fisheries began practicing dredging. Dredging involved dragging a heavy bar with an attached net along oyster beds in order to capture a large quantity of oysters. With the invention of the steam engine, this practice became even more efficient. Each dredge pulled up seven to eight bushels of oysters.[31] However, this contributed to the proliferating rates of overharvesting in the already exhausted oyster beds.[32]

New York City also had a serious problem with its fresh water supply: it was extremely polluted. Bodies of water were used as a dumping ground for all sorts of garbage and raw sewage, from dead animals to feces. However, this was often the same water in which the oysters were cultivated.[33] Oysters are natural filtration systems for water. But because of the sewage, the oysters were declining in quality, and therefore, were not able to filter the water. This contributed to the severity and number of cholera and typhoid outbreaks in the city. In fact, oysters cultivated in polluted waters were discovered to be a vehicle for typhoid.[34]

In 1909, Manhattan wholesalers and traders ceased investing in the oyster industry after the relationship between oysters and typhoid was exposed. In 1915, the shellfish beds in Jamaica Bay were closed because of sewage pollution.[35] A typhoid outbreak in 1916 was traced back to consuming oysters from a specific contaminated water supply, which was then shut down.[36] This pattern of typhoid outbreaks followed by closed oyster beds continued throughout the early 1900s. The oyster industry slowly declined. And with it, so did the culture surrounding the mollusk. The capitalist practices that had developed the oyster industry and promoted a specific social and cultural climate were now contributing to its erosion. Since the oyster population decreased significantly, oystermen could no longer earn a profit by harvesting straight from the sea.[37] Consequently, oysters began disappearing from the markets, which meant they were also disappearing from the dinner table. The lower- and middle-class families could no longer afford the oysters still left on the market, forcing them to change their diets and find an alternative menu. Soon, oysters were considered a luxury and delicacy.[38]

The African American residents of Sandy Ground also faced the negative effects of changes within the industry. The legal changes that came along with the capitalist principles of the twentieth century allowed the industry to establish racist practices. Since New York State legislature required licenses to claim oyster beds following the arguments over artificial beds, African-American oystermen lost their beds to oyster merchants that could easily register and afford the taxes and licensing

29. Kurlansky, 123.

30. Kurlansky, 250.

31. Kurlansky, 249.

32. Kurlansky, 130.

33. Kurlansky, 251.

34. Kurlansky, 252.

35. Kurlansky, 262.

36. Kurlansky, 262.

37. Kurlansky, 265.

38. Kurlansky, 262.

costs.[39] Soon after, the merchants vertically integrated their companies to own all levels of the oyster business.[40] Oyster industry jobs became racially segmented, which perpetuated stereotypes within the industry. African Americans were only hired as deck and shore hands, if they were even able to find work within the larger companies at all.[41] The oyster capitalists also began to attack the image of the natural growthers, which they associated with the African-American oysterman. White oyster merchants published racist cartoons, such as the one displayed in Figure 1, in industry journals.[42]

Figure 1. An example of a racist cartoon targeted at African American natural growthers.

This racist caricature of an African-American man targeted natural growthers in Sandy Ground who preferred the traditional handshake agreements to the new licensing rules. These racist practices, in combination with water pollution, caused the Sandy Ground oyster industry to decline. At the same time, it crippled the equalities between white and African-American Sandy Grounders. While the economic inequalities quickly onset, the community tried to combat the social and cultural inequalities as long they could. For example, the sport teams in the community remained integrated, but there were differences emerging in other institutions, such as church membership and medical practices.[43]

The Oyster in New York City Today

Despite the destruction of the oyster reefs at the hands of New York's capitalists, the city's relationship with the mollusk has not reached its end. In 1972, New York passed the Clean Water Act, which prohibited the dumping of waste and raw sewage into the Harbor.[44] This Act, as well as other environmental laws, helped improve the water quality. Consequently, New York launched the Billion Oyster Project. The goal of this project is to restore the oyster population in the Harbor by creating a habitable ecosystem through public education initiatives. By 2035, the project hopes to have one billion live oysters living in one hundred acres of reef found in New York's Harbor.[45] Billion Oyster Project wants New York to champion the title "oyster capital of the world" once again. However, it also recognizes that oysters are incredibly important to our environment. They filter nitrogen pollution from the water as they eat, which in turn keeps algae populations that thrive on excessive nitrogen levels and decrease oxygen levels in check. Furthermore, oyster reefs help protect New York from storm damage by weakening the effects of large waves, flooding, and erosion. Lastly, oysters attract other marine life, inviting diversity into our harbors.[46]

39. Askins, 9.

40. skins, 9.

41. Askins, 10.

42. Askins, 10.

43. Askins, 10.

44. "Billion Oyster Project," Billion Oyster Project, https://billionoyster-project.org/#.

45. "Billion Oyster Project."

46. "Billion Oyster Project."

Conclusion

Oysters were fundamental to the development of New York City. This bivalve was not only the basis of an entire trade industry but contributed to the development of a society and culture that was centered around the mollusk. Although New Yorkers loved oysters, creating cuisines, social settings, and music based on the commodity, the high demand for oysters eventually led to the reefs demise. Due to New York's economic practices, from dredging to bed licensing, and the polluted fresh water supply, the city was stripped of this commodity and the oyster industry declined. At the same time, this destroyed the social and cultural trends the oyster industry had once helped create, as exhibited by the cuisine changes in the lower and middle class and the case study of the Sandy Ground community. Despite this, New York City is trying to revive the oyster population through modern environmental acts, like the Clean Water Act, and education initiatives, such as the Billion Oyster Project. New York City's relationship with oysters exemplifies that if you love something, you should let it go (especially if you're destroying it), but if it's meant to be, it will come back to you.

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essay

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In the Wake of Historical Erasure and State Repression: Gulag Survivors, Memorial, and the Ongoing Rehabilitation of Truth

Introduction

Time and again, former Gulag inmates struggled to have their needs met and re-enter Russian society, as the Soviet State did not want scrutiny of the past to undermine its power and align the Communist Party with atrocities. After Joseph Stalin's death in 1953, Nikita Khrushchev saw to the first wave of destalinization, which circulated the memoirs and works of survivors such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and rehabilitated several ex-prisoners. However, Khrushchev was selective in his dealings and aimed to stabilize the Soviet system rather than correct its flaws.[1] In the two decades following him, Leonid Brezhnev restored Stalin's cult of personality and removed Gulag history from the public eye, as it only served to bring the state under scrutiny.[2] By the late 1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev and his policy of "glasnost" allowed for another examination of history, but even he experienced a balancing act between modernization and loyalty to the Soviet regime.

In response to this lack of aid for survivors, many activists took matters into their own hands. They practiced "samizdat" underground and produced collections such as *Pamiat'* in order to publish works highlighting Gulag survivors to both domestic and international audiences. These "dissidents" became the predecessors and members of the International Memorial Society, which emerged in Moscow as the leading organization grappling with the public memory of a post-totalitarian Russia. Ultimately, Gulag survivors and other human rights advocates challenged selective destalinization and historical revisionism over time through their preservation and publication of documents, public outreach, and creation of organizations such as Memorial. While activists have continued to face state resistance in the form of civic harassment and legalization issues, initiatives such as Memorial nonetheless reflect an ongoing endeavor for individuals to do their own memory work, lest their histories be forgotten and manipulated for political pursuits.

The Gulag: Internment, Release, and the Struggle of Re-Entry

In the Soviet Union, the Gulag reached its peak under Stalin and continued well after World War II. The acronym stood for Glavnoe Upravlenie ispravitel'no-trudovykh LAGerei, or the Main Administration of Corrective Labor Camps that oversaw forced labor across the country.[3] The Gulag served as the main Soviet Penal system and was a useful tool to suppress real—or imagined—opposition to the Communist Party's leadership.

1. Nanci Adler, "The Rediscovery of Soviet History," *Victims of Soviet Terror: The Story of the Memorial Movement*, (Westport; Connecticut; London: Praeger, 1993), 42.

2. Stephen F. Cohen, "The Victims Return: Gulag Survivors under Khrushchev" in *Political Violence: Belief, Behavior, and Legitimation*, https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230616240_4, 64.

3. "Introduction: Stalin's Gulag," *Soviet Forced Labor Camps and the Struggle for Freedom*, Center for History and New Media, George Mason University, http://gulaghistory.org/nps/onlineexhibit/stalin/.

By the late 1930s, arrests were indiscriminate, some people taken off the street or surprised in their beds during nightly roundups.[4] Professor Kate Brown describes how "One man was detained simply because he had a long beard, which suggested he might be a radical Muslim cleric."[5] While common criminals were abundant in the Gulag, average citizens were also targeted because the term "treason" was arbitrarily understood and thus applied to any remote suspicion. From 1929-1953, four hundred seventy-six camp complexes existed in the Gulags, which does not even account for the hundreds of "lagpunkts," or smaller units, that continued to expand.[6] Once in the camps, inmates were called "zeks" and classified by sentence, profession, and "trudosposobnost," or work capacity.[7] They would be regulated in the "zona," a square or rectangular prison area that gave guards in watchtowers full surveillance and mobility.[8] The camps became an economic network, in which prisoners extracted resources like minerals and wood or grew crops in a harsh, sub-zero environment. Eighteen million people were subjected to the system, and at least one and a half million people were murdered or died from malnutrition, disease, and injury.[9] These numbers reflect the fact that while the size of the Gulag was reduced after Stalin's death and technically no longer existed by 1960 on paper, forced labor camps continued to operate and produce victims well into Gorbachev's leadership.[10]

Upon their release from the camps, former Russian inmates experienced varying degrees of socioeconomic displacement and discrimination during the rehabilitation process. Legally, rehabilitation is a two-fold pursuit, in which a survivor of the Gulag or their heirs can prove innocence against the original imprisonment accusation and also be compensated for the internment.[11] However, despite these parameters, victims were left unrecognized for many decades, and for those still living, finding work or acceptance from even loved ones proved to be difficult. In her autobiographical work, musician Elinor Lipper describes the circumstances of an ex-inmate prior to Stalin's death: "The state pays a released prisoner's traveling expenses from the camp to his place of settlement. Wherever he goes, he is at once branded as a former convict. These regulations apply to the entire Soviet Union."[12] Though a former prisoner may have received an internal passport and traveling privileges, in every corner of Russia, they would be followed by their previous criminal status. The weight of such a label and the treatment that came with it stayed consistent after 1953. Gulag survivors had ongoing difficulty being hired in their area of expertise, and would be rejected or fired if their applications were discovered in the NKVD-MGB system.[13] Moscow journalist Irina Sherbakova establishes that "When release came, after the death of Stalin, it was neither anticipated nor easy… Release demanded trouble, letters, and petitions. Re-entry into ordinary life was slow. They had long struggles to win rehabilitation, a flat, or a pension."[14] The process placed a great deal of responsibility on the individual or their family to appeal, as opposed to having the state immediately pay its dues. In fact, Alexander Etkind provides the example of officially rehabilitated survivors in St. Petersburg only receiving a sum of fifty U.S. dollars a month for their suffering.[15] Such results discouraged people from seeking justice and sharing their history.

4. Kate Brown, "Out of Solitary Confinement: The History of the Gulag," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8, no. 1 (2007): 67-103. doi:10.1353/kri.2007.0001.

5. Ibid.

6. Anne Applebaum, "Life in the Camps," *Gulag: A History*. (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 181.

7. Ibid, 185.

8. Ibid, 185.

9. Ibid, 200.

10. "Introduction: Stalin's Gulag."

11. Alexander Etkind, "Hard and Soft in Cultural Memory: Political Mourning in Russia and Germany," *Grey Room*, no. 16 (2004): 36-59, www.jstor.org/stable/20442652, 42.

12. Elinor Lipper, "After the War," *Eleven Years In Soviet Prison Camps* (San Francisco: Hauraki Publishing, 2015), ProQuest Ebook Central, 197.

13. Cathy A. Frierson and Semyon S. Vilensky, *Children of the Gulag*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 369.

14. Irina Sherbakova. "The Gulag in Memory," *International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories: Memory and Totalitarianism*, edited by Luisa Passerini, Vol. 1, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 105.

15. Etkind, 42.

In addition to monetary difficulties, living victims of the Gulag encountered issues in facing their fellow Russians, particularly with regards to parents and their children. Time served in forced labor camps took a toll on the person long after they returned to society, which included damaging their interpersonal relationships and jeopardizing the status of their family. Anna Larina conveys the anxious thoughts running through her head before the reunion with her eldest son after decades of imprisonment: "I was about to see my son, but he was an unknown young man. What kind of person would he be, after being brought up in a children's home? Would we find a common language? Would he be able to understand me? Would he consider my having other children a betrayal to himself, and reproach me?"[16] Like several other parents who survived the Gulag, Larina was unable to be there for a major part of her son's youth. Babies and younger children allocated to orphanages or other homes often grew up not knowing their parents, and if brought back together, had a hard time forming a bond.[17] Furthermore, Leon Aron explains that "For the children of the 'enemies of the people,' their parents' sentence was theirs too… their mothers' and fathers' 'crimes' haunted them all their lives."[18] Not only would the victims themselves have to carry the title of criminal, but by extension, their children found themselves barred from the same opportunities.

Selective Destalinization: The Progress and Limits

During the transition from Stalin to Khrushchev, Russian society experienced a sociopolitical "thaw" that affected the ways in which both the State and individuals interacted with and studied the past. Khrushchev was the first Soviet leader to denounce the crimes of Stalin and allow for a reexamination of twentieth century history.[19] His secret speech to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956 signaled a move towards relative liberalism in the media and the publication of materials otherwise taboo in Russia, such as the Gulag camps, political repression, and Stalin's wartime failures.[20] Anne Applebaum states that "Slowly, vanished names began to reappear in official publications.... Characters hitherto unacceptable in Soviet fiction—greedy bureaucrats, returning camp inmates—began to appear in published novels."[21] The new lifts on censorship corresponded to Khrushchev's willingness to expose the Stalinist past. Prior to Khrushchev, most Soviet writers feared for their lives if they published a piece outside of Party standards and would not have seen such leniency. However, with the "thaw," readers could access several literary works about the purges and began to contemplate the ramifications of state-sponsored repressions.[22] The effects on Gulag survivors gained momentum soon after: three years prior to the secret speech, about 7,000 people had been rehabilitated, as opposed to the 617,000 and growing in the ten months after that February.[23] This was a tangible result of public discourse on the Gulag and how to bring newly-released inmates back into the folds of society. However, while Khrushchev's destalinization

16. Anna Larina, "Reunion with Yura in 1956, "*This I Cannot Forget: The Memoirs of Nikolai Bukharin's Widow*, (London: Hutchinson, 1993), 319.

17. Leon Aron, "'The Innocent, the Slandered, the Exterminated,'" *Roads to the Temple: Truth, Memory, Ideas, and Ideals in the Making of the Russian Revolution, 1987-1991*, (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2012), www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1npp2p.10, 82.

18. Ibid, 82.

19. Barbara Martin, "History as Dissent: Independent Historians in the Late Soviet Era and Post-Soviet Russia: From 'Pamiat' to 'Memorial, '" *Dissent! Refracted: Histories, Aesthetics and Cultures of Dissent*, edited by Dorfman Ben, (Frankfurt Am Main: Peter Lang AG, 2016), www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv2t4dpq.5, 50.

20. Ibid, 51.

21. Applebaum, "Thaw—and Release," 520.

22. Kathleen E. Smith, "From Petitioners to Protesters: The Birth of the Memorial Society," *Remembering Stalin's Victims: Popular Memory and the End of the USSR*, (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1996), www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctv1nhpk5.6, 171.

23. Applebaum, 509.

campaign helped put the Soviet past on the minds of people and initiate the process of rehabilitation, it also became a selective ploy for him to consolidate his rule and strengthen Soviet ideals, rather than truly reassess them. Khrushchev relied on the exposure of Stalin's crimes as a form of propaganda to disparage political opponents, which truly took flight through the mass publication of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. As a former inmate, Solzhenitsyn wrote extensively about his experiences and helped publicize the Gulag, especially in the West. Applebaum stresses that *Ivan Denisovich* "was not optimistic, and it was not a morality tale. The sufferings of its heroes were pointless. The work they did was exhausting and draining… The Party did not triumph in the end, and communism did not emerge the victor."[24] Unlike other books at the time, which either glossed over Gulag history or associated the heroes' pain with their eventual salvation through the Communist Party, *Ivan Denisovich* was a story about the Everyman of the Gulag and the harsh conditions he faced; it steered clear of socialist realism, or the idealized Soviet narrative, while still retaining a fictional, accessible medium. Throughout the book, the title character provides readers with raw information such as "In camp the squad leader is everything: a good one will give you a second life; a bad one will put you in your coffin."[25] At other times, he cuts no corners in telling his fellow inmates that "'Prayers are like those appeals of ours. Either they don't get through or they're returned with 'rejected' scrawled across 'em.'"[26] In both of these instances, the protagonist conveys the arbitrary nature of the Gulag and how a prisoner's existence can end without a moment's notice; there are no Soviet winners, only the lucky ones. This approach to the past was radically different from the historical revisionism and scarcity of Gulag information in prior years.[27] As such, *Ivan Denisovich* became a timely piece that complemented Khrushchev's destalinization in both its exposure of the Stalinist regime and its propaganda potential.

The editor-in-chief of *Novyi Mir* (New World), Aleksandr Tvardovsky, became the enthusiastic bridge between Khrushchev's pursuits and Solzhenitsyn's storytelling. Applebaum explains how Tvardovsky "wanted to publish [*Ivan Denisovich*], but knew that if he simply had the story typeset and sent off to the censors, they would ban it immediately" due to its grisly details, and thus, wrote a preface that presented the narrative to Khrushchev "as a weapon against his enemies."[28] This process came "After much back and forth… and a few changes to the manuscript—Solzhenitsyn was persuaded to add at least one 'positive hero,' and to include a token condemnation of Ukrainian nationalism."[29] Though having to reflect the State's desires to a certain degree, Solzhenitsyn soon found himself riding on a wave of success. His novel received Khrushchev's approval for its nonconformity and effectiveness in silencing opponents, as well as praise from State newspapers such as *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* for the "struggle against the [Stalin] personality cult and its consequences."[30] Furthermore, both current and former inmates wrote letters addressing the impact *Ivan Denisovich* had on them and their healing process.[31] However, the positive reception would be short-lived, as Khrushchev was deposed and Solzhenitsyn's increasing outspokenness following the publication of *Ivan Denisovich* landed him expulsion from the Writers' Union in 1969 and subsequent exile from Russia in 1974 under Leonid Brezhnev.[32]

Though Khrushchev made important advances for Gulag survivors and media, the balancing act could only sustain itself for so long and revealed a more complicated relationship between destalinization and the State. Janusz Bardach, who was imprisoned in the Siberian gold mine, Kolyma—known as the harshest Gulag internment—makes a chilling parallel in his second memoir:

> Although encouraged by the changes and relishing the feeling of personal freedom, I remained skeptical about how far they would go. The Party bureaucracy and the remaining apparatus of the secret police wouldn't easily give up their positions of power. Khrushchev and the new Party leadership impressed me, but on the faces of Khrushchev's supporters I could see the same fervor that was on the faces of those who had supported Stalin.[33]

Bardach was neither impressed by nor trusted the impassioned crowd and Khrushchev. Here, the writer predicted the limitations of selective destalinization and how, at the core of the reforms, existed a strain of old Soviet idealism and oversight that held the current leadership back from a true historical reckoning. It was only a matter of time before the state revealed the extent of its commitment to former Gulag inmates.

Sure enough, the Party continued to tightly control all aspects of rehabilitation and restitution.[34] Khrushchev's choices would never fully bring the past to light, so long as he continued to appeal to both elites and survivors. Though he lifted certain aspects of censorship on the Gulag, he diminished the scope of past repressions and ultimately made the Party out to be the greatest victim of Stalinism rather than individual Russians.[35] As Kathleen E. Smith states, Khrushchev "chose to reform the political system… [He] believed that judicious reform could bolster the regime's legitimacy without unleashing a revolt from below."[36] He felt that by liberalizing media, restructuring the Gulag and the release of prisoners, and opening up discourse over Stalinism all within State reason, he could toe the line between progress and loyalty. Unfortunately, as demonstrated by the shelving of Solzhenitsyn's *Ivan Denisovich*, there were more Party zealots to deal with than first believed. Applebaum notes that: "If the Soviet Union's elite were to accept that the portrait of Ivan Denisovich was authentic, that meant admitting that innocent people had endured pointless suffering. If the camps had really been stupid and wasteful and tragic, that meant that the Soviet Union was stupid and wasteful and tragic too."[37] For a time, Khrushchev's destalinization seemed to open up discussion on issues of memory, until the scales tipped in favor of conservative Party ideals that did not prioritize or uplift Gulag survivors.

24. Ibid, 523

25. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1963), 52.

26. Ibid, 154.

27. See Kevin M.F. Platt and David Brandenberger, "Terribly Pragmatic: Rewriting the History of Ivan IV's Reign, 1937-1956" in *Epic Revisionism: Russian History and Literature as Stalinist Propaganda,* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 170. Under Stalin, the Party's preoccupation with state-building and legitimacy resulted in the mythologizing of figures like Ivan the Terrible in media, whose reputation of cruel excesses and treatment of Russia's enemies was accordingly "rehabilitated."

28. Applebaum, 523.

29. Ibid, 523.

30. Ibid, 523.

31. Ibid, 524.

32. Martin, 54.

33. Janusz Bardach and Kathleen Gleeson, "The End of Terror," *Surviving Freedom: After the Gulag,* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 233-234.

34. Smith, 171.

35. Smith, "Khrushchev's Thaw: Selective Destalinization," 26.

36. Ibid, 20.

37. Applebaum, 525.

Historical Revisionism and the Return of Stalin

With Khrushchev's fall in 1964 and the rise of leaders such as Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, and Konstantin Chernenko, the Russian people experienced a "freeze" that characterized a period of Stalinist resurgence and stricter censorship from the 1960s to the early 80s. After a decade of relative leniency and victims of Stalin's terror finding their footing, publications on sensitive issues of the past, such as Gulag memoirs, disappeared from presses and were forced to move underground as Stalinist revisions took their place.[38] Under Brezhnev, Khrushchev and his attempts at destalinization were denounced, soon to be replaced by myth-making. Catherine Merridale describes how few people could ignore "Victory Day" in the 1970s and early 1980s, describing "The banners were enormous, thousands of them… Monumental posters also came out of store, some to be draped across the fronts of public buildings. There were twenty-foot portraits of Lenin and Marx, there were hammers and sickles, and there was always a supply of Brezhnevs… posed to show all the amazing medals that he had awarded to himself."[39] At the same time, Herman Ermolaev asserts that "censors condoned the influx of material resurrecting the cult of Stalin. These restorations [included] characters' references to Stalin as 'a great man in Moscow' and 'our beloved Stalin.' His name [reemerged] in the phrase 'One must know the teaching Marx, Lenin, and Stalin.'"[40] No longer was the priority to correct wrongdoings and uplift those who had experienced terror, but rather resurrect the image of a great State that upheld Communist ideals, managed great feats during the war, and could do no harm to its own people.

When ex-KGB head Yuri Andropov succeeded Brezhnev, he ensured less threats to the State through stricter camps and prisons, heavier surveillance, and increased civic harassment of dissidents. Thanks to his efforts, the early 1980s are remembered as "the most repressive era in post-Stalinist Soviet history. It was as if the pressure within the system had to reach a boiling point, just before the system itself broke down altogether."[41] Though only a year in office, Chernenko closely followed disciplinary suit by urging editorial boards to be stricter with ideological screenings of written works.[42] These measures to almost expunge Gulag history resulted in only twenty-four people being rehabilitated between 1964 and 1987, as opposed to the near million people under Khrushchev.[43] To the leadership of the new State who subscribed to Stalin's cult of personality, survivors were a "political embarrassment" and their rehabilitation "served as a reproach regarding both a past which the Party could not defend and a present to which the Party was not adapted."[44] The select wave of circulated memoirs, personal accounts, and discussions under Khrushchev were enough to frighten state officials, revealing "that their power and privileges were also the product of the victimization of millions of their fellow citizens…. They were 'afraid of History.'"[45] In order to avoid culpability and maintain the Party's ideological trajectory, these leaders would have to anonymize evidence of the Gulag and its former inmates once more.

38. Adler, "1987-88: Gaining Support," 51.

39. Merridale, 297

40. Herman Ermolaev, "Censorship in 1965-1984: The Freeze" in *Censorship in Soviet Literature*, 1917-1991, (Lanham: Roman & Littlefield, 1997), 189.

41. Applebaum, "The 1980s: Smashing Statues," 553.

42. Ermolaev, 182.

43. Applebaum, 557.

44. Nanci Adler, "The Politics of Readaptation and Resocialization Procedures," *The Gulag Survivor: Beyond the Soviet System*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 179.

45. Cohen, 61.

Indeed, during the freeze, Gulag survivors and their families increasingly found themselves unable to be recognized and have their stories heard at home. In his novel *Everything Flows*, written after Soviet officials barred his first Gulag piece *Life and Fate* in 1960, Vasily Grossman captures the ensuing period of silence: "Barbed wire, it seemed, was no longer necessary; life outside the barbed wire had become, in its essence, no different from that of the barracks…. What [the survivor] observed now was the same pitiful weakness, the same cruelty, the same greed and the same terror that he had seen in the camps."[46] Lydia Chukovskaya, among other women who had been widowed by the Gulag, further lamented the censorship of literary works and persecution of writers, which increased after the 1966 Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel case. In a 1968 newspaper article, she wrote that "Without the free word, there are no free people; without the independent word, there can be no great nation capable of internal change."[47] Here, she suggests that despite its propagandistic displays of greatness, the state cannot truly claim that status unless its people are able to access and guide public discourse, and in this context, memory as well. This was echoed by many survivors, including historian Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko, who had been imprisoned for thirteen years: "It is the duty of every honest person to write the truth about Stalin. A duty to those who died at his hands, to those who survived that dark night, to those who will come after us."[48] Sure enough, even as the State took measures to heighten censorship, the responsibility felt by writers and activists pushed them to find ways around those restrictions.

46. Vasily Grossman, *Everything Flows*, translated by Robert Chandler, Elizabeth Chandler, and Anna Aslanyan, (New York: New York Review Books, 2010), 92, 139-140.

47 Antonella D'Amelia, "'Without the Free Word, There Are No Free People': Lydia Chukovskaya's Writings on Terror and Censorship" in *Totalitarian Societies and Democratic Transition: Essays in Memory of Victor Zaslavsky*, (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2017), www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctt1pq341b.16, 312.

48. Cohen, 66.

49. Ibid, 535-536.

50. Ibid, 536.

51. Misha Friedman and Masha Gessen. "Sergei Kovaliov," *Never Remember: Searching for Stalin's Gulags in Putin's Russia*, (New York: Columbia Global Reports, 2018), 99.

Samizdat: Human Rights, Memory Work, and The Case of Pamiat'

Despite the increased surveillance of Soviet leadership and the restoration of Stalin, censorship from 1964-1985 was inconsistent enough that activists could undermine State efforts and publish their writings underground. Throughout these years, three of the most important themes of *samizdat*, or underground "self-publishing" of censored materials, were the history of Stalinism and the Gulag, as well as the persecution of dissidents.[49] Applebaum stresses that "Samizdat networks continued to print and distribute copies of the [banned] works of Solzhenitsyn" and that "it was thanks to samizdat—and particularly its distribution abroad—that the human rights advocates would gain… a far wider international forum."[50] Though writers like Solzhenitsyn were indefinitely censored, those practicing samizdat recovered materials and continued to circulate them in different spheres, even with audiences overseas to spread awareness. By 1975, this strategy was well-synced to the monitoring of the Helsinki Accords, which promised to hold the Soviet Union and other nations accountable for human rights violations.[51] It was important to these so-called "dissidents" that the personal accounts of Gulag survivors and other Soviet victims not be lost in Brezhnev's "freeze"; they could no longer allow the State to handle affairs like the telling and preservation of history.

Furthermore, not only did these activists work around the censorship of memoirs and books pertaining to Stalin's crimes, but also conducted independent historical research and archival work, which generated the publication *Pamiat'* (Memory). Starting in 1976, *Pamiat'* was comprised of the lead editor and historian Arseny Roginsky, as well as an array of human rights activists who all belonged to the intelligentsia in some form.[52] These advocates collected materials by asking readers from the Soviet Union and abroad to send in pieces such as memoirs, diaries, letters, oral testimonies, essays, and official documents.[53] As Martin and her colleague Anton Sveshnikov argue, "The format of a periodical publication would allow readers to enter into a dialogue with the editors by submitting material for publication or offering their remarks, corrections, and comments."[54] Pamiat' called for readers to actively participate in the distribution and archiving of memory; this was a departure from the longest running samizdat periodical, *Chronicle of Current Events*, which focused less on Stalin-era repressions and left people to draw conclusions from historical documents presented.[55] In order to protect themselves and those contributing works, *Pamiat'* "anonymized to prevent the identification of their origin or author" while "editors and contributors also had to hide behind pseudonyms."[56] However, by 1982, the collection could no longer be in operation, as its members underwent house searches and job resignations; Roginsky was also on trial for his outspokenness in 1981.[57] Nonetheless, the activism of *Pamiat'* paved the path for future advocacy.

Glasnost and Activism: The Emergence and Importance of Memorial

Under Gorbachev, the era of *perestroika* (reform) and glasnost (openness) reduced the centralization of media constraints but came to repeat the selective nature of Khrushchev's destalinization. Unlike Khrushchev, whose denouncement of Stalin began in secrecy and lifted certain censorship over media and creative intelligentsia, Gorbachev allowed for the greater public to participate in democratization.[58] As a result, by 1986 people began to form and join "nyeformaly", or informal non-State organizations that appealed for special interests and different causes.[59] However, neither Gorbachev nor his administration could have foreseen the effects of glasnost and how it served as an even greater "thaw." More and more "nyeformaly" groups such as the 1987 Klub Perestroika and Demokraticheskii Soiuz (Democratic Union) began to trickle into society, "[publicizing] the contradictions between the regime's talk of glasnost and democratization and its restrictive policies" by showing up to demonstrations and taking cases to court.[60] Though Gorbachev presented himself as the most liberal leader the Soviet Union had seen yet, who encouraged socialist pluralism, he "did not intend to put the people in a position to judge or protest his policies."[61] Glasnost may have lessened the number of forbidden topics on the Soviet past, but it did not abolish the control system or make the Party any more accepting of criticism. Merridale explains how "[*glasnost*] encouraged a form of public remorse, but only in limited quantities. There were no early plans for an open-ended policy of truth and reparation," as Gorbachev desired "acceptance for the idea that pluralism and innovation were containable within the structure of single party rule."[62] While the Central Committee's own former members were being rehabilitated in the late 1980s, such as Anna Lorina's husband Nikolai Bukharin,[63] the State aimed to curb efforts to discuss and remember the past that did not align with Party sentiments.

When Memorial first formed, many Russians thought little of what it would achieve. The grassroots organization was small, headed by those such as former *Pamiat'* editor Arseny Roginsky and Sergei Kovalev and consisting of eleven total people gathering signatures to support the creation of a monument for the victims of Stalin.[64] However, Memorial distinguished itself quickly in its demands, mission, and pursuit of legalization. The group understood its main mission as two-fold: "a historical direction, focused on the study of the history of political repression, which constituted the natural continuation of the work of *Pamiat'*; and a human rights defense direction inherited from the struggle of past dissidence."[65] In order to legitimize themselves, Adler asserts that Memorial "emphasized the fact that their activity was in accordance with Soviet law and that they were not an underground organization, but one that adheres to the spirit and letter of the Soviet Constitution."[66] Though Memorial intended to do its work apart from the State and its control, the organization came to the conclusion that to gain support and maintain itself, it would still have to conciliate with the apparatus to some degree. One of the first ways in which it demonstrated this was by sending members onto the streets of Moscow to inform citizens about the organization and to ask for signatures petitioning the Supreme Soviet for permission to construct a monument for the victims of Stalinism, as well as a research center to further study this history.[67] Prior to this November activity in 1987, the group had informed authorities of their activities, "listing the times and locations at which members would appear and expressed the hope that the city council would support its initiative."[68] Rather than taking a hostile stance against the state like some "nyeformaly" had, Memorial intended to challenge the State's commitment to liberalization through legitimate, civil means.

This approach to the past soon garnered Memorial important attention from press and sponsors alike. Halfway through 1988, Memorial gained the backing of the journals *Literaturnaia gazeta* and *Ogonek*, as well as several powerful institutional sponsors like the Artists' and Filmmakers' unions.[69] Human rights activists Catherine A. Fitzpatrick and Lyudmila Alexeyeva, who were on the ground at the time, report that "By the end of 1988, Memorial had grown into a mass movement of some 15,000 to 20,000 active supporters and had spread to many other cities in the Russian Republic, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Byelorussia and elsewhere."[70] This led to the successful erection of a monument on Lubyanka Square in Moscow, which consists of a large stone from the Solovetsky Islands, where the first Gulag camp emerged.[71] Promptly, the organization found itself receiving several letters, memoirs, and other materials from former Gulag inmates and leading memorialization efforts. In fact, even Party

52. Martin, 59.

53. Ibid, 58.

54. Barbara Martin and Anton Sveshnikov, "Between Scholarship and Dissidence: The Dissident Historical Collection Pamiat' (1975-1982)," *Slavic Review*, vol. 76 (2017), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

55. Ibid.

56. Martin, 60.

57. Ibid, 61.

58. Smith, 78.

59. Ibid, 80.

60. Ibid, 85.

61. Ibid, 79.

62. Merridale, 304.

63. Ibid, 304.

64. Fitzpatrick, 62.

65. Martin, 66.

66. Adler, 51.

67. Smith, 86.

68. Ibid, 86.

69. Ibid, 90.

70. Fitzpatrick and Alexeyeva, 63.

71. Applebaum, "Epilogue: Memory," 568.

officials began to participate in the renewed rehabilitation process. For instance, in the Chita region of Siberia, Adler states that "KGB officers were [helping] relatives of victims gain access to archives on Stalin's repressions. Alexei Solovyov, the KGB deputy director of the region, estimated that 11,332 people had been arrested and/or disappeared in this area between 1934 and 1939."[72]

In 1989, Memorial held its official founding meeting and continued to expand its memory work by hosting public events and projects, as well as supporting the expansion of other archival groups. Student activists Daria Khubova, Andrei Ivankiev, and Tonia Sharova witnessed Memorial organize an exhibition about the camps in Moscow's Palace of Culture in Spring 1989, stating "for the first time there were maps, documents, and photographs on public display. The thousands of visitors included old people standing there with placards hanging in front of them, saying, 'Does anyone else remember X camp?' They simply wanted to share these personal memories."[73] Later that year, these students became the first to join the Oral History Centre at the Moscow State Institute, which was jointly sponsored by the Moscow Historical and Archives Institute and Memorial.[74] There, people would be able to conduct fieldwork, interview survivors, and archive materials; the creation of other databases would soon follow. Such educational and commemorative endeavors eventually contributed to the passing of the 1991 "Law on the Rehabilitation of Victims and Political Repressions" and naming October 30th as the "Day of Memory of Victims of Political Repressions."[75] Legislation in 1996 further allowed the children of "enemies of the people" to call themselves "victims" rather than the "aggrieved"; this status made them eligible for rehabilitation, as many had grown up in orphanages and experienced the same alienation as that of their parents.[76] Finally, in the following year, the converted labor camp Perm-36 became the first site of Gulag memory opened to visitors.[77]

However, every step of the way, Memorial faced civic harassment and issues with its legalization from the State. Gorbachev may have opened the doors once more to historical discussion and debate, but he had not sanctioned Memorial. As Smith describes, the police still "interrogated the activists, threatened them with repercussions at work, and on occasion turned them over to the courts for 'malicious failure to obey legal orders of representatives of the authorities.'"[78] No matter how presentable Memorial appeared, the organization continued to experience interference from State officials, who took measures to delegitimize the need for justice for Gulag survivors. Fitzpatrick and Alexeyeva explain how in 1990, not all 226 chapters of Memorial were registered, which meant that they were forbidden access to a bank account and could not draw upon public contributions.[79] Because Memorial sought to become an established, institutionalized movement, it became the biggest potential threat to the legitimacy of the Soviet regime and breaking the Party's monopoly.[80] If the State was not incarcerating Memorial activists, it attempted to co-opt projects, Memorial fearing "that if the authorities took up the idea of commemorating victims, the whole thing might still come to nothing, or the project might be reduced to a statue of a 'brave prisoner' in the socialist realist style."[81] Memorial grappled with not only retaining its independence and being authorized as an organization, but also how it would prevent its historiographical efforts from fitting the mold of State ideals.

72. Adler, 55.

73. Daria Khubova, Andrei Ivankiev, and Tonia Sharova, "After Glasnost: Oral History in the Soviet Union," *International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories: Memory and Totalitarianism*, edited by Luisa Passerini, Vol.1, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 90.

74. Ibid, 93.

75. Martin, 70-71.

76. Nanci Adler, "Reconciliation with–or Rehabilitation of – the Soviet Past?" in *Memory Studies* 5, no. 3 (July 2012): 327–38, doi: 10.1177/1750698012443889.

77. Ibid.

78. Smith, 86.

79. Fitzpatrick and Alexeyeva, 64.

80. Martin, 65.

81. Smith, 89.

82. Sherbakova, 114.

Conclusion: The Fight is Not Over

For most of the twentieth century, the Russian people and their leadership have had what scholars describe as an "ambivalent" relationship with their modern history. As individuals thought to have permanently disappeared resurfaced en masse in the years following his death, society found it increasingly difficult to ignore the consequences of Stalinism. The emergence of Memorial demonstrates the need for people to do their own memory work separate from an unreliable State. The group did not want the Party to continue to control the rehabilitation and commemoration processes, painting both in the light of Soviet ideals rather than presenting the reality of victims. Sherbakova explains the significance and impact of Memorial best with her experience at a 1990 Moscow meeting:

> [One] woman, who had been arrested in about 1939, said to me in a completely calm voice: 'but over there is the man who informed on me.' And she greeted him quite normally. Catching my perplexed expression, she explained: 'Of course we were then just eighteen, his parents were old Bolsheviks who were repressed, and then they tried to recruit me too. And of course he was repressed later on himself.' I felt that what she said was the outcome not of a lack of concern for or forgetting of her past, but of a realization, which now at last had come to people, of the shameful things which the system itself had done to them.[82]

Here, both Sherbakova and the Gulag survivor come to understand that history was more nuanced than just perpetrators and victims, and that to a degree, everyone had been forced to play a part in this system. If not for organizations like Memorial, healing interactions like this one would not have occurred. This battle to remember and honor victims continues, even in a post-Soviet Russia under Vladimir Putin, whose regime echoes sentiments of Brezhnev's "freeze."

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