# LEGACY

## A Journal of Student Scholarship

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# Dan Feldhaus

## A Struggle Over Status: Citizenship of Alexandrian Jews During the First Century CE

The city of Alexandria was in turmoil during the first century CE. This impressive metropolitan city was faced, after centuries of Greek rule, with domination by a foreign power. Proud of their Greek heritage and unsure of their status under Roman control, Alexandrian Greeks were desperately clinging to their previous power. They saw the Jewish population of the city receiving favors and extra privileges from the Romans. Fearing the potential loss of their status and power, the Alexandrian Greeks sought to more firmly establish their role as the controlling population.

In 38 CE an incident occurred that would ignite the tensions of the city. The Jewish King Agrippa I was passing through Alexandria on his way to his new kingdom. He did not bring a large entourage or seek to make a spectacle out of his visit, but the Jewish community in Alexandria held a massive parade in his honor. The Alexandrian Jews saw this as an opportunity to enlist Agrippa's aid in their dealings with his close friend, the Roman emperor Gaius.

The Alexandrian Greeks, offended by this Jewish king being publicly lauded in their city, held a parade of their own. They dressed a well-known beggar and idiot to resemble Agrippa and paraded him around the Jewish section of the city. Flaccus, the Roman prefect of Alexandria, had become increasingly dependent on the support of the Greek population and seized this as an opportunity to increase their favor. Soon after the mock parade, Flaccus declared the Alexandrian Jews aliens and intruders, and what has been called the first Jewish pogrom began soon after.

The Alexandrian Greeks poured into the Jewish quarter and began rounding up its inhabitants. They looted homes and defiled synagogues. In the following weeks the Jews were forced to remain in a small, crowded, and unsanitary section of the city and many died as a result. Jewish officials were falsely charged with crimes and publicly humiliated and tortured.

The Jewish philosopher and writer Philo Alexandrini was a native of Alexandria and witnessed this horrifying incident. He gives a vivid first hand account of the events.

> When the promiscuous and unruly Alexandrian mob discovered [the Emperor's dislike for Jews], it is supposed that a most opportune moment had come its way and it attacked us. It unmasked the hatred which had long been smoldering

> and threw everything into chaos and confusion. As if we had been surrendered by the Emperor to sufferings admitted to be of the severest kind or had been defeated in war, they attacked us with insane and bestial fury. They invaded our homes and drove the householders out, wives and children and all, so as to leave the houses unoccupied. They no longer waited for the darkness of night in fear of arrest, like burglars, to steal our furniture and treasures, but they carried them off openly in broad daylight and displayed them to those as they met, as people do who have inherited things or bought them… Greeks joined in driving many thousands of men, women and children out of the whole city into a very small part of it, like sheep or cattle to a pen.[1]

This riot brought underlying tensions between the Greeks and Jews to a boil, and after it ended nothing had been firmly settled. The Greeks had not rid themselves of the Jews, nor had they received any official action from Rome in their favor. In fact, a few months later the prefect Flaccus was brought to Rome in chains, exiled, and eventually executed at the emperor's order.

The fallout from this event would put into question exactly what the civic status of the Alexandrian Jew was. Were they Alexandrian citizens? Had they ever been? Did they even want to be, or was Alexandrian citizenship more a means to an end than a desire to join the Greek community? Or were they simply trying to hold on to rights and privileges that they had enjoyed without challenge for centuries? Although it is difficult to make concrete conclusions about events in the distant past, especially when the records are almost all extremely biased, it appears that the Jews as a whole were not Alexandrian citizens. They did hold a higher position in the city than the native Egyptian population, but were still of considerably lower status than their Greek neighbors. The evidence will show that the riots were a result of Greek resistance to the Jewish push for official recognition and affirmation of their status.

## Alexandria

To understand the situation in Alexandria during the first century CE and the tensions that existed there, we must first look at its history. Alexandria was a unique city, founded as the capital of Alexander the Great's empire. It was the center of Hellenized Egypt, and showed this heritage in its character and organization. Located at the mouth of the Nile, Alexandria rose to a prominence not found anywhere else in the

Greek world, with a commercial, intellectual, and cultural air surpassing that of any other Greek city of its time.[2] The city itself was often considered to be completely set apart from the surrounding countryside and was thought of as an oasis of civilization.[3] Upon Alexander's death, his massive territorial conquests were divided among three of his leading generals. Egypt became the dominion of the Ptolemaic dynasty that would last until Cleopatra lost it to the Romans in 31 BCE.

Alexandria had been the seat of the Ptolemaic kings, and would continue to host the Roman prefects, making it subject to direct control of the ruling authority.[4] It was a metropolitan city whose population consisted of a mix of peoples, which helped to fuel its cultural diversity, as well as tensions between groups. Under the Ptolemies, and continuing under Roman domination, the majority of enfranchised citizens of Alexandria were Greek, and the native Egyptian population rarely, if ever, enjoyed the elevated status of citizen.[5]

The Greek citizens dominated the city. Proud of their heritage and unsure of their status under Roman control, Alexandrian Greeks firmly held on to their elevated status and desperately tried to solidify their position in this new Roman world. There was constant friction between the Greek Alexandrians and their new Roman rulers, and the city was the site of several anti-Rome uprisings. This friction was also a major contributing factor to the anti-Jewish violence that erupted under the Romans.

The Jews had a history in Alexandria that went back to its foundation. The Jewish historian Josephus went to great lengths to prove that the Jews had played an important role in the history of the city. His book *Contra Apionem,* or *Against Apion*, was written in response to strong anti-Jewish allegations being made by an Egyptian named Apion who questioned the validity of Jewish claims to Alexandrian citizenship. Joesephus' arguments are admittedly biased, but historically credible. He maintains that sections of Alexandria were "presented to [the Jews] as their residence by Alexander, and they obtained privileges of a par with those of the Macedonians."[6] Under the Ptolemies many Jews continued to migrate to Egypt in a constant trickle so that by the first century CE there were as many as 1 million.[7]

There is a long-standing and well documented history of Jewish military service to the Ptolemies[8] and Josephus places great emphasis on their service to Alexander to support his arguments. Writing about Alexander's encouraging Jewish settlement in the newly founded Alexandria, Josephus says,

> For it was not lack of inhabitants to people the city, whose foundation he had so much at heart, that led Alexander to

assemble in it a colony of our nation. This privilege he con-
ferred on our people, after careful and thorough scrutiny, as
a reward of valor and fidelity… He entrusted the fortresses of
Egypt to their keeping, confident of their loyalty and bravery
as guards.[9]

Jews shared in the flourishing of Alexandria as a commercial and cul-
tural crossroads. Although they generally settled in an area known as the
"Delta" there is little or no evidence to show that this was an unwanted
arrangement.[10] Jewish assimilation of some aspects of Hellenized society
was enthusiastically pursued. There is evidence that within a few genera-
tions the Jews had almost completely adopted the Greek language, some
possibly even forgetting Hebrew. The Jewish community in Alexandria is
known to have relied upon Greek translations of their Hebrew scriptures
in their synagogues in Alexandria.[11]

Some Jews seem to have risen to prominent positions in Alexandria,
which may have contributed to tensions with Greeks there. Alexan-
drian Greeks saw some Jews who had attained great wealth as serious
competitors in commercial markets.[12] There are records of Jews being
employed as tax collectors, policemen, and even prominent and powerful
administrators.[13] But this by no means implies that all Jews in Egypt were
well off. In her book *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, E. Mary Smallwood
cites many references to Jews showing that the majority of them were
poor. Of the Jewish population as a whole she says, "The situation in
Egypt does not seem to have been the exception to the general rule that
the ancient world did not envy the Jew for his wealth but despised him
for his poverty."[14]

While the Jews did assimilate Hellenized culture in many ways, central
to their identity as Jews were their religious laws. The strict observance
of these laws prevented Jews from participating in many of the cultural
practices of the Greeks, which helped further the division between the
two peoples. For the Greeks, membership in the community "was above
all things a religious community united by the common service of their
ancestral gods,"[15] and Jews were not permitted by their laws to observe
these services.

We are beginning to see some of the factors that drove a wedge between
the Greek and Jewish populations in Alexandria and created a sometimes
vicious debate about citizenship. These divisions and animosity became
much more direct and open upon the Roman seizure of Alexandria. Greek
inhabitants of Alexandria did not necessarily welcome the Roman occupa-
tion, and often outright fought it. Although much of the previous admin-
istrative structure remained intact, the final rule now fell upon Romans,

not Greeks. The Jews, on the other hand, largely welcomed the Roman occupation of Alexandria.

It is likely not coincidental that Greek anti-Judaism began to be expressed in actual violence during the first century CE. Roman forces received Jewish assistance in 55, 48 and 30 BCE in their efforts to invade Egypt.[16] Their siding with the Romans dramatically added to tensions with Alexandrian Greeks, and it has been said that the Jews were "regarded [by Greeks] as traitors because of their pro-Roman action."[17]

There was one additional factor concerning Alexandrian Jews that dramatically changed Greek attitudes toward them after the Roman conquest. The Jewish community had long enjoyed a certain amount of self-rule within Alexandria. Since at least the 2nd century BCE, the Jews of Alexandria had what is known as a *politeuma*. A *politeuma* was a semi-autonomous political body that had its own constitution and officials and administered its own internal affairs. The Jewish *politeuma* in Alexandria was crucial in maintaining their ethnic cohesion. It was led by an ethnarch who was its highest administrative and judicial official, and consisted of a council of elders, a popular assembly, and a lawcourt for cases involving matters of Jewish law.[18] The presence of a *politeuma* within Greek cities was not unusual, but when Rome took over Alexandria it disbanded the Greek assembly there but left the Jewish one intact. All of a sudden the Jewish community had more authority over its population than did the Greek. This would be a sore point for many years and was one of the Jewish privileges that caused tensions between the two groups.

## Citizenship

To understand the debate about Jewish citizenship in Alexandria during the first century CE, we must first examine the history and benefits of citizenship in general. This will help us understand the Jewish quest for citizenship, and why the Alexandrian Greeks were so protective of it.

Citizenship in the ancient Mediterranean defined the civic status of individuals or groups and drew the lines of social stratification. Some of the benefits of Roman citizenship were access to legal protection, financial opportunities, and political powers such as voting rights and eligibility for political office. However, the definition of citizenship was often fluid, changing in meaning from one city or civilization to another.

In the early days of the Roman Republic, citizenship was used as a tool and reward to encourage the loyalty of newly conquered territories. The burgeoning empire extended citizenship to its allies, and withheld it from peoples who had resisted Roman dominance.[19] During the unification

of the Italian Peninsula, citizenship was often given to communities as a whole. As the Empire expanded it absorbed these communities, often leaving much of the original governing structure intact, but also bringing them under the control and protection of Rome. This "municipalization" of Italy brought both a literal and figurative sense of citizenship, creating a bond and common identity as Romans and gradually equalizing the value of citizenship regardless of place of origin.

As the Empire began to stretch its borders beyond the Italian peninsula, the concept, application, and methods of bestowing citizenship began to change. Instead of giving citizenship to entire communities as they had done closer to home, the Romans began to grant it on an individual basis. Masters often gave Roman citizenship to former slaves. The Roman Emperor could bestow citizenship as he wished. Granting citizenship as a reward for military service was used to both extend Rome's influence as well as meet the ever growing need for soldiers. As the borders grew, the connection between citizenship and a Latin cultural identity weakened.

The Jewish historian Josephus bases most of his defense of Alexandrian Jews' civic status on their history in Alexandria. He believes that the Jews had always held de-facto Alexandrian citizenship because of their long history going back to the city's foundations. When the city fell under Roman control, however, the issue became all the more important. Before Roman occupation, the Greeks were comfortable in their position within the city. They founded it, controlled it, and therefore were not threatened by the Jews. With Rome now the controlling power, the Greeks' status was less solid. The Romans upheld the elevated status of Alexandrian citizenship, but they also gave the Jewish population many special considerations and privileges, including the *politeuma* and the right to collect their own tax to be sent back to Jerusalem. Suddenly, the Greeks were not as sure about their position in the hierarchy. It was in this atmosphere of confusion and tension that Agrippa's visit sparked the riots in 38 CE.

## The Riots

During the 30's CE there had been an increasingly popular movement of nationalism in the Greek Alexandrian community. This movement was primarily opposed to the Roman occupation, but saw the Jewish community as a vulnerable and particularly offensive part of the Roman problem.[20] Greek merchants had suffered economic losses when the Romans took over transportation of exports, and the Jewish merchants had been favored.[21] Greek requests for an assembly of their own had been repeatedly denied, increasing their jealousy of the Jewish *politeuma*. Further infuriating the Greeks was the fact that the Jewish community

was actively seeking Alexandrian citizenship.

The key reason for this active pursuit of citizenship by Jews was the enforcement of the *laographia*, or poll tax. Under the Ptolemaic rulers, Alexandrian Jews had little reason to push for Alexandrian citizenship. They had their *politeuma* and religious freedom, and the only Jews who petitioned for the Alexandrian franchise were those who desired full assimilation into Hellenized society.[22] Under the Romans, Alexandrian citizens were exempt from this tax, and by being forced to pay it, Jews were being classified with the native Egyptians, the lowest class of people. Some historians argue that status was as much at stake as money. In her book *Alexandrian Citizenship During the Roman Principate*, Diana Delia argues that the Alexandrian Jews were not seeking citizenship, but the restoration of their prior status and privileges that had been removed.

During the reigns of both Augustus and Tiberius, these Jewish privileges had been firmly protected, but upon Gaius' ascension to the throne in March of 37 CE, the Greeks saw an opportunity to exact revenge on the Jews. Since 32 CE the Roman prefect A. Avillius Flaccus had held local rule over Alexandria, but he had been a vocal enemy of Gaius before his assumption of the throne. Fearing imperial retribution, Flaccus accepted the offer of support from Greek residents in exchange for his "surrender" of the Jews. At first this took the relatively mild shape of a less favorable attitude toward Jews in his legal and policy decisions, but mob action was soon to bring a different tone to the process.

In the summer of 38 CE King Agrippa I made his fateful visit to Alexandria. Jewish hopes of helping their cause by celebrating Agrippa were soon dashed. The riots began and hundreds of Jews, possibly thousands, were killed, robbed, and left homeless. The Alexandrian Greeks defiled their synagogues with images of the emperor, even though Roman law protected the Jewish religion.[23] False charges of stockpiling weapons were used to justify the invasion and looting of more Jewish homes weeks after the riots, and though no arms were found, several Jewish women were arrested. Shortly following Flaccus' arrest, both the Greek and Jewish communities sent their embassies to plead their cases to the emperor in Rome.

## The Primary Sources

Unfortunately, the actual papyri evidence from Alexandria itself is hard to come by. The water table and general humidity of the area have doomed all papyri buried there so we must look elsewhere for information. The main source of information comes from the two embassies sent to Rome. The renowned anti-Semite Apion, whose writings have regrettably not

been preserved, led the Greek embassy.  Fortunately, Josephus gives us some insight as to the claims Apion made in his *Against Apion.*  Most fortunate of all is that the Jewish embassy was headed by Philo, who recorded the meeting and events leading up to it in his *Legatio Ad Gaium*, or *Embassy to Gaius.*

Though we are fortunate to have these sources, we must remember that they were not written by objective observers.  At times it seems the question of citizenship is clearly answered, but we must take the bias of the authors into account. Since Apion's words are lost, we don't know exactly what his claims are, but we do know his reputation.  Josephus does provide us with a lengthy rebuttal of Apion's arguments, but it is hard to ignore his bias.  He has a talent for hyperbole and makes no effort to hide his contempt for Apion.  Also it is important to note that *Against Apion* was written between 95 and 100 CE, 60 years after the riots took place.  Often the reader is forced to wonder how much of Josephus is fact and how much is indignant opinion.  Philo provides the most well balanced information, although he is not totally free from bias, being a Jew from Alexandria himself.  His account does seem to be less fanciful than Josephus' wanderings in history, seeming to stick to the events of the day rather than arguing about the past.

Josephus makes his view on the matter quite clear: Jews do and always have had Alexandrian citizenship.  He describes how Alexander and his successors Ptolemy, Ptolemy III, Ptolemy Philometor, and Cleopatra "entrusted the whole of their realm to Jews, and placed their entire army under the command of Jewish generals."[24]  Apparently Apion made many claims seeking to refute the Jewish historical tradition, and at this Josephus takes great offense.  He speaks of the strict adherence of Jews to their traditional laws, and how this is reflected in their keeping of history.[25]

Josephus supports his claim of citizenship in the history of the city, reminding Apion of the letters of Alexander and Ptolemy, and the reiteration of those privileges by Julius Caesar.[26]  To Josephus, the idea that Jews might not be considered Alexandrian citizens is ludicrous, because "all persons invited to join a colony, however different their nationality, take the name of the founders… Our Jewish residents of Antioch are called Antiochines, having been granted rights of citizenship by its founder, Seleucus."[27] He also disputes Apion's charges that the Jews cannot be citizens because they worship different gods by charging that the Egyptians and Greeks are in a constant state of "bitter and implacable war on the subject of religion."[28]

Josephus provides a well written rebuttal of Apion, but falls short of making a convincing argument.  As good debaters often do, he inter-

changes terms where they suit his argument the best. First of all, when he stretches back in time to show the connection between Jews and Alexandrian rulers, he almost always speaks in terms of privileges and respect for Jews, not of citizenship. He equates the complex issue of citizenship simply to one of residence, saying that Jews live in Alexandria and are therefore Alexandrians. Given the complexity and importance of citizenship, this argument falls short of proving that Jews had always had the Alexandrian franchise.

Philo provides us with a more informative and more objective view in his works *Legatio ad Gaium* and *Flaccus*. The first tells the story of the embassies sent to Gaius after the riots, of which Philo himself was a member. In this book he describes the riots themselves while focusing on the Emperor Gaius as the chief culprit. Philo believes that Gaius' anti-Semitic views opened the door for the violence. In *Flaccus,* Philo again tells the story of the riots, but in much more detail and focusing more on Flaccus' role.

Unfortunately, in neither of these two works does he specifically speak about whether or not the Jews had Alexandrian citizenship, but he does shed some light on the debate. He makes it clear that there were Jews in Rome who had acquired Roman citizenship. Writing about Augustus Caesar's knowledge and acceptance of these Jews and their practices Philo says, "[Augustus] did not exile them from Rome or deprive them of their Roman citizenship because they remembered their Jewish nationality also."[29] This tells us that it was possible for Jews to have Roman citizenship without giving up their religion, which does weaken some arguments against Jews being kept from Alexandrian citizenship for religious reasons. Possibly the only strong piece of evidence supporting Alexandrian citizenship for Jews is found in *Flaccus*.

> When then his attack against our laws by seizing the meeting-houses without even leaving them their name appeared to be successful, he proceeded to another scheme, namely, the destruction of our citizenship, so that when our ancestral customs and our participation in political rights, the sole mooring on which our life was secured, had been cut away, we might undergo the worst misfortunes with no cable to cling to for safety."[30]

Considering the complexity of the term "citizen" it is necessary to analyze the translation to find exactly what word is being used and what it meant. Through careful examination we find the Greek word being used is                    . Diana Delia examines the usage of this word

and defines it as meaning, "a member of a community who shares in its deliberative and judicial authority. In other words, a πολιτεις is a person who actively exercises his political rights and defends his private rights at law."[31] Thus, it is possible that Philo was not saying that Alexandrian Jews were citizens per se, but that in this instance, πολιτεις Flaccus and the Greek Alexandrians involved in the riots were seeking to put an end to their political rights.

What Philo does clearly tell us many times in both works is that Jewish rights and privileges were being assaulted. He praises Julius and Augustus Caesar for granting the Jews privileges, such as the ability to collect a temple tax, and respecting their religious laws,[32] and curses Gaius[33] and Flaccus[34] for abrogating them. Political rights and religious privileges seem to be at the center of Philo's concerns for the Jewish people, not actual citizenship. At the end of his disheartening meeting with Gaius, which he describes as "more like a cross between a theatre and a prison than a lawcourt,"[35] Philo concludes *Legation ad Gaium* by reiterating his main concerns.

> If Gaius were to give in to our enemies, what other city would remain quiet? What city would refrain from attacking the Jews living in it? What synagogue would be left unmolested? What political right belonging to those who order their lives according to Jewish traditions would not be overthrown? Both the specifically Jewish Laws and their general rights vis-à-vis each individual city would be overthrown, shipwrecked, and sent to the bottom of the sea.[36]

But perhaps there is another reason altogether that Philo does not speak much of citizenship. In the introduction to her translation of *Legatio ad Gaium*, E. Mary Smallwood suggests that Philo was aware of the letter *Claudius to the Alexandrines*, which is seen by some historians as a "rebuke to the Jews" for seeking citizenship.[37] Shortly after the death of Gaius the new Emperor Claudius sent this letter to Alexandria to finally answer questions still lingering from the riots. Apparently two more embassies, one Jewish and one Greek, came to Rome to seek imperial intervention in the continuing conflict in Alexandria. In the letter Claudius is "unwilling to commit [himself] to a decided judgement"[38] about which party was responsible for the riot, but he leaves no doubt that he feels it is time for the matter to be ended. He commands that

> The Alexandrines show themselves forbearing and kindly toward the Jews who for many years have dwelt in the same city,

> and offer no outrage to them in the exercise of their traditional worship but permit them to observe their customs as in the time of Divus Augustus, which customs I also, after hearing both sides, have confirmed; and, on the other side, bid the Jews not to busy themselves about anything beyond what they have held hitherto, … but to profit by what they posses, and enjoy in a city not their own an abundance of all good things.[39]

Claudius' decision informs us of both what conditions existed before the riots, and how the future should be handled. It seems that his decisions would satisfy both groups, removing from the Alexandrians the fear that Jews might be allowed full citizenship, and reaffirming the religious and political rights that the Jews enjoyed before the reign of Gaius.

Josephus includes a "copy" of this letter in Book XIX of his *Jewish Antiquities*. The words quoted by Josephus send a much different message, which casts further doubt on his reliability. In his version, Claudius goes into great length about the honorable history of the Jews in Alexandria and agrees with Josephus' claim that the Jews have colonized "from the earliest times jointly with the Alexandrians and received equal civil rights from the kings."[40] Claudius' words as preserved by Josephus are much more generous to the Jews and confirm their Alexandrian citizenship. This seems typical of Josephus' tendency toward exaggeration or twisting things so that they fit his view. Josephus is motivated by a desire to reaffirm the long and honorable history of the Jews, and writes his own words of support into a "quoted" letter from a Roman emperor.

## Conclusions

It is undeniable that some Jews did posses the Alexandrian franchise.[41] There are many specific examples of individual Jews that held high positions in Alexandria, Philo himself being one. On the other hand, there are many more pieces of evidence indicating that not all Jews were enfranchised. There are large numbers of Jews that were included on the rolls of those who paid the *laographia,* including low ranking members of auxiliary military units, police officers, and merchants.[42] From these facts alone we can conclude that the Jews as a whole did not possess Alexandrian citizenship.

But were they seeking it? There are records that show that large numbers of Jews were petitioning for Alexandrian citizenship in the years leading up to the riots, but what was their motivation? The most pragmatic and believable possibility is that they were simply trying to avoid the cost and the stigma of paying the *laographia*, and Alexandrian

citizenship was the quickest route.  Some historians have suggested that the Alexandrian Jews were relying on Roman favor and support and the more ambitious among them wanted an improvement and were agitating for the Alexandrian franchise.  The Greeks might have responded to this with resistance, wanting to keep their elevated status as citizens to themselves.  Furthermore, for Jews, participation in many of the traditional Greek aspects of Alexandrian citizenship would directly conflict with their Jewish laws.  Greeks may have thought the Jews were trying to have the best of both worlds, enjoying the benefits of Alexandrian citizenship without participating in civic duties.

A few historians suggest the possibility of graded citizenship, using the confusion of terms, differences between Roman and Alexandrian citizenship, and extra privileges to argue that Jews occupied a kind of intermediate level of citizenship above native Egyptians but not quite on par with Greeks.  Delia argues "that no explicit evidence for graded citizenship at Alexandria exists,"[43] but goes on to admit that it is a possibility.  Delia's work defining the variety of terms applied to citizenship supports the idea that this was a complex issue.  The term Alexandrian could describe any resident of the city.  It required further clarification describing heritage, education, political representation, and status to truly define what kind of citizen a person was.

In my opinion, the idea of graded citizenship seems plausible.  I also believe it is possible that the Jews were truly interested in Roman citizenship and saw Alexandrian as the first step.  If they were seeking citizenship, Roman or Alexandrian, it was most likely just a means to an end. The riots were a result of Greek anger at the Jews' attempt to solidify, if not increase, the privileges they already had.  These opinions are firmly supported by Philo, who certainly focuses much more on rights and privileges than citizenship. The letter from Claudius upholds this view, as he tells the Jews to be thankful for what they have and not to push their luck.  Did the Jews as a group hold Alexandrian citizenship? In my opinion, no.  But perhaps they didn't really want it.

The push for citizenship was not rooted in a desire to be more like the Alexandrian Greeks.  If this were what the Jews wanted, they would only have had to give up their Jewish traditions and follow the Greek way of life.  In fact, many Jews did this, although they would not be considered true Jews under these conditions.  What the Jews wanted was an official affirmation of their status.  If they did want Alexandrian citizenship, they wanted it on their own terms.  This was unacceptable to Alexandrian Greeks who were also seeking to protect and reaffirm their own status.  The riots and their aftermath sent a clear message from both the Alexandrian Greeks, and eventually the Roman emperor.  The Jews

were allowed to remain in Alexandria, and by imperial decree maintained many of their prior rights and privileges, but there was no doubt that Alexandria was a Greek city in which Jews were tolerated foreigners. The riots set a precedent that showed the Jews that they could not necessarily count on Roman support. The Roman Emperor set Roman policy, and individual emperor's attitudes toward Jews varied greatly. Elsewhere in the Roman Empire Jews would receive the same message many times in the following years, often accompanied by violence and bloodshed that made the events in Alexandria look trivial.

## Notes

[1] Philo, *Philonis Alexandrini, Legatio ad Gaium*, ed. and trans. E. Mary Smallwood (Lieden: E.J. Brill, 1961), 120-24.

[2] Warren C. Hollister, *Roots of the Western Tradition, A Short History of the Ancient World,* 6th ed. (McGraw-Hill, 1996), 136.

[3] Diana Delia, *Alexandrian Citizenship During the Roman Principate* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 1.

[4] Aryeh Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr), 170.

[5] E. Mary Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule* (Lieden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill), 225.

[6] Josephus, *Against Apion*, II 35-36 in *Josephus in Nine Volumes*, trans. H. St. Thackeray (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).

[7] Smallwood, 120.

[8] Ibid., 221-22.

[9] Josephus, *Apion*, II 42-45.

[10] H. Idris Bell, ed., *Jews and Christians in Egypt* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1972), 10.

[11] Ernest Abel, *The Roots of Anti-Semitism* (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 1975), 39.

[12] Bell, 11.

[13] Kasher, 58.

[14] Smallwood, 223.

[15] Bell, 11.

[16] Smallwood, 224.

[17] Abel, 47.

[18] Smallwood, 227.

[19] A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973), 154.

[20] Smallwood, 235.

[21] Abel, 107.

[22] Ibid., 104.

[23] Smallwood, 239.

[24] Josephus, *Apion*, II. 48-49.

[25] Ibid., I. 42.

[26] Ibid., II. 37.

[27] Ibid., II. 39.

[28] Josephus, *Apion*, II 62-67.

29  Philo, *Legatio*, 157.
30  Philo, *Flaccus*, 53.
31  Delia, 12.
32  Philo, *Legatio*, 158 and 311.
33  Ibid, 134.
34  Philo, *Flaccus*, 52.
35  Philo, *Legatio*, 368.
36  Ibid., 371.
37  Smallwood, intro. *Philonis Alexandrini, Legatio ad Gaium*, ed. and trans. E. Mary Smallwood (Lieden: E.J. Brill), 12.
38  *Claudius to the Alexandrines,* vol. 13 in  H. Idris Bell, ed.,  *Jews and Christians in Egypt* (Westport : Greenwood Press, 1972).
39  *Claudius,* V  15.
40  Josephus, *Antiquities, Book XIX*, 281 in *Josephus, In Nine Volumes,*  trans. H. St. J. Thackeray (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).
41  Delia, 27.
42  Kasher, 79.
43  Delia, 9.

# Melissa Duxbury

## Makanda: A Hidden Village of Art

Art invokes all kinds of emotions. Music shapes the soul, sculpture profiles the mind, and painting pleases the eye. Art is found in color, architecture, and even nature. One favorite past time of mine is long drives throughout the countryside to look upon the natural beauty of the earth. A certain relaxing drive for the short distance traveler is the stretch of Giant City Road. This brief journey will transport you to some of the most majestic land of southern Illinois. The gateway to this beautiful trip through southern Illinois's Giant City State Park is the town of Makanda, Illinois. Along the side of the road is a boardwalk of classic 19th century buildings connected to one another. These shops offer people of all backgrounds the opportunity to present their unique artistic visions. The town of Makanda is also home to a community of artists who came together to display their talents at festivals. Makanda's transition from a produce center to a community of artists distinguishes the town from other artist colonies across the U.S.

Artist colonies dot the diverse landscape throughout America. Many of these colonies have developed over the last century and some like Makanda are just beginning. The major colonies that have spent a number of years thriving in the U.S. are the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire, the Wurlitzer in Taos, New Mexico, and the Woodstock community in Woodstock, New York. These are some of the most famous artist communities in America. However, one peaceful community stands apart from these. It is the charming village of Makanda. Makanda is amazingly different from its more famous counterparts. It is a simple community with a kind and openhearted feel. The artists who dwell in the village focus on nature and their own creativity. The village has an uncomplicated structure, yet it has a loveable "vibe" that glides from person to person. Makanda's artists share their accomplishments with one another through festivals and communications; however, artists work on their own, drawing inspiration from the creative energy of their neighbors.

Makanda, once commonly referred to as the North Pass, has a history as sweet as its name. Thoughts about the actual origin of the village's name have moved in many different directions. Theories of a definite origin of the name "Makanda" have passed through local newspapers and the mouths of people in the area. One theory is that the name came from the business of making candy, and another is that it derived from an Indian chief who resided in the area.[1] Based on interviews with area

locals, many believe the latter is correct. However, no further confirmation of the chief's origin or tribe has been achieved.

The earliest days of Makanda date as far back as the late 1700s. Before the area was bustling with activity from the railroad and industry, it was energized with natural wildlife. The region of rocky cliffs and rustic dwellings was once inhabited by many kinds of wild animals. Stories from the earliest settlers and local Indian tribes speak of wild bears, elk, and even buffalo that were found to be abundant throughout the land.[2] People used the vicinity mostly for hunting and exploring. The original settlers throughout the area were mostly Indians. However, small groups of white settlers began to make their way into the surrounding area. These people began to make a home for themselves in the Illinois territory.

The area of southern Illinois began to grow and prosper. Settlers in the southern Illinois area, especially in the Makanda vicinity, were offered rich soil and temperate climates. These two factors allowed farming to begin.[3] The fruit and vegetable industry began to grow, and people began migrating to the region to begin their trade. Then in the early 1850s, a remarkable rumor began to fly throughout the area that Makanda would be the site of a major throughway for the Illinois Central Railroad. This brought anticipation and hope to many of the families living in the area. The first train to arrive brought in a very large crowd to celebrate the event.[4] People eagerly aspired to be part of this industrial boom.

The fruit and vegetable industry was the most economically profitable in Makanda. Crops going out of Makanda began to skyrocket. From 1860 to 1867 Makanda was shipping almost 100 carloads per month to places like Boston and New York![5] Almost any kind of fruit and vegetable was exported from Makanda: peaches, strawberries, apples, grapes, asparagus, and even potatoes. As time went on, more and more people came into Makanda to experience the prosperous time. The largest immigration into Makanda was during the turn of the century; at this time the town was believed to have had approximately 3000 residents.[6] According to the other members of the Makanda community the strip of storefronts along the boardwalk actually reached as far as Giant City State Park. Anita Hayden, owner of Southern Sisters rug weaving business, has spoken of how large Makanda actually was. "I was told there were around 100 stores, and they went down to the park and back; there were restaurants, motels, and even bars."[7] It was absolutely amazing how popular Makanda was becoming.

The small southern Illinois town was doing extremely well economically; however, unforeseen circumstances began to occur. The business of shipping produce every day would come to a halt because of one of the greatest inventions of the 20th century, refrigeration. Electricity would

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make its way across the United States, spreading rapidly from urban to rural areas. People began to use refrigeration as a means of storing food for longer periods. This took its toll on the fruit and vegetable industry of towns like Makanda. According to Allen Stuck, a local artisan in Makanda, when "refrigeration was invented, the shipping of produce was no longer needed every day. This caused businesses and people to just drain away."[8] Man-made inventions took their toll on Makanda, but natural disasters did so as well.

Makanda suffered tragic events that would lead to closings of businesses and declines in population. Almost immediately after the population boom of the turn of the century, Makanda suffered a terrible fire, which burned many buildings to the ground. During the 1930's, it was believed that many people "burned their own buildings to the ground for insurance reasons."[9] According to many Makanda locals, Makanda is located directly in the middle of a flood plain. The water that recedes from Cobden comes directly through to Makanda. Throughout the years Makanda would be burdened with aggravating floods that drove people to higher ground.[10] Another occurrence would take place that would make or break Makanda. It was the college in a nearby town.

Makanda's next-door neighbor, Carbondale, would be the major draw for bringing people to southern Illinois. The location of Southern Illinois University in Carbondale changed the direction of many major features that Makanda possessed. The railroad, for instance, "switched its major loading center to Carbondale."[11] Because of Carbondale, Makanda began to lose the attraction it once had. However, one aspect of Carbondale did benefit Makanda's future. The university brought in students who

decided to stay because of the natural beauty of the area.[12]   A certain number of these students would help to change the face of Makanda to what it is today.

A migration of young, artistic people came to Makanda in the early 1970's.[13]  During this time many of these young men and women began to realize their artistic talent.  Most of the young people attended SIUC and chose to spend their lives basking in the natural beauty of southern Illinois.  A number of classic early 19th century buildings still stood in the main part of Makanda.  These buildings were the place where a number of men and women came to work to make their little enterprise.

Artists such as  jewelry makers, sculptors, woodworkers, and even



Photo courtesy of Lee and Laurel Weiderman

rug weavers came to Makanda to begin their business in the picturesque setting of southern Illinois.  Dave Dardis, a sculptor in Makanda came to the once "ghost town, because… [he] was on the road so often and needed a place for studio space; it was cheap, and it's near the woods."[14] Most of the young entrepreneurs came to southern Illinois because of the university, and began to feel the artistic inspiration that the area has to offer.  The university offered these creative people a chance to find their talent.  Allen Stuck, a jewelry creator in Makanda adds, "Makanda seems to have a very large accumulation of artists, because of the university in southern Illinois; it creates these people who have creative ideas."[15]

The artists of Makanda prefer to make their work to the highest standard.  They desire to make a living from their quality craftsmanship. However, many patrons prefer something minimal and cheaper.  Allen spoke about the difficulty of making his work simple for his patrons.

"Something simpler and cheaper is not easier to do. Trying to do something simpler is more difficult, because I still have to maintain an essence of visual and physical solidity within the framework."[16]  The artists of Makanda work with many different kinds of materials.  One creative mind in Makanda, Anita Hayden, works with fabric.  She began her rug weaving business, Southern Sisters, in 1983.  Anita works with recycled materials to loom her rugs.  Holding one rug in her hand she says, "This is a fringe, a waste that comes off factory looms, their salvage ends."[17]  Her business adds a feel of warmth to the downtown area.  It is a reminder of a motherly figure in our lives who knew the best thing was never to be wasteful.[18]  The imagination and innovation that flows through these people is nothing less than impressive.  Part of the reason Makanda's art community is unique is that the creative minds involved chose the rural life of southern Illinois as their home.

In discussing the community of Makanda, it is important to set the village against the backdrop of other artist colonies in the United States. This helps us understand the similarities and differences between a small colony like Makanda, which artists have chosen to make their home, and larger communities that serve as vacation sites or artistic resting points. While the artists of Makanda chose the serenity of southern Illinois as their dwelling, many of these other communities are located on the East and West coasts of the United States.  One artist colony, however, the Taos Colony in New Mexico, is located in an area of rural New Mexico.  Taos is a smaller village, like Makanda, yet in contrast it was "shaped through centuries by ancient Native American and Hispanic Catholic cultures."[19] The artists in Taos have a very direct attachment to those that invest in their work.  Those that attend the artist colony in Taos enjoy the remote mountainous community and complete solitude.

In comparison to Makanda, this village offers a unique view into the art of rural Native American life.  Taos began much earlier that Makanda; it actually came about by accident.  Taos began in the early 1900s, when two young artists, Geer Phillips and Ernest L. Blumenschein, were heading further west, and a wheel on their wagon broke.  Heading back from Taos to fix the wheel, Phillips instinctually felt the spiritual strength of the village.[20]  Blumenschein decided to travel back to New York City after a short time.  He brought with him some of Philip's work, and almost instantly he had a buyer for the pieces.  This would begin the first of the "Taos Society of Artists."[21]  This also would commence a chain of events that would lead Taos to devote a critical amount of time and energy for patronage through promotion.  Taos has a significant aspect that is equivalent to Makanda.  Taos artists' activity actually began to increase rapidly because of the Sante Fe Railroad.  It wasn't long before the "Sante

Fe Railway had become a valuable patron of painters who gathered in the fledgling of each summer."[22]  Like Makanda's past, the railroad led to a surge in migration and shipping into the area.

One artist colony that was born out of Taos is the Wurlitzer Foundation. The colony devotes itself to seclusion for creative minds of all kinds.  The Wurlitzer was "established in 1956 by Helen Wurlitzer," and is a community that once again focuses on complete solitude; however, each resident is free to congregate with other residents if they choose.[23]  The colony is a patchwork quilt of imagination that includes a variety of artists.  The Wurlitzer has been described as a place for "rugged individuals, for rule breakers who can sit silently watching sunlight tiptoe across the high country without wanting or needing anything else."[24]  The Wurlitzer is located in a wooded, mountainous area where artists can find their individualistic muse.  The stay in the colony is limited, and each resident stays in his or her separate residency.

Another artist colony in the U.S. is the Woodstock Colony in Woodstock, New York.  The Woodstock Colony is unlike Makanda's because it was purposely planned.[25]  Woodstock's creators chose to make the colony a school and a community for artists and craftspeople to work on their creative tasks.  The artists of Woodstock chose painting as their major feature, whereas Makanda is a home for a variety of artistic creations. Makanda and Woodstock are similar because it too was founded so its artists can "work in productive harmony with nature."[26]  Makanda and Woodstock are also similar in their Bohemian type of atmosphere.  Makanda's earthy tone coincides with Woodstock's untreated scenery.

Other colonies on the East Coast have merged with the American landscape; one of these is the MacDowell Colony.  The MacDowell Colony is actually the very first known colony in the United States. Just before the turn of the century pianist and composer Edward MacDowell and his wife Marian purchased an area of land in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Edward began to feel the inspiration the wooded area gave him.  He also was a founder of the American Academy in Rome; from this experience he knew that artists from different crafts provide inspiration to one another.[27]  The dream became a reality in 1906 when the MacDowell colony was born, and within one year MacDowell received its very first resident. Unfortunately, Edward passed away in 1908, but Marian kept the colony in motion for another fifty years.[28]

The MacDowell colony is much like Taos and Woodstock.  The residents stay in their own cabin completely secluded from any other person. "Colonists gather for breakfast and dinner in Colony Hall, a converted barn.  Lunch is delivered in a wooded picnic basket to each door."[29] MacDowell's serenity has affected so many artists who frequently come.

One writer and English professor, David Milofsky, first came to the colony in 1990 to experience some seclusion to help with his writing. "I didn't know if I'd write a word and imagined six weeks of staring out the window. To my amazement, I wrote the first day I got there, I wrote in the morning, my usual time, but also in the afternoon and even at night."[30] Colonies like MacDowell and Woodstock are places for artists to develop their work, when home has become the enemy. In constrast, Makanda's residents chose the area as a stationary studio space and a place to rest their head from the long trips on the road. Makanda's artisans devote their time and energy to traveling to various art shows to promote their pieces. Dave Dardis explains the difficulty of making a living without traveling: "I'd like to make a living right here, and not be on the road. It's tough on the road."[31] The men and women of Makanda do not have the option to enjoy the splendor of rest and relaxation in a colony. They find their inspiration in their studio space, which is also their personal residence.

The community of artists that come out of Makanda do not quite make a "colony." The men and women in Makanda live and create in their own personal space. According to Dave Dardis, "Colony is kind of a funny word. Colony almost makes you think everybody is doing the same thing and they all get along and agree. None of us agree on anything."[32] The community of men and women in Makanda express themselves in their own individualistic ways. Their creative minds are independent and expand through imagination. Another aspect of Makanda is that many of the artists show other local artists' work. Taking a walk thorough many of the shops one can observe some other artists' work. Anita Hayden takes the time to show fellow artists' creations. "Ever since we opened in 1983, besides rugs, we have always wanted to represent local artists."[33]

Artists of any kind find their own motivational niche to develop their work. Those involved in the art community in Makanda have their own definition of how they come about their work. Allen Stuck comments on his unique style in which he sculpts the rings he creates. "I do my rings to slant a person's hands. They look really good on a slant because our bodies have all these slants and curves on them, we're not static, geometric creatures, we are very organic."[34] Makanda is a village shaped around art, and it is clearly apparent in the work of the artists in the area.

The artistic achievement of Mother Nature and the synthetic accomplishments of humans are found throughout the village of Makanda. Makanda is a village that has endured many facelifts throughout the last century, and it has drastically changed over time. It went from being a confident town with a prosperous produce industry to a dwindling

community with an insecure outlook. Many people have found comfort in the intimacy of the village. Makanda should not be distinguished as an "artists' colony," for colony implies "collaboration." When the term "collaboration" is mentioned, many of the artists like Allen respond, "Collaboration is kind of an oxymoron word here in Makanda. All the people here are individualistic people. It's really hard to gather together a bunch of independent thinking people and have them come up with a cohesive plan."[35]   People are individuals and create and move in their own fashion. Many men and women who come to an artist colony come for peace and quiet to develop their form of artwork. Makanda's location in southern Illinois, and the artists' choosing Makanda as a permanent dwelling is what makes it truly special. In Makanda art is a welcome mat at the front door. People who journey to this hidden village of art will find the doors open for their patronage.

## Notes

The author would like to thank Lee and Laurel Weiderman for permission to reprint their photographs in this article.

[1]   Walter L. Brieschke, *Notes on Makanda* (Makanda, 1983), 31.

[2]   W. F. Hopkins, *History of Jackson County: Makanda Township* (Philadelphia: Brink & McDandough, 1878), 100.

[3]   Ibid.

[4]   Waymen Presley, "Makanda," *Makanda Times Monthly*, April 1983, 5.   From the Jackson County Historical Society Newspaper File.

[5]   Hopkins, *The History of Jackson County*, 100.

[6]   Jim Hatton, "Now a sleepy little village… With an uncertain future: Makanda—Once it was a thriving produce center," *The Southern Illinoisan*, 1 March 1970.

[7]   Anita Hayden, interview by author, tape recording Makanda, IL, 11 July 2000.

[8]   Allen Stuck, interview by author, tape recording Makanda, IL, 13 July 2000.

[9]   Dave Dardis, interview by author, tape recording Makanda, IL, 12 July 2000.

[10]   Stuck, interview by author, 13 July 2000.

[11]   Hatton, "Now a sleepy little village," *1 March 1970.*

[12]   Pat Wiseman-Conroy, "Rebuilding Makanda," *Murphysboro American*, 4 April 1984.

[13]   Hatton, "Now a sleepy little village," 1 March 1970.

[14]   Dardis, interview by author, 12 July 2000.

[15]   Stuck, interview by author, 13 July 2000.

[16]   Ibid.

[17]   Hayden, interview by author, 11 July 2000.

[18]   Patricia Riely, "The Southern Sisters weave on looms that are 80 years old," *The Southern Illinoisan*, 11 April 1984.

[19]   Suzan Campbell, "Taos Artists & Their Patrons," *American Art Review*, July/August (1999): 113.

[20]   Ibid., 114.

[21]   Ibid., 116

[22]   Ibid., 115.

[23]  Linda Lightsey Rice, "The Wurlitzer Foundation: a colony for iconoclasts," *Poets and Writers Magazine,* March/April (1997): 26.

[24]  Ibid.,  24.

[25]  Hollister Sturges III, "The Woodstock Art Colony," *American Art Review*, Sept/Oct (1999): 136.

[26]  Ibid.,  137.

[27]  "The MacDowell Colony," accessed 18 July 2000; available from  < http://www/macdowellcolony.org/mdhstry.htm.

[28]  Ibid.

[29]  Susannah Cassidy O'Donnell. "Touring New Hampshire's Merrimack Valley on the 100th Anniversary of the MacDowell Colony," *Museum News,* Sept/Oct (1996): 52.

[30]  David Milofsky, "Strangers in Paradise: What Does Life at an Artist Colony Bring? Soul-Searching, Solitude, and the Occasional Grapefruit," *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 25 June 2000.

[31]  Dardis, interview by author, 12 July 2000.

[32]  Ibid.

[33]  Hayden, interview by author, 11 July 2000.

[34]  Stuck, interview by author, 13 July 2000.

[35]  Ibid.

# Catherine Cosimi

## The Impact of Illinois and Its Women on the Women's Suffrage Movement in the United States

The women's suffrage movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was very important as part of the history of the United States. Several women, such as Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt, worked very hard to establish voting rights for women in the United States. Anyone who has taken an American history class has heard of these two women, as well as the women's suffrage movement. What hasn't been heard, however, is the impact that Illinois had upon the women's suffrage movement. Illinois was a very important state within this movement. Its women were even more important, because they became the leaders of the movement as well as the originators of legislation that would lead the way toward ratification of the 19th amendment to the Constitution of the Unites States.

There were several women from Illinois whose activities in women's organizations made a significant impact upon the establishment of the 19th amendment and also changed the polls in Chicago, Illinois. Many of the important women include Mary Livermore, Frances Willard, Catherine McCulloch, Grace Wilbur Trout, and Jane Addams just to name a few. As these women held activities within their women's organizations, they helped rally other women of Illinois and established ratification of the Women's Suffrage Act, or the Presidential and Municipal Suffrage Bill in Illinois and later the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. If it were not for these significant women in Illinois, other states may not have followed and other women may not have had the courage to fight for their right to vote as they did.

Mary Livermore was one of the first women from Illinois who felt that something must be done to allow women to excel. Mary Livermore did not join the women's suffrage movement until after the Civil War.[1] In fact, she thought at that time that women did not need the right to vote. After the war was over, she realized that women would have to vote if they were going to get anything done in their favor. With tremendous support from her husband, Mary wrote and published columns in her husband's newspaper.[2] At times, people believed that it was actually her newspaper and that she was disguised behind her husband's name so that people would read it and follow what it had to say.[3] Shortly after publishing the columns, she was invited to lecture at various places throughout Chicago.[4] In 1868, Mary Livermore organized the first women's suffrage convention in Illinois, and as a result became president of the Illinois

Women's Suffrage Association.[5]

> I soon arranged for a Suffrage Convention to be held in Chicago,
> the first ever attempted in that city….It was the first Women's
> Suffrage lecture I ever heard.  As far as I was concerned, I was
> a pioneer in the reform.  The Illinois Women's Suffrage As-
> sociation was formed and I was elected its first president….I
> established a woman suffrage paper, "The Agitator," which
> from the start espoused the temperance cause as well as that
> of woman suffrage.[6]

Throughout the years, Mary convinced many family members and friends to rally for women's suffrage.  Included in the people she influenced was Frances Willard.  In 1873, she and Frances Willard organized the Association for the Advancement of Women.[7]  Mary Livermore became the first president and Frances Willard became the first vice president.[8] Mary later became the editor of the *Woman's Journal* and since Frances Willard became her friend and was strongly dedicated to suffrage, Mary made Frances co-editor of the journal.[9]

   Frances Willard had been the President of the Women's College of the University of Illinois, Evanston when she developed a strong urge to become part of the women's suffrage movement. She solidly and desperately believed that all women should have advancement and achieve the American Dream, as men had done and were still doing.  During this time, she was involved in Illinois politics, but hadn't yet been a part of suffrage.  She stated in her book, "At this time, many felt that Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Victoria Woodhull, and George Train were irresponsible leaders, whose rash statements and gaudy acts had tainted the entire movement.  Mrs. Stanton defied the Victorian public by advocating divorce, and Mrs. Woodhull shocked the nation with her reputed advocacy of free love."[10]  As a result of her feelings toward women suffragists, Frances Willard decided not to join their fight, but instead to change the way that the world looked at women's suffrage by giving it a fresh new look.  By doing so, she changed women's suffrage, and rallied supporters who otherwise would never have given women's suffrage a second glance.[11]  One of her great accomplishments was convincing the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) to support suffrage.

Frances met Mary Livermore, an Illinois leading lady of the suffrage movement, and Mary brought her into the American Suffrage Association. Both Frances Willard and Mary Livermore served as officers in The Association for the Advancement of Women, and soon developed a strong friendship.[12]  It was in May, 1876, that Frances determined to declare

publicly for suffrage, regardless of the opposition of her colleagues.[13] She had decided to make a stand for suffrage at a meeting in Dixon, Illinois, hoping to commit Illinois to her suffrage policy before the national convention.[14] She stated, "If the women of the prairies did not speak out, who would? Not the conservative East, not the silent South, or the unorganized West."[15] Toward the turn of the century, with help from other respectable women in politics, Frances Willard helped to gain respect for the women's suffrage movement and more women wanted to get involved. By the end of the 19th century, the meetings on women's right to vote pulled the biggest crowds, with more than 10,000 attending.[16]

As correspondence secretary of the national WCTU, Frances Willard was in a strategic position to mold the Union to her views, although not without a struggle.[17] After a short struggle, Frances Willard convinced the Illinois Union to support suffrage and shortly after the Unions of Massachusetts and Iowa committed to full suffrage. She proposed a bill that would allow women to vote on temperance issues around the same time that Catherine McCulloch started getting involved in women's suffrage, and it won.[18] It was felt by many people that the much wiser leaders of the American Suffrage Association were more successful when trying to convert by state at first, instead of federally. Once Frances accomplished suffrage on temperance issues, the WCTU decided to elect her as their national president in the late 1870's.[19] Frances Willard belonged to many women's clubs, including all clubs regarding suffrage, was active in all of them, but was most energetic in the suffrage groups. In the words of one scholar, "Definitely and without equivocation Frances Willard placed suffrage before prohibition."[20] Though Willard did not live to see the 19th Amendment, her political efforts played a significant part in the events leading up to its passage.

After the contributions of the two women, Mary Livermore and Frances Willard, a new generation of suffragists followed in their footsteps to carry the torch of suffrage into the 20th century. Illinois became the first state east of the Mississippi to grant women suffrage in a presidential election.[21] The Illinois law is given credit for making possible the success of the New York suffrage bill in 1917, which in turn made national success possible.[22] As one will see, all of this was made possible by the many women of the suffrage movement in Illinois, and the hard work of the women's clubs and organizations. Catherine McCulloch, Jane Addams and Grace Wilbur Trout worked in a very tightly knit organizational pattern and were involved in many demonstrations and women's clubs together.

In January of 1913, the women's rights movement in Illinois was growing more rapidly than ever. Newspapers such as the *Chicago Tribune* were printing advertisements for rallies and the ways that the suffragists

planned to win the war of women's suffrage.[23]  The rallies were so large that the streets of Chicago were crowded and people could hardly move around the auditoriums where these rallies were held.[24]  All of the women discussed attended these rallies and gave speeches to encourage men and women alike to join their crusade.

Catherine McCulloch was a respected attorney, who spoke of suffrage from a legal standpoint.[25]  Catherine McCulloch was responsible for enacting women's suffrage legislation in Illinois.  She held conventions all over Illinois during the 1890's and in 1890 helped the number of petitions for women's voting to soar above the numbers of past years.  Mrs. McCulloch held six weeks of conventions in southern Illinois, even as far south as Cairo.[26]  In 1908, there was a proposal for women's municipal and presidential suffrage led by Catherine McCulloch and Jane Addams, but it did not succeed.[27]  Catherine persevered, and during her fight for women's suffrage in Illinois, a suffrage bill was introduced into the state legislature in 1913.[28]

> Mrs. Catherine Waugh McCulloch…volunteered on this occasion to accompany Mrs. Booth to Springfield.  As this was Mrs. Booth's first trip, no action had as yet been taken to introduce the Presidential and Municipal Suffrage Bill which had been drafted by the Progressives and which we were to introduce.  Mrs. McCulloch however, took with her a suffrage bill which she had drafted and which she insisted upon having introduced without one word being changed, which was done.[29]

Because Mrs. McCulloch was a lawyer, she believed this bill to be regular in form and to cover the subject fully.[30]  Although it didn't pass until the second time through the legislature, it was eventually accepted.  The bill was unique because it gave women the right to vote in presidential and municipal elections and soon became a model for the other states.

Finally, on June 26, 1913, Illinois ratified the Presidential and Municipal Suffrage Bill.[31]  From this time, until the 19th amendment was ratified in 1920, the women's suffrage movement started booming.

> The Illinois Suffragists [sic] fully realized the importance of preserving intact the Presidential and Municipal Suffrage Bill passed by the Illinois legislature in 1913, because it was the first bill of the kind ever passed in the United States, and established the precedent which enabled many other states afterwards to pass similar bills and the Presidential and Municipal Suffrage Bill is called in other states 'The Illinois Law'.[32]

With Illinois presidential suffrage added, there were ninety-one members of the electoral college for whom women were entitled to vote.[33] Soon after the Presidential and Municipal Suffrage Bill was passed in Illinois, Catherine McCulloch was already preparing to present a federal amendment.[34] On February 2, 1914, the *Chicago Tribune* quoted McCulloch as being the "little giant of the suffrage movement."[35] In response she said, "Don't forget to register today!"[36]

Jane Addams, usually known for the establishment of the Hull House in Chicago, played a major role in the women's suffrage movement in Illinois. While Jane Addams was fighting for labor, she tried to organize opposition to Alderman Powers by relying on male voters, but found that this was insufficient and became an activist for women's suffrage.[37] Jane Addams started her crusade for women's suffrage while she was a student at Rockford Female Seminary. Most of the women that Jane Addams associated with were very well educated, wealthy, and independent. They encouraged her to believe that women could survive without the males, or be independent, and convinced her that the woman's voice should be heard. When she traveled to Chicago in 1889, she was invited to join a prestigious Chicago women's club within weeks of her arrival. As time passed, Jane became the chairperson for over one hundred women's organizations. Jane Addams stated in one of her speeches:

> Nothing impressed me so forcibly as the fact that the response came from bodies of women representing the most varied traditions. We were joined by a church society of hundreds of Lutheran women…by organizations of working women who had keenly felt the need of municipal franchise in order to secure for their workshops the most rudimentary sanitation and the consideration which the vote alone obtains for workingmen; by federations of mothers' meetings, who were interested in clean milk and the extension of kindergartens; by property-owning women, who had been powerless to protest against unjust taxation; by organizations of professional women, of university students, and of collegiate alumnae; and by women's clubs interested in municipal reforms.[38]

Like many other women, she actively supported the efforts of suffragists to fight for reform.[39]

After 1906 Jane Addams spent more time speaking and working for suffrage. She lectured frequently on college campuses, before women's clubs, and in public lectures arguing for women's right and responsibility to take a more active role in government and society.[40] Jane Adams

was elected vice-president of the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1913, the year that the Suffrage Act was ratified in Illinois. That same year her colleague Grace Wilbur Trout served as President.  That year Jane wrote a pro-suffrage article for *Ladies Home Journal*, which had traditionally been very anti-suffrage.  Jane Addams testified that women definitely needed to obtain the right to vote if they were to gain any leeway in Illinois and in the United States.  She displayed her strong opinion that women could not trust that their future would be safe with  male voters making crucial decisions about the lives of women. She stated in her article, "The trouble is that men have no imagination, or rather what they have is so prone to run in the historic direction of glory of the battlefield, that you cannot trust them with industrial affairs."[41] This strongly suggests that Jane Addams knew that women must have a voice about their own issues and the only way to do this was by getting the vote.  Jane Addams realized that men cannot make decisions about women's issues; instead, women must take control of their own destiny. Jane Addams also wrote many pro-suffrage papers, which included "Why Women Should Vote."[42]  As a result, Jane Addams decided to fight for women's suffrage, and she helped to spread the voice of women across Illinois.  These actions prove Jane Addams was not only an advocate of women's labor rights, but also a strong advocate of women's suffrage.

On February 5, 1914, there was an advertisement in the *Chicago Tribune* showing the disagreement between Jane Addams and Grace Wilbur Trout about the primaries.[43]  Jane Addams believed that women should vote in the primaries to make sure that they did everything that they could to get their voice out.  Grace Wilbur Trout on the other hand didn't want women to vote in the primaries because they would then have to affiliate with parties, and that would influence them too much.[44]  On February 2, 1914, Grace Wilbur Trout, Jane Addams, and Catherine McCulloch's speeches were being advertised in Chicago.[45]  They held a rally in a Chicago auditorium and it was so crowded that there were people standing in the streets outside listening to the speeches.[46] Each of the women had the motto, "On To The Polls" within their speeches.[47]  As a result of these rallies more and more women were joining the Women's Clubs in Chicago and throughout Illinois.

Grace Wilbur Trout was very active in almost every woman's suffrage club in Illinois.  She stated, "My first active participation in suffrage work was as President of the Chicago Political Equality League, to which office I was elected in May 1910."[48]  She was allowed to make a suffrage float for a Fourth of July parade in Chicago.  This float drew the attention of people who were not yet interested in women's suffrage in Illinois.  After her term as League president, she was elected state president of the Illinois

Equal Suffrage Association in 1913, and at the same time, Jane Addams was elected vice president.[49]  Grace promoted the spread of women's suffrage to other states outside of Illinois.  She stated, "On March 3rd, the day preceding President Wilson's first inauguration at Washington, suffragists of the various states were called to come to the National Capital [sic] and take part in a suffrage parade.  I was very proud to conduct eighty three Illinois women to Washington."[50]  She, Catherine McCulloch, and Jane Addams held positions in various women's clubs and worked together in the movement.  Grace Wilbur Trout went on a tour throughout the United States rallying people for suffrage.  Among those on the tour was Catherine McCulloch.[51] Before the municipal suffrage bill was enacted in Illinois, Grace Wilbur Trout sent out telegrams to all the men in the Illinois House that had promised to vote in favor of the bill, and requested that they show up on the day that the bill was to be voted on.[52]

Some people were excited about this bill that allowed women to vote, while others still did not like the idea at all.  The *Chicago Tribune* continued to publish the news on the front page into February of 1914.  On February 1, 1914, the headlines read, "Women to Make Chicago's Vote Greatest in U.S."[53]  On page one of the *Chicago Tribune*, the article discussed the growing number of women who were registering to vote in the next election.  The *Chicago Tribune* declared that Illinois would have more people registered to vote than any other state, thereby increasing the popular vote significantly.[54]  Illinois would now have a bigger voice in the election of the president of the United States.  In addition to the many women who registered to vote, the rallies that the women's clubs organized in 1914 were drawing even more women to register and march onward to the polls.  On February 3, 1914, the last day to register to vote in the primary election in Chicago, the headlines of the *Chicago Tribune* read, "200,000 Women May Become Voters Today, Politicians Startled, Run Up High Forecast on Registration."[55]

Between the time that Illinois suffrage legislation was passed and up until the time that the 19th Amendment was enacted, women were given handbooks explaining the voting process and registration.  These handbooks were one of a kind because no other state had a voting revolution as Illinois did.  The handbook explained what offices they would be voting for and offered practice ballots to ensure that women knew what they were doing.  The handbook also explained which statutes would be affecting women and it explained the laws that were already in effect.  In addition, the handbook also included maps of the counties of Illinois and senatorial districts.[56]  This handbook seemed to pay off because later in the week, on February 15, 1914, the *Chicago Tribune* stated, "When the bond proposition for the Glencoe school appeared doomed yesterday,

the women of the village rallied and worked to get out the vote and the school bond issue was saved by the women."[57]

Because the women of Chicago had so much success with the state registration, they fought to establish an amendment to the constitution. The Illinois women banded with women from other states, and pleaded with Washington to establish an amendment.  They were defeated several times, but never gave up the fight.  Although it took several years to enact the 19th Amendment, the women of Illinois joined hands and did not stop the fight until they were given what they were striving so hard to accomplish at both federal and state levels.  "In 1919, the delegates to the Constitutional Convention were elected and convened at Springfield in January 1920.  One of its first acts was to adopt an article giving full suffrage to Illinois women to be incorporated in the new Constitution."[58] Once Illinois passed this legislation, the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association joined the National American Woman Suffrage Association to convert the other states as well.  At the NAWSA annual convention held in Chicago that year each of the state associations began to follow the lead of Illinois. And so it was on August 18, 1920 that these efforts led to thirty-six states ratifying the federal suffrage bill that became the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.  Illinois, the first state east of the Mississippi to grant suffrage to its women, was also the first state to ratify the Federal Suffrage Amendment, proving that Illinois women had suceeded.[59]

Now the importance of the role of Illinois and its women is clear.  The contributions made by Mary Livermore, Frances Willard, Catherine Mc-Culloch, Grace Wilbur Trout, and Jane Addams have been recognized as the foundation on which the United States adopted equal suffrage for women.  It is evident that Mary Livermore and Frances Willard gave a fresh new look to women's suffrage, especially in Illinois.  Even as they grew old and then passed away, their work did not stop.  It was carried on by a new generation of suffragists that included the other three women profiled in this paper, Catherine McCulloch, Grace Wilbur Trout, and Jane Addams.  First these women collectively fought for suffrage at the state level, and they rejoiced as the result of their hard work was realized when Illinois became the first state east of the Mississippi to give suffrage to its women.[60]  Next, their efforts proved historic as they laid the foundation needed to accomplish women's suffrage at the national level in the Unites States:

> It was claimed that there had been no event since the Civil
> War of such far-reaching national significance as the passage
> of the suffrage bill in Illinois….[S]ince that time Mrs. Carrie
> Chapman Catt, President of the National American Women's

Suffrage Association, said that New York women could never have won their great suffrage victory in 1917 if Illinois had not first opened the door in 1913, and the winning of suffrage in New York so added to the political strength of the suffrage movement in Congress that made possible the passage of the Federal Suffrage Amendment in 1919, so the work in Illinois was fundamental and as vitally important to the women of the whole nation as it was to the women of Illinois.[61]

After their hard work at the state level, the Illinois women kept on fighting and accomplished the impossible. They had finally influenced the other states, achieving suffrage at the national level and, as a result, the 19th Amendment was added to the constitution. The news came to the Illinois women as a pleasant surprise. When they learned that the thirty-sixth state ratified the Federal Suffrage Amendment, with the fruits of their labor having become a great success, the Illinois women now prepared to continue their work in convincing women that to vote for one's country is as important as to fight for one's country, realizing that as one battle ended, another was beginning.[62]

The importance of the Illinois women's involvement in the early women's rights movement of the United States is immeasurable, for without it, we may not have been able to accomplish all that we have today. Imagine just for a moment not having any female senators, judges at the local level, or Justices of the Supreme Court. Every woman from every state should be thankful, and even today, every woman from Illinois can be proud, because if it were not for the strength of these women, we might not have the political power and prestige that we hold today. Illinois has become famous for many other things, but for its historic vote, I am very proud. As these Illinois women have shown us, endurance and determination can accomplish what may seem like unachievable feats. These women dedicated their lives to this cause, and even after decades of efforts, the outcome was unclear up until the very end. Although historians give much of the credit to New York for our receiving the vote, it is in fact thanks to the Illinois women that this great legacy exists.

## Notes

[1] Adade Mitchell Wheeler and Marlene Stein Wortman, *The Roads They Made: Women in Illinois History* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Co., 1977), 41.

[2] Mary Ashton Rice Livermore, *The Story of My Life* (New York: Arno Press, 1974), 481.

[3] Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society for the Year 1920* (Springfield: Phillips Bros. Print, 1921), 87.

[4]  Livermore, 451.

[5]  Wheeler and Wortman, 55.

[6]  Livermore, 482.

[7]  Wheeler and Wortman, 61.

[8]  Ibid., 61.

[9]  Mary Earhart, ed., *Frances Willard: From Prayers to Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), 136. This book is a reproduction of Frances Willard's papers, edited and with commentary by Earhart.

[10] Ibid., 134.

[11] Ibid., 132.

[12] Ibid., 135.

[13] Ibid., 151.

[14] Ibid., 153.

[15] Ibid., 154.

[16] Wheeler and Wortman, 67.

[17] Earhart, 151.

[18] Wheeler and Wortman, 106.

[19] Earhart, 169.

[20] Ibid., 198.

[21] Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, 107.

[22] Ibid., 107.

[23] Editorial, *Chicago Tribune,* 5 January 1913, 2.

[24] Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, 2 February 1914, 1.

[25] Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, 94.

[26] Catherine Waugh McCulloch, *Bridget Sisters, or The Legal Status of Illinois Women in 1868* (Chicago: Illinois Equal Suffrage Association, 1911), 3.

[27] Steven M. Buechler, *The Transformation of the Woman Suffrage Movement: The Case of Illinois* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1951), 152.

[28] Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, 96-98.

[29] Ibid., 98.

[30] Ibid., 98.

[31] Ibid., 108.

[32] Ibid., 110.

[33] The National American Woman Suffrage Association, *Victory: How Women Won It* (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1940), 79.

[34] Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, 111.

[35] Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, 2 February 1914, 1.

[36] Ibid., 1.

[37] Wheeler and Wortman, 106.

[38] Jane, Addams, article from *Ladies Home Journal* in Victoria Brown, ed., *Twenty Years at Hull-House: with Autobiographical Notes by Jane Addams* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), 172.

[39] Wheeler and Wortman, 83.

[40] Allen Davis, *American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 188.

[41] Addams, 233.

[42] Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *One Woman, One Vote* (Troutsdale: NewSage Press, 1995), 195.

[43] Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, 5 February 1914, 1-2.

[44] Ibid.

45  Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, 2 February 1914, 1.
46  Ibid.
47  Ibid.
48  Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, 93.
49  Ibid., 97.
50  Ibid., 98.
51  Ibid., 94.
52  Ibid., 105.
53  Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, 1 February 1914, 1.
54  Ibid.
55  Ibid.
56  Alice Greenacre, *A Handbook for the Women of Illinois,* ed., Sophonisba Brekinridge (Chicago: Department of Social Investigation, 1913), 1-132.
57  Editorial, *Chicago Tribune,* 15 February 1914, 4.
58  Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, 113.
59  Ibid., 114.
60  Ibid., 107.
61  Ibid.
62  Ibid., 116.

# Adam Congleton

## The Ultimate Consequences of the Shirtwaist Strike of 1909

The Shirtwaist Strike of 1909 began the same way many other strikes had prior to 1909. Thousands of disgruntled workers walked off their jobs as working conditions became worse and wages seemed insufficient. However, this huge strike had one characteristic that made it different from the previous walk outs, and this was the fact that all the workers were women. Perturbed about unsafe working conditions, low wages and long hours, the women declared a general strike in all of New York's shirtwaist factories. The strike had an enormous impact on the shirtwaist industry itself, the unionization of women, and the way women were viewed in the workplace all together. Many groups were involved in the strike effort, including both suffragists and socialists. The wealthy, prominent women who got involved to help the strikers were viewed as primarily suffragists, while the various unions that organized the strike were socialists. These two groups were both extremely helpful during the strike, but as negotiations began and the strike wound down they had numerous conflicts. These conflicts are one of the primary reasons that the strike ended with mixed results, and was not a complete success. The strife that arose between the suffragists and the socialists during the Shirtwaist Strike of 1909 greatly changed the outcome of this event and the negotiations between the strikers and the shirtwaist factories.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the shirtwaist manufacturing industry was booming in New York City. As more and more women took jobs as office workers, schoolteachers, stenographers or switchboard operators, the demand for the shirtwaist increased. It was a new and popular item among women, and became a symbol of the female office worker. The shirtwaist was similar to a man's shirt but much thinner. It was usually pleated in the front and buttoned up in the back. Besides the shirtwaist being a popular item, other clothing articles were in demand too. America was in the midst of an industrial revolution, and as jobs increased in areas such as New York, so too did the money earned that could be spent on clothing. This, coupled with the huge influx of immigrants to the United States, brought the clothing industry of New York big business. In fact, by 1900, 65,000 women worked in the clothing business in New York, and by 1909 the clothing trade was its largest industry.[1]

There were approximately six hundred shirtwaist and dress making shops in New York by the time the enormous strike started. These shops were mostly small operations, and the employees were mainly women.

Most of these women were young and single, and a large majority of them were Jewish and Italian immigrants.  There were approximately 40,000 people employed in the shirtwaist manufacturing industry itself, and four out of five of them were young women.[2]   This large population of shirtwaist makers was not viewed as a threat inclined to strike, because so many of them were female.  Consequently, the women were not treated fairly by the factory bosses, but soon after the general strike was declared, beliefs about female strikes were dismissed.

The clothing mills in which the shirtwaist makers worked could be described as sweatshops.  The women worked long hours in unsafe conditions for low wages.  They were treated unfairly by the factory bosses and subcontractors, and had very little job security.  Children could also be found in this trade since few child labor laws had been enacted in the United States at this time.  The winter and fall seasons were the clothing industry's busiest times, and employees could expect to work up to an amazing eighty four hours a week.  In sharp contrast was the summer, when over half the clothing workers might be laid off.  This made for hard times, but usually the shirtwaist maker worked an average of fifty six to fifty nine hours a week.  They would work from eight o'clock in the morning to six o'clock at night with a one half hour lunch break.  In the busy seasons the women were sometimes required to work on Sundays. Many were against this idea of working on the Sabbath, but they were warned they would be fired if they did not show up.[3]

In the shirtwaist factories most women were employed by subcontractors.  These men would rent sewing machines from the company, get a large load of work to complete, and then assemble a group of women to do the work.  The subcontractor would then get a lump some of money for the completed load.  This made for hard work because the subcontractor would hire as few women as possible to complete the large load so he would make more of a profit.[4]  The job was extremely difficult because all sewing machines were run by foot power and the women worked under gas lighting.[5]  This gas lighting proved to be fatal when the famous Shirtwaist Factory fire erupted less than two years after the strike.  Doors and exits were customarily locked to prevent employees from stealing fabric, which also proved to be fatal.  Needles and thread had to be bought from the factory store along with numerous other materials.  Lockers had to be rented and women were charged for any mistakes they made on an item.[6]  As conditions like these got worse and worse, many women saw a strike as the only route towards improvement.  The motivations for a strike were there; all the women needed was organization and strong leaders, and fortunately they got both.

Organization among the shirtwaist makers did not come easily, which

may be one reason the women waited so long to strike. The bosses of the shirtwaist factories took specific measures to ensure that the women would never unite. Italians were purposely placed to work next to Jews so that language barriers prevented communication. Race antagonism was also used before the strike began, and continued when the women took to the picket lines. Another way the factory bosses tried to prevent the women from striking was to use religion. Many of the women were very religious; this is evident in their reluctance to work on the Sabbath. Some factories had a priest come in and tell the girls that if they struck they would go to hell.[7] Fortunately, most of the women did not believe this accusation and the general strike began.

Complete organization did not come all at once however. The Shirtwaist Strike of 1909, began with women at single factories walking off the job. The first women to strike were employed by the Leiserson Shirtwaist Factory, and then the women of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory followed their lead in September.[8] These actions inspired other shirtwaist makers to strike, and eventually the general strike began. On November 22, 1909 Clara Lemlich, one of the strike's most influential leaders, called for a general strike for all shirtwaist factory employees. Her voice was heard and overnight between twenty thousand and forty thousand workers joined the strike.[9] The strike is often called the "Uprising of Twenty Thousand" because so many women were involved.[10] Many of the women were apprehensive to go on strike and picket the streets, and were restrained by their old world customs. Others were younger and much more daring, perhaps feeling a sense of American nationalism.[11] Whatever the case was, the Shirtwaist Strike of 1909 was the largest strike by women the United States had ever seen.[12] Things were looking good as the general strike began. One thing the thousands of strikers had going for them was that the strike came during the busy season. The manufacturers would desperately need workers, and the strikers felt good about their chances.[13]

The first day of the strike was November 23, 1909 and picketers were immediately met with violence. Strike breaking was a common practice at this time, and thugs along with police had no sympathy for the women shirtwaist makers. The women were attacked with sticks, billy clubs, iron bars and various other items. As the strike went on the violence became so bad that some women became discouraged despite their nonviolent protests. Company guards also used any excuse possible to beat up the picketers in front of the numerous factories. One month into the general strike 771 arrests had been made, most with undue force. Prostitutes were also hired to infiltrate the picket lines in an attempt to defame the strikers through association. This angered the women and fights would

break out between the hired women and the strikers, resulting in an excuse for police to make more arrests. Picketers also had to put up with sexual innuendos and lewd comments directed towards them from company bosses, guards and police officers. The factory bosses would do almost anything to discourage the women and break up their unity. They even concocted rumors that they hoped would lead to ethnic fights. For example, the bosses said that Jews were striking only because they hated Italians and didn't want to work with them. This ethnic antagonism was a clever attempt to create divisions among the strikers, but it was unsuccessful in deterring the women's efforts.[14]

The problems women picketers faced on the streets also affected their home life. As the strike continued, the unemployed women had problems in their families. Husbands and fathers got angry at the women, and feared for their reputation. Theresa Malkiel was a prominent shirtwaist striker and devout member of the socialist party. She recorded this quote from her father in her diary: "It's just because I don't think it's a woman's place to be hanging around street corners, fighting with rowdies and to be taken to jail. Union is all good and well by itself, but it was never meant for the women." Malkiel's rebuttal to this quote was that if a woman worked in a place not fit for pigsties, she might as well stand up on the corners and fight for her rights. The shirtwaist strikers had to do just that, fight. Strikers who were arrested were arraigned in court the same day. Most were fined ten to twenty five dollars when arrested. A striker being brought in for the second time could expect at least a twenty-five dollar fine. If a thug beat up a girl striker, it was hard for her to find a policeman that would arrest him.[15] This was primarily because many of the policemen were bribed by the manufacturers.[16]

Violence and strikebreaking efforts became so bad that something had to be done to keep the women on the picket lines. Besides the physical violence, the women also had to put up with the attacks on their reputation, and it was taking a toll on many of them. A plan was decided upon and put into action to get the police to stop their vicious attacks. Wealthy members of New York society would be invited down to walk the picket lines with the striking women. Many prominent women were suffragists, and involved in reform efforts, but something else had to be done to convince them to join the effort. The leaders of the strike organized mass meetings and invited the press and wealthy women. Then, during the gathering, all of the women who had been beaten or arrested told their story to the crowd. These meetings convinced many wealthy supporters that joining the picket lines was a good idea and that the violence must stop. College students were also invited to join the picket lines along with wealthy, prominent women, and immediately the violence stopped.[17]

Police officers were now afraid of arresting or beating the women in fear that they may target one of the wives of a prominent New York citizen. An accident like this may have lead to that officer losing his job.

The groups of wealthy women that joined the picket lines were soon deemed the "mink brigades" by local newspapers. This nickname was given to them because they were so wealthy, and most likely owned a fashionable mink coat.[18] Women such as Anne Morgan led these groups of New York's wealthiest women into areas such as the lower east side in an attempt to protect the picketers and eventually improve working conditions in the area. These women succeeded in ending almost all violence, but they also played another extremely important role. The upper class supporters of the strike were called allies, and offered extremely valuable financial and political support. As the prominent New York women involved themselves in the strike, they gained much attention from the press. This publicity was beneficial to the strikers, but would also cause some dissension among the wealthy suffragists and socialist backers of the strike. Allies such as Alva Belmont were often wealthy, well educated and single. Many of them already had experience in areas of social reform and philanthropy. Belmont herself held meetings and organized motorcades to raise money for the strike fund.[19] All of these things were invaluable assets to the cause of the Shirtwaist Strike, but many socialists felt that things should have been done differently.

However, Anne Morgan did join the primarily socialist Women's Trade Union League (WTUL). By doing this she gave her moral support to the strikers. She justified her involvement in the strike by saying, "When you hear of someone who presses forty dozen skirts for eight dollars a week something must be wrong". Morgan felt that she could at least give the strikers the support of public opinion. She was also quoted as saying, "We can't live our own lives without doing something about it". Belmont got involved in a different way than did Morgan. Both were wealthy, but Belmont gave more financial support to the striking women. Alva Belmont was the president of the Political Equality Association, and also felt public opinion was important to the striker's cause. She issued appeals for funds to assist the striking women, which were very successful at generating money.[20]

Besides support from suffragists, the strike also received backing from the Women's Trade Union League and socialists. Socialist strike supporters, in a way, were somewhat jealous of the attention the allies got. Morgan and Belmont became the focus of almost all publicity from the press, and this angered the socialists. They felt that the allies were insincere and unnecessary. Socialists wanted equal attention from the press, if not more than the suffragists were receiving. They wanted more

control of the strike, and felt women such as Anne Morgan were being much too verbal. "Socialists created a barrier between the allies and the strikers, through criticism of the allies."[21] This strife between supporters of the strike did not ruin all efforts, but as negotiations came to an end this division definitely had an effect on the outcome of agreements. Suffragists began to turn away from the strike effort, as it seemed socialists were influencing the striking women during the negotiations.

Relations among socialists and suffragists became increasingly worse as the strike lingered on. Theresa Malkiel expressed that she did not like Mrs. Belmont. Malkiel was even quoted as saying, "I was a suffragist long before Belmont even dreamed of it". Socialists such as Malkiel questioned the motivations behind the suffragists' involvement in the strike. Some felt that the suffragists were only interested in the strike because it was a way they could gain support from the working girls. Others felt that suffragists belonged to the capitalistic class and could never have anything in common with the strikers. The socialists refused to cooperate with Belmont, Morgan and all other suffragists.[22] Miss Violet Pike of the WTUL had this to say about Belmont's involvement: "This is a strike, not a political movement which the women suffrage movement is. There may be suffragettes among the strikers, but this is a trade union movement plain and simple".[23]

The women socialists were focused on the class struggle of the strikers. The suffragists' focus was primarily on the women's vote. This clash of ideas is the main reason the two groups could not get along for the duration of the strike. *Solidarity*, an anarchist newspaper, claimed that the suffragists' motivations were a lust for fame, adventure and prominence. Even the prominent Emma Goldman expressed her distrust of the suffrage politics in a meeting on December 12, 1909. Anne Morgan did join the WTUL, as mentioned before, but the labor unions were almost hostile to the presence of millionaires in the strike.[24] All of these statements and feelings gave fuel to the fiery dispute between the two groups. The shirtwaist manufacturers were glad to see this dissension among the leaders of the strike.

Midway through December in 1909 the Waist and Dressmakers Manufacturers' Association presented a contract to strikers that agreed to many of their demands, but not to recognizing the union. This contract was rejected by the strikers, and many allies saw this as a bad decision. Anne Morgan blamed this poor decision on socialist influence, and most allies saw things the same way. This rejection of a contract was the beginning of many allies losing interest in the effort. Socialist ideas had turned some allies away from the working class strikers, and soon many of the wealthy women felt alienated by socialist influence. The rejection

of this December contract caused many allies to abruptly lose interest, and it can be assumed that they had based their support on a "romantic conception of sisterhood."[25]

As negotiations began to come to a close, the WTUL and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) began to dominate the affairs of the strike. They coordinated events, raised money, and had impressive public relations campaigns. These groups had gained a new status for themselves during the Shirtwaist Strike, and by doing so had made great strides in the unionization of women.[26]

Despite many extremely valuable gains made by women, the strike ended with mixed success. Those who believe the strife that arose between socialists and suffragists did not affect the outcome of negotiations need only to look at the negative side of the final agreements. Most women won their pay increases and union recognition, but many did not. Many women achieved nothing at all and returned to their old jobs under the same conditions in which they left. The women who lost more during the strike than they gained tried to return to their old jobs, only to find many positions had been permanently filled by scab laborers.[27] More than 150 large shirtwaist-manufacturing firms did not settle, and many refused to grant the demands of the ILGWU.[28] Many women had suffered through months of striking, enduring physical beatings and verbal abuse only to gain nothing. If the allies and suffragists had not been so divided perhaps they could have worked together and made sure all women gained from the strike. If the allies had not lost interest the strikers could have held out longer, but diminishing ally support also meant diminishing financial support.

However, 354 employers had signed the ILGWU's contract, which included these concessions for shirtwaist makers. First, almost all agreed to union recognition, a fifty-two hour workweek and wage raises from twelve to fifteen percent. All agreed to do away with subcontracting, limit night work to two hours per day no more than twice a week, pay week workers for legal holidays, and in the slow season to divide work evenly among the employees.[29]

Although higher wages, union recognition and a fifty-two hour work week were important victories of the strike, longer lasting achievements were also made. The Shirtwaist Strike of 1909 was an important part of women's history. It was very significant for women of the time, but also an important event for women who would enter the workplace for years to come.[30] Perhaps one of the greatest victories of the strike was the new existence of a real union for women. But the most important result of the strike was the breaking of a tradition—the tradition that women cannot strike, and cannot strike successfully. The young, inexperienced girls of

the Shirtwaist Strike of 1909 broke this old tradition, and set a precedent for female workers for years to come.[31]

The strike had finally ended in February 1910 as the ILGWU called it off.  Not all shirtwaist manufacturers had agreed to the terms, but most had, and many women benefited immediately upon returning to work.  The shirtwaist makers had won many concessions, and the two unions involved gained valuable strength and recognition.  These concessions were priceless to the many women who returned to a better job because of them, but they also came back to haunt the ILGWU negotiators when the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory burned two years later.[32]

Thousands of women were affected by this huge strike, and while most benefited, some were affected adversely.  Fines against strikers totaled $1,296,000 dollars.  Nineteen women were sent to jail and treated as hardened criminals.[33]  Some women strikers even tried to commit suicide as the violence and pressure became too much.  These young girls that were working outside of the home had expected to marry a man eventually.  However, participating in union activity would greatly decrease a woman's chances of finding a husband.[34]

The positive affects of the Shirtwaist Strike of 1909 are far more numerous and enduring than the negative aspects.  The female's life chances had been different for the women who participated in the Shirtwaist Strike, but they did their part to change this inequality.  Although this strike occurred when America was still very young and extremely different than it is today, the effects of these women's actions may still be seen.  The women's rights movement gained momentum from this strike, and greatly improved the confidence of women to unite.  The only blemish that remains in the history of this great success is the conflict that arose between the socialists and the suffragists.  If the two powerful groups could have gotten along and worked together, perhaps the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire would never have occurred.  Despite the strife that arose between the two groups during the ordeal, the strikers fared pretty well.  Women in general made great strides as a direct result of the strike.  Socialist groups gained membership and so too did suffragists.  The Shirtwaist Strike of 1909 is an event that primarily dealt with labor issues, but more importantly dealt with women's concerns.  It is in the aftermath of this successful strike that women would begin to gain equal treatment and equal rights with men.

## Notes

[1]  Nancy Woloch, *Women and the American Experience* (Boston: McGraw-Hill Companies Inc., 2000), 209-210.

[2]  Ibid., 210-211.

[3]   Ibid.

[4]   Ibid., 211.

[5]   Leon Stein, ed., *Out of the Sweatshop: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy* (New York: New York Times Book Co., 1977), 61-66.

[6]   Woloch, *Women and the American Experience*, 211.

[7]   "Girl Strikers Tell the Rich Their Woes," *New York Times*, 16 December 1909.

[8]   Annelise Orleck, *Common Sense & a Little Fire* (London: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 59.

[9]   Stein, ed., *Out of the Sweatshop*, 59.

[10]  Deirdre Doherty, Original Editorial Project (State University of New York at Binghamton, 1998), 1.

[11]  Stein, ed., *Out of the Sweatshop*, 59.

[12]  Orleck, *Common Sense & a Little Fire*, 57.

[13]  "Girl Strikers Tell the Rich Their Woes," 1909.

[14]  Orleck, *Common Sense & a Little Fire*, 58-62.

[15]  Theresa Malkiel, *Diary of a Shirtwaist Striker* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1990), 92-118.

[16]  "Miss Morgan Aids Girl Waist Strikers," *New York Times*, 14 December 1909.

[17]  Orleck, *Common Sense & a Little Fire*, 61-62.

[18]  Ibid., 62.

[19]  Doherty, Original Editorial Project, 2.

[20]  "Miss Morgan Aids Girl Waist Strikers," 1909.

[21]  Doherty, Original Editorial Project, 2.

[22]  "Women Socialists Rebuff Suffragists," *New York Times*, 20 December 1909.

[23]  "Suffragists to Aid Girl Waist Strikers," *New York Times*, 2 December 1909.

[24]  Francoise Basch, Introduction to *Diary of a Shirtwaist Striker* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1990), 27-31.

[25]  Doherty, Original Editorial Project, 2-3.

[26]  Ibid., 2.

[27]  Woloch, *Women and the American Experience*, 222.

[28]  Doherty, Original Editorial Project, 3.

[29]  Stein, ed., *Out of the Sweatshop*, 84-85.

[30]  Orleck, *Common Sense & a Little Fire* , 63.

[31]  Stein, ed., *Out of the Sweatshop*, 85.

[32]  Orleck, *Common Sense & a Little Fire*, 63.

[33]  Basch, Introduction to *Diary of a Shirtwaist Striker*, 27-31.

[34]  Ibid.

# Nancy Davis

## Ostentatious Expenditure, Sumptuary Law and Political Power: The Threat of the Nouveaux Riche in Pre-Modern Society

The end of the middle ages witnessed a demographic shift away from isolated rural locales toward settlement in larger, densely populated urban centers. Higher concentrations of people brought about a new social mobility and hierarchy based on the acquisition of wealth. In contrast, the medieval social structure of the feudal system incorporated a system of interdependent, hierarchical alliances, based on land and title; social mobility was uncommon and social class structure rigidly defined. By the time of the Renaissance, the landowning elite's stronghold on political power began to wane, as spending capacity increasingly became a greater force behind the acquisition of power. This new economic-based rule governing social hierarchy was especially apparent in Italian commercial cities, where power and politics rested in the hands of the wealthy merchant class. Empowered by pre-modern social mobility, rich merchants fought against each other, throwing banquets and displaying wealth to oust the old order of the privileged class and establish positions of power for themselves.

In reaction, rulers attempted to guard their political and social status against an ambitious and increasingly powerful nouveaux riche with sumptuary laws enacted for a new purpose, namely to limit conspicuous consumption. Previously, feudal sumptuary law was not used to maintain status quo or restrict political influence. Sumptuary law sought to regulate the consumption of scarce and vital resources like food and labor that, if wasted, would have dire consequences on the whole population. As Europe shifted from a feudal to a pre-modern society, however, people became less concerned with regulating food and labor and concentrated more on controlling spending associated with social hierarchy.[1] Pre-modern sumptuary law emerged with "the shift away from dearth or ruin concerned with actual or imagined shortage of the means of sustenance"[2] and sought to limit the political influence the merchant classes could buy with their vast incomes that matched and even rivaled the landowning elites. Two political theorists—Niccolo Machiavelli in *The Prince* and *The Discourses*, and Giuniano Maio in *On Magnificence*— realized the potential that buying power had in obtaining political influence. While neither Machiavelli nor Maio specifically mentioned sumptuary law in their respective works, their discussion of the financially-based, pre-modern political world suggests that regulation of spending was key in

the acquisition and maintenance of power. However, both Machiavelli and Maio's works also suggest that spending was a double edged sword: while spending allowed people to climb to power, at the same time it rendered leaders vulnerable to other big spenders. Consequently, a new set of rules governed a pecking order based on the accumulation and maintenance of wealth and shaped the politics of pre-modern high society.

Only in an urban environment could a political writer such as Machiavelli emphasize that "he who comes to power with the help of the elite has more difficulty holding on to power than…with the help of the populace."[3] In contrast to the political structure of a rural feudal environment, Machiavelli's observation is characteristically pre-modern because it suggests the support of the people, rather than the elite, plays a key role in determining a ruler. New factors such as higher concentrations of people in cities, independence from feudal obligations, and mobility through commerce, created a pre-modern political environment in which the people assumed a much bigger political role than in rural feudal society. Within densely populated urban centers, wealthy citizens competed for attention through hosting "carnivals, parties, banquets, jousts, weddings…aimed at producing fleeting pleasure…delighting the ignorant rabble"[4] in order to win over the mob, and in effect buy access to political power. The popular support of the people not only helped grant that access; it also meant that acts of expenditure would become a powerful political tool to sway and influence the masses. Politicians from the nouveaux riche class would not hesitate to use their financial resources to obtain power while simultaneously threatening to undermine the old feudal order.

As European society became more mobile, the desire for social distinction and differentiation emerged as a theme in the struggle over political power between the elites and the nouveaux riche. Regulation of dress and external symbols became the central target of sumptuary legislation, indicating an increased concern over hierarchy in the display of appearances.[5] Wealthy merchants' huge incomes meant elites no longer had exclusive access to luxury material goods. Consequently, merchants had the financial capacity to live, look, and act like elites, as well as to threaten their political positions. In this manner, the struggle for political power revolved around appearances, and to compensate for the heightened social mobility, new sumptuary laws were created that regulated the various nuances of clothing in order to maintain social distinction. The idea that "consumption should not be by each according to their means, but by each according to their rank"[6] was key to sumptuary legislation concerning preservation of class distinction according to social status. Sumptuary laws regarding fashion and appearance placed prohibitions on external ornamentation in order to preserve rank in court society of

the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.  In the words of one scholar, "Each order had its badge: the clergy had the tonsure, the nobility had the sword, the robe had its gowns, long for the law, short for finance."[7] Sumptuary law attempted to prevent respective social classes from breach- ing social boundaries by dressing in a style other than their own. However, the attempt to control appearance with laws proved to be a losing battle because as the nouveaux riche climbed in political rank, they began to make policy in their own favor, and thus sumptuary law regarding strict social distinction according to class became increasingly ineffective.

In reaction to ineffective appearance legislation, fashion emerged to exclude the nouveaux riche class from the social ranks of the elite class in spite of their buying power or legislative control over sumptu- ary law.  As one writer argued, "Clothes became weapons in the battle of appearances…employed to erect a barrier, to stave off the pressure of imitators…who always lagged behind in some nuance in the choice of color or way of tying a ribbon or cravat."[8]  Instead of forcing cloth- ing restrictions through laws, which an increasingly political merchant class could overturn, the elite class used fashion and the power of social convention and norms to halt imitation from the nouveaux riche.  Rapid change characteristic of fashion trends sought to keep people constantly moving away from certain colors and styles and adopting new ones to assert social distinction.[9]   But fashion as a mechanism to confine a certain appearance to the noble class was not just restricted to clothes, as fashion trends followed in other items of conspicuous consumption as well.  Painting in Italy during the Renaissance gradually shifted from emphasizing expensive, dazzling colors to emphasizing skill.  According to Michael Baxandall,  "[T]he diminishing role of gold in paintings is part of a general movement in western Europe…towards a kind of selective inhibition about display."[10]  The shift away from bright and flashy colors towards a more sobering fashion with emphasis on drab colors apparent in paintings was a reaction to the "frightening social mobility with its problem of dissociating oneself from the flashy new rich."[11]

Maio and Machiavelli confronted this issue of spending and display in relation to political power and recognized the subsequent competition between hereditary elites and the nouveaux riche.  Their respective works approach this relationship between conspicuous consumption and politi- cal power from the different political contexts in which they were written and are biased according to the author's view on political power in an increasingly mobile society of pre-modern Europe.  Giuniano Maio was associated with the Aragonese court in Naples where he became tutor to King Ferrante's children in 1490.[12]  Maio wrote *On Magnificence* in 1492 for King Ferrante as a work of advice derived from Aristotle's definitions

of Magnificence in *Nicomachean Ethics* IV.2, and concluded the work us-
ing King Ferrante as an example of one who embodies "magnificence".[13]
Maio quotes Aristotle's definition of magnificence as "the beautiful ap-
pearance of a thing that has been embellished, arousing admiration in
the person who sees it; its power consists…in its sumptuous grandeur."[14]
Maio and other pre-modern conservative thinkers believed luxury items
such as richly adorned clothes, jewelry, and furniture had significant
authoritative and awe inspiring powers and hence they needed to be
confined to the elite class.   This was the only social group, according
to Maio and Aristotle, endowed with enough "magnificence" to exercise
political authority, let alone to wear and use expensive material items.
"Magnificence," wrote Maio, "requires a personal excellence which does
not proceed from riches, but only from the honorable merit of virtue, it
cannot be granted to everyone."[15]  As a work written for a king, *On Mag-
nificence* supports the exclusive power of the ruling elite and emphasizes
the view that items of social distinction be reserved only for the elite.
Maio recognized that people other than the nobility had the capacity to
rise to power through spending, but he firmly denounced the nouveaux
riche's right to power through expenditure, and asserted power according
to rank, not wealth.

Machiavelli's works, *The Prince* and *The Discourses*, dealt with similar
issues of political power, but were written under different circumstances
and contain a bias different from Maio's in *On Magnificence*.  Like *The
Discourses*, Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* in the early 16th century while in
exile from Florence, ruled at the time by the Medici family. Machiavelli's
motives for writing *The Prince* are obscured by his dedication of the work
to the Medici, the very same dynasty that exiled him.  Ironically, despite
his banishment by a republican government, Machiavelli still cast this
form of rule in a positive light .[16] Indeed, unlike Maio, Machiavelli favored
"republican, participatory government,"[17] and both works stressed popu-
lar support backing a leader under either an autocratic or a republican
government as the key element to political power.  While *The Prince* and
*The Discourses* outline different types of government—*The Prince* an
autocracy and *The Discourses* a republic—both explain that the source
of political power comes from the support of the people, and through
acts of conspicuous consumption, leaders rise to power by harnessing
the goodwill of the population. With regard to the virtues of a republic
or an autocracy, Machiavelli "was an advocate of either, according to the
circumstances of the case,"[18] suggesting that the form of government did
not matter so long as the authority of the people was constant.

Machiavelli and Maio were at ideological odds over who had the right
to political power.  Consequently each writer saw the sumptuary law as

having different uses. Machiavelli did not specifically mention sumptuary law in either *The Prince* or *The Discourses*, suggesting more interest in the individual, be he a ruler or prospective one. He was also concerned with how a ruler's spending affected his relationship with the people: "If you are already a ruler generosity is a mistake; if you are trying to become one then you do…need to be thought of as generous."[19] Machiavelli's works never indicate a preference for a specific social class's entitlement to political power; his primary interest lay in the technical workings of power. His heavy emphasis on ways in which rulers could manipulate laws and the population in order to either acquire or maintain power suggests that sumptuary law could be used as a device to equalize competition posed by other big spenders instead of restricting a ruler's own spending.

Unlike Machiavelli, Maio explicitly favored limitations on expenditure and appearance according to social class, arguing that the "wealthy ought to have a limit set on their magnificence and pomp—in accordance to their dignity."[20] According to Maio, sumptuary law was a necessary mechanism to prevent a wealthy nouveaux riche from entering the ring of politics, where it had no business being in the first place, and to preserve the social distinctiveness of an hereditary ruling elite. "To no rank," he wrote, "is such a splendid virtue more suitable than to the most exalted princes and kings, for the excellence of the sumptuous achievement corresponds to the loftiness of their stature."[21]

While Machiavelli and Maio's political commentary differed concerning who had the right to govern, both writers recognized how the social environment of pre-modern Europe presented new political problems that did not exist in feudal times, most notably the competition between the interests of wealthy citizens and the hereditary elites. The conflict between ruler and wealthy citizen existed in pre-modern Europe not only because of a more socially mobile society, but also due to the increased importance of the masses in politics. According to Machiavelli, "He who comes to power with the help of the elite has more difficulty in holding on to power than…with the help of the populace, for in the former case he is surrounded by many who think of themselves as his equals, and whom he cannot order about," but with the support of the populace, "there is no one…around him who is not prepared to obey."[22] To gain support of the people, rulers or wealthy citizens had to be generous "by some out of the way and conspicuous action which…has brought…honorable notice,"[23] which meant, in Machiavelli's terms, "lavish and ostentatious expenditure."[24] Machiavelli and Maio both saw the people as a whole as dumb and easy to please and manipulate with tournaments and games. In return, they would pledge their support to the sponsors of such entertainment. They also realized the political utility of an entertained mob,

which, according to Maio, overwhelmingly outnumbered "men endowed with more discerning judgment."[25]

While spending enabled political gain, if continued while in power, it placed the ruler in jeopardy. A ruler had to be careful regarding not only the spending of his own resources, but also the expenditure of other people's wealth in the form of taxes. In effect, a ruler had to place spending restrictions on himself to be "able to live on his income, maintain an adequate army and undertake new initiatives without imposing new taxes."[26] Thrift was an essential attribute for a ruler who did not want to fall into disfavor with the people. According to Machiavelli, "[A] ruler who pursues a reputation for generosity will always end up wasting his resources; and will be obliged in the end…to impose crushing taxes upon the people…this will begin to make him hateful to his subjects."[27] On the other hand, restrictions rulers placed on themselves due to budget constraints rendered them vulnerable to the spending of wealthy citizens whose ambitions for power had the potential to entice the fickle mob away from supporting the ruler. Yet Machiavelli maintains that thrift was a better choice than generosity. He argued that even though thrift rendered rulers vulnerable to defeat by another demagogue throwing banquets and parties, "it is wiser to accept a reputation as miserly, which people despise but do not hate than to aspire to a reputation as generous, and as a consequence, be obliged to accept criticism for rapacity, which people both despise and hate."[28] The rules of political power set down by Machaivelli's texts suggest a ruler could hope to compete with prospective wealthy citizens, be it in a republic or a monarchy, by enacting sumptuary laws to limit the amount of influence over the masses a rival could buy. By incapacitating wealthy citizens' ability to spend with sumptuary laws, such limits reduced the amount of popular favor a potential political enemy could amass.

Spending presented itself to rulers as a problematic double-edged sword, which sumptuary law seemed to overcome. However, use of sumptuary law to restrict political rivals' spending presented further problems and threats to a ruler's position. The main problem of sumptuary law as a legislative device to restrict access to material goods was that it created envy and an increased desire for luxury items people were legally barred from.[29] The fundamental contradiction of sumptuary legislation is related to the issue of imitation, as one scholar suggests when he states, "If some economic or cultural asset is restricted to some groups or classes it becomes a potential object of aspiration for others."[30] Restrained from displaying generosity, rulers restricted luxury to safeguard their positions, which under the imitation theory, jeopardized their own position because it caused envy and desire in others.

Sumptuary law was also problematic in that it encouraged high concentrations of wealth in the upper classes. To a certain extent, sumptuary legislation benefited the economy because restrictions on luxury items controlled the flow of economic standards like gold and prevented its excessive usage as raw material in cloths or in other luxury items, which removed gold from circulation causing the debasement of currency. However, as economists found in the late seventeenth century, emphasis on saving withdrew money from circulation and caused unemployment. This realization led to the view that states should encourage spending among the rich in order to maintain social stability and popular support.[31]

Pre-modern Europe saw a merchant class emerge on the political scene, as well as the peoples' increased political role in supporting leadership and the use of conspicuous consumption to harness popular support. Subsequently, fashion emerged, and the outward appearance of people began to change more rapidly. Sumptuary laws once used to restrict limited resources such as food began to be used to restrict the amount of luxury goods wealthy citizens could buy. Conservative political thinkers like Giuniano Maio firmly denounced social mobility and the use of money to acquire political positions. Maio used Cicero and Aristotle as examples from antiquity to back his firm belief in power based on rank, not wealth, He argued, "Cicero castigates those who, entirely lacking in honour, dignity and virtue, want to consider themselves on par with great and famous princes."[32] Niccolo Machiavelli concentrated more on the mechanical workings of power, discussing in *The Prince* and *The Discourses* what rulers needed to do to maintain power in a pre-modern political environment where wealth determined rank and popular support was of the utmost importance. In Machiavelli's view, "[I]f the masses are opposed to you, you can never be secure, for there are too many of them; but the elite, since there are few of them, can be neutralized."[33] Although sumptuary law and spending came to dominate pre-modern politics and replaced an era of hereditary rule, it ushered in new problems as well as social innovation. While the changed nature of politics allowed social mobility and gave popular opinion more power, society became increasingly dominated by wealthy citizens who used conspicuous consumption to fight each other for political positions.

## Notes

[1] Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1996), 33.

[2] Ibid., 34.

[3] Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince,* ed. and trans. David Wootton (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995), 31.

4   Giuniano Maio, *On Majesty*, trans. Nicholas Webb, in Jill Kraye, ed. *Cambridge Translations of Renaissance Philosophical Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), 2:111.

5   Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law*, 33.

6   Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the 'ancien regime'* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 28.

7   Ibid., 39.

8   Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the 'ancien regime'*, 6.

9   Ibid., 42.

10  Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy*, (New York: Oxford UP, 1972), 14.

11  Ibid., 15.

12  Nicholas Webb, "Giuniano Maio" in Kraye, *Cambridge Translations of Renaissance Texts, 2:*109.

13  Ibid.

14  Giuniano Maio, *On Magnificence*, 110.

15  Ibid.

16  Wooton, ed., *The Prince*, xvii. Machiavelli's actual motives for writing *The Prince* have been an area of debate. While some scholars believe Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* to gain employment, as he hoped the advice would be seen as useful, a small minority of scholars believe Machiavelli gave the advice as bad advice, in hopes that the Medici by adopting the advice would bring about their ruin.

17  Ibid., xvi.

18  Bernard Crick, ed. and intro. *The Discourses*, (New York: Penguin Books Ltd., 1970), 18.

19  Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 50.

20  Maio, *On Magnificence*, 111.

21  Ibid.

22  Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 31-32.

23  Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, 497.

24  Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 49.

25  Maio, *On Magnificence*, 111.

26  Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 49.

27  Ibid.

28  Ibid., 50-51.

29  Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law*, 103.

30  Ibid.

31  Sir Dudely North in Roger Mason, *The Economics of Conspicuous Consumption: Theory and Thought since 1700* (Cheltham and Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc., 1998), 2.

32  Cicero, *De officiis* II, in Maio, *On Magnificence*, 110.

33  Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 32.

# Laura Carroll

## Euripidean Tragedy: Shifting the Focus to Reality

For the first time in its imperial history, during the last quarter of the 5th century BCE, ancient Athens stood at bay in a struggle against Sparta that would prove to be her loss.  Through the Peloponnesian War her spirits plummeted and soared through embarrassing defeats, ferociously abused victories, and the nightmare of war-mad demagogues.[1]  This war had a tremendous impact on all who came in contact with it, including the great dramatist Euripides.  In his time he was known better than both Aeschylus and Sophocles, yet it was more difficult to love him, understand him, and accept both him and his work.[2]  While other 5th century Athenian playwrights were romanticizing Ancient Greek life, Euripides's dramas depicted reality by portraying images of a divided Athens, and the impending ruination of her glory.  It is no wonder that in his time Euripides was cast aside by many, admired by a few, but liked by no one.[3] He skillfully illustrated the realities of common life by accepting honesty and truth before beauty, and freely intertwined comedy with tragedy. Euripides responded to the turbulence in Athens differently than his fellow contemporary playwrights, so to effectively portray reality in his dramas he focused more on character development rather than plot, and from this emerged the controversial issue of the dominant heroine, and tragedies that focused on the triumph of vengeful women as in the *Medea*.

Euripides was born in 480 BCE on the Island of Salamis.  His parents were wealthy and had a good reputation in the town of Phyla, six miles northeast of Athens, where they had moved after the birth of Euripides.[4] As a young poet he spent much of his time with philosophers and sophists that came from all over Ancient Greece to gather in Athens.[5]  Unlike other 5th century playwrights, Euripides has no record of political activity, nor did he sit in any political office.[6]  He led a secluded life, and in his spare time he loved to read, study and learn from books in his library (possibly the first ever in Athens) that housed as many as 92 dramas. For 5th century Athens this was a notable achievement when drama and education were oral traditions.[7]  At the age of 25, in 455 BCE, Euripides produced his first of many plays that would be the start of a half-century of continuous creativity.  Unfortunately, 5th century Athenians begrudged his plays the popularity they deserved, and in 408 BCE a disgruntled Euripides packed his bags and fled his home on the Island of Salamis. He went to the court of Macedonia where he remained for the rest of his life until his death in 406 BCE.[8]  His final resting-place is in Macedonia near the town of Arethusa.[9]

Euripides loathed the Athenians because of their public mistreatment and misunderstanding of him. He was described as "gloomy, thoughtful, stern, a hater of laughter, a man that avoided the society of other men, a man who did not know how to jest even in his cups, and he was generally disliked."[10] The Peloponnesian War brought Euripides in close contact with the imperialism of Athens and the militarism of Sparta, and he came to despise both. He is said to have the same fearless autonomy of ideas when it came to political and social issues. He was constantly taking one position and then another.[11] His doubt in Athenian society is reflected in his work.

The Peloponnesian War and the turbulence it caused in Athens influenced Euripides to do what no Greek dramatist had done before—create tragedies that reflected the reality of life instead of romanticizing life to mask the truth in his time as other playwrights were doing.[12] His tragedies had a sense of dramatic irony because what was performed was not independent from the audience; it needed the audience's involvement as spectators.[13] The irony was in how accurately Euripides depicted daily life in 5th century Athens. He took a bold new step when writing, for his plays focused on character development rather than plot. This way he could work more with the reality of his environment. He defended himself by explaining that his method was to substitute a "more tightly structured, 'democratic' form that was relevant to the spectator's daily life, and allows them room for discrimination and judgement."[14] To the Athenians he produced uncertainty, discord, violence, disruption, and subversion.[15]

Since 455 BCE, Euripides created play after play demonstrating his skill in the portrayal of reality through character development. In return, the Athenians rewarded him with repeated failures. Most of his plays are about sacrifice, vengeance, or injustice, and most have strong human heroines. He made an issue of the divided soul; for example, Medea's struggle to enact revenge on her husband by killing her own sons. From character development emerged a new theme in Ancient Greek drama, the predominant role of the female character. Unlike other writers, Euripides made female self-devotion a focus in his work.[16]

There is no doubt that Euripides displayed an unusual interest in the behavior, impact, nature, and social status of 5th century Greek women.[17] The *Medea* and his other plays are his depictions of daily life in Athens, and in particular, the treatment of female Athenians.[18] His observations of life made him more cynical of his own gender rather than of women. Traditionally, Ancient Greek tragedies were public displays used to bolster the community of predominantly male citizens.[19] One can not find literature or drama from this time period that was not distorted in its

views of gender relationships, yet it was possible that women were not as unimportant or empty headed as they were presented to be.[20]  Athenian women were not considered citizens, but were acknowledged as natives of the city.  Not only was this a sexually segregated city, but it also was accustomed to the virtues of men and women being radically different.  A man's virtues were to be courageous in battle and to win glory, and a woman's were in the bearing and loving of her children.[21]

It is the opinion of Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz that "as a result of the suppression of real women, the culture invented its own representations of gender, and it was this fictional 'woman' that appeared on stage, in the myths and in the plastic arts, representing the patriarchal values attached to the gender while suppressing the experiences, stories, feelings, and fantasies of actual women."[22]  It was with this situation in mind that Euripides began to create dramas where women were not suppressed.  It was his satire on a predominantly male society.  Euripides made the point that the sexual function of women put them at the mercy of men.  He recognized that the sexual desires of both men and women could be equally intense.  Furthermore, the emotions between a mother and her child have theatrical appeal, but it shows that there is still another obstacle to the freedom of women.  It became another tool to threaten and pressure her.[23]  The female characters in Euripides's plays have brains, and the knowledge of good and evil.  He created them to be thought of as adults not children.  If any ill is spoken about women in his plays it is to keep with the social norms at that time that insisted that women were vain, deceitful, and frivolous.[24]  Euripides was not campaigning for women's rights, nor was he blatantly trying to stir up controversy by creating his characters in this manner.  Quite a bit of his work was dedicated to the conduct and suppression of women, so it is sensible to conclude that he had instruction to contribute to those who would listen.[25]  One of those lessons is the *Medea*.

The *Medea* is a tragedy of revenge that feeds on its own flesh, of east against west, and of woman against man.[26]  Written in the last spring of peace before the Peloponnesian War in 431 BCE, *Medea* marked the end of what was the Golden Age of Athens.  The Golden Age was an era of great creativity in the fields of science, art, intellectual activity, and political activity.  The chorus of women in the *Medea* is still singing the praises of this period.[27]  What is different about the *Medea* in comparison to his other plays is that it does not have a sacrificial virgin to be the willing victim of a patriarch; instead, it is Medea who takes the life of her husband Jason's virgin bride-to-be.

A dominant theme in the *Medea* is the typical reactions to the delicate feelings, or deeper passions of the wife when confronted with the prob-

lems of a husband who is insensitive and selfish.[28]  The character Medea is presented as woman and goddess, native and foreigner.  She is out for revenge, and paid no price for her crimes.  She does not commit suicide, nor does she experience a more heinous fate.  Medea is hardly humble when she speaks her last lines from a chariot provided to her by the god of the Sun himself.[29]  Likewise, the impact of her first speech is equally stunning.  "Medea's first speech was deliberately designed to disappoint those who had expected the flame and fire of an inhuman heroine on her first appearance.  There was strength in the quiet, cold bitterness of contempt with which she described a society where men were supreme and women chattel."[30]

> Women of Corinth, I have come out to see you
> For fear you might reproach me.  You mustn't think
> I'm proud.  I know some people hide themselves
> From common sight, like gods, and that shows pride,
> While others show it stalking down the street.
> But some, who just walk quietly, get a name
> For being haughty, distant and superior.—-
> (I, I, 212-219)[31]

These are words that Euripides designed to be heavy with irony.  It is the repetition of the reproaches continually heaped on Jason, and these words introduce the famous passage of reproach against the male morality that made the play so controversial.  Here Euripides speaks to a generation or two ahead of his time, and as usual he is making an effort to show Athenians the folly of their ways.[32]  The expression of the opposed passions in Euripides's characters was a new and sophisticated thing; it enabled the audience to observe the death-struggle of love and hate in Medea.[33]

A new dramatic character that has unusual power characterized the epilogue at the end.  Medea, by then super-human, destabilizes the ending by displaying passion that the tragedy could not contain.  While riding off in her chariot, she herself seems to become a goddess.  Like the divine she enacted hideous revenge on those opposed to her will.[34]  Her passion relinquishes her own human character, alienates a compassionate chorus of women, and destroys her family and friends.  Her character violated the norms of drama at that time, and her fury was too powerful to be held on stage.[35]

The Peloponnesian War caused an upheaval in ancient Athens that had far-reaching impact on all who came in contact with it.  This became the backdrop and setting for many of Euripides's dramas, one of which was

the *Medea*. In depicting the reality of the situation instead of romanticizing it he made himself an enemy of the Athenian people who refused to recognize his plays as the works of the master dramatists that we know today. To create a realistic setting he focused on character development rather than plot, and this was the beginning of his controversial quest to emancipate the traditional characterization of women in drama as weak, vain, petty and dishonest. Fifth century Athens was overwhelmingly dominated by men who did not appreciate the radical new ideals of a playwright who casts a woman character that sought revenge and achieved it without any punishment at all. In the case of the character Medea, she, a common woman, rode off in a gilded, divine chariot like a goddess. No woman at that time dared to murder a man's sons, his heirs to a patriarchal society, and get away with it. He was breaking the norms of that time with a new focus, new styles of drama, and new dominant characters, and despite his unpopularity during his lifetime, he created original dramas with radical ideals that continue to influence playwrights today.

## Notes

[1] F. L. Lucas, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome: Euripides and His Influence* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1963), 5.

[2] Bernard Knox, "Euripides: The Poet as Prophet," in *Directions in Euripidean Criticism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985), 1.

[3] Ibid., 6.

[4] William Nickerson Bates, *Euripides: A Student of Human Nature* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1930), 5-6.

[5] Lucas, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, 4.

[6] Knox, "Euripides," 6.

[7] Bates, *Euripides: A Student of Human Nature*, 13.

[8] Lucas, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, 6.

[9] Bates, *Euripides: A Student of Human Nature*, 13.

[10] Ibid., 14.

[11] Lucas, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, 34-35.

[12] E. M. Blaiklock, *The Male Characters of Euripides* (Wellington: New Zealand University Press, 1952), xi.

[13] Phillip Vellacott, *Ironic Drama: A Study of Euripides' Method and Meaning* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 23.

[14] Justina Gregory, *Euripides and the Instruction of the Athenians* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985), 1.

[15] Knox, "Euripides," 5.

[16] Lucas, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, 20.

[17] Vellacott, *Ironic Drama*, 82.

[18] Knox, "Euripides," 5.

[19] Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, *Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 1.

[20] Blaiklock, *The Male Characters of Euripides*, 2.

21  Rabinowitz, *Anxiety Veiled*, 3, 7.
22  Ibid., 1.
23  Vellacott, *Ironic Drama*, 96.
24  Lucas, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, 36-37.
25  Vellacott, *Ironic Drama*, 89.
26  Lucas, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, 6.
27  Knox, "Euripides," 2.
28  Blaiklock, *The Male Characters of Euripides*, 21.
29  Rabinowitz, *Anxiety Veiled*, 125.
30  Blaiklock, *The Male Characters of Euripides*, 25.
31  Euripides, *Medea*, trans. Alistair Elliot (London: Oberon Books, 1993), 28.
32  Blaiklock, *The Male Characters of Euripides,* 25.
33  Lucas, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, 23.
34  Francis M. Dunn, *Tragedy's End: Closure and Innovation in Euripidean Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 40.
35  Dunn, *Tragedy's End*, 45.

# John Killmaster

## Cemetery Hill: A Defense of Richard Ewell at Gettysburg

During three days in July of 1863, two American armies clashed near a modest and peaceful farming community in southern Pennsylvania. Historians, military analysts, amateur enthusiasts and the public alike have blamed several Southern officers who were in command during those three days for the Confederate loss. The two most prominent were Confederate Generals James Longstreet, and Richard Ewell. Following the Southern withdrawal from Gettysburg, Longstreet was immediately criticized for delaying his attack on the left of the Federal line on the second day. Later historians cast their aspersions on General Ewell who led the assault on the Federal right. Ewell commanded the old Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson Corps and was accused of a lack of initiative for not assaulting Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill on the first day of battle, leaving the Federal line with strong defensive positions. Though Ewell's decision not to advance was seen as indecisive, he understood that he had many disadvantages: troop fatigue, the geography of the battlefield, little knowledge of the positions of the remaining units of the Federal Army and a lack of the time needed for mobilization. Evidence contained in the historical record on the battle will explain that Gen. Ewell was justified in delaying an attack.

   Gettysburg's historical record is extensive. The sources used in this paper are only a minute percentage of the total documentation available. Nevertheless, these limited sources contain a large amount of information. The primary documentation used includes first hand narratives of observers and soldiers (mostly officers), dispatches, reports, military maps and photographs taken shortly after the battle. Many of the authors of secondary sources are respected historians in their fields and have used similar documentation in their works.

## Background: Chancellorsville to Gettysburg

On May 1, 1863 the Army of Northern Virginia met the Army of the Potomac near a small Virginia crossroads in a dense wooded region appropriately called "the Wilderness." Lee split his outnumbered army between the small town of Chancellorsville and the large river town of Fredericksburg. He concentrated a large portion of his forces within these thick woodlands, while holding off two Federal corps and two divisions with only one Confederate division and one brigade, stretched out very thin along the heights of Fredericksburg.[1] This strategy neutralized the

Federal matériel advantage, which was twice the size of the Confederate's. Lee's 'divide and conquer' battle strategy was a brilliant use of tactics and was the first decisive offensive victory in the East since First Bull Run (Manassas). The result of the victory at Chancellorsville increased the morale of the Confederate army as well as southern pride on the home-front, despite the death of Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, mistakenly shot by his own soldiers. From May to July, the Southern army was rid-ing a wave of confidence while President Lincoln was struggling to find a more suitable field commander than Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker for his demoralized union forces.

In addition, the mastery of the Chancellorsville campaign produced an attitude of invincibility among Lee's soldiers, despite their disadvantages in men and matériel. According to Edwin Coddington, although the suc-cess of the campaign foiled Union Commander Joseph Hooker's objective of the siege of Richmond, the Army of the Potomac "still was intact" and able to deliver a fatal blow against the Confederates after some rest and reinforcement.[2] Nevertheless, Lee allowed his army to indulge in the much-needed morale booster. The war in the west was culminating at this time around Vicksburg Mississippi, where Gen. Ulysses S. Grant was conducting a campaign with mixed results as the Confederate forces were able to repel repeated attacks on the well-fortified city. Consequently, the situation by June 1863 placed the Confederate army on sturdier feet than the demoralized Army of the Potomac.

Lee devised an invasion plan that would force the Union army to commit all necessary resources to fight a battle on their own ground as Virginia had been forced to do for two years. Furthermore, the Southern Army was badly in need of military ordinances, which could be found in the abundant Pennsylvania towns beyond the already stripped terrain of Maryland. Lee knew he had to strike soon while the Army of Northern Virginia had the initiative. The invasion of the North began as Lee shifted his army west toward the Shenandoah Valley.

On 3 June, Lee's replenished army began its march north through the Shenandoah Valley, and crossed the Potomac River into Maryland. Ewell's second corps was the first to enter Pennsylvania and was dispatched by Lee towards the Carlisle-Harrisburg vicinity. Ewell reached Harrisburg on 27 June and hoped to capture the capital the following day. However, orders from Lee summoned Ewell's Corps to Heidlersburg, Pennsylvania to link up with A.P. Hill.[3] Ewell was decidedly irritated at the change of orders. He had hoped to capture Pennsylvania's capital city and send a scare throughout the North.[4] Nevertheless, he followed orders quickly and on 29 June marched toward Heidlersburg.

Lee's change of orders was in response to a report stating that a few

Federal divisions had crossed the Potomac River and were marching north.  This was the first substantial report of Federal movements but the information was inaccurate.  In fact, by 28 June, Gen. George Meade had all seven corps across the river, and the following morning, two brigades of Gen. John Buford's cavalry were already in position west of Gettysburg.[5]  Lee had lost touch with his "Eyes of the Army" cavalry commander Gen. J.E.B. Stuart, who was in York in hopes of linking up with Gen. Jubal Early's division of Second Corps.  Without Stuart, Lee had to rely on a spy to observe enemy movements.  The spy known as James Harrison informed Longstreet that all seven Federal Corps were marching north not far from South Mountain, the southern end of the Confederate line. The Army of Northern Virginia was stretched thin and any battle in this condition would be an advantage for the enemy.[6]  Surprised by the swiftness of the Union Army's advance, Lee issued an additional set of orders to his corps commanders *not* to engage until all divisions were in position in the Cashtown-Gettysburg vicinity.[7]

The Confederate Third Corps commanded by A.P. Hill was already near Gettysburg on 30 June.  Hill's division commander Gen. Henry Heth ordered Gen. James Pettigrew and his brigade of barefoot North Carolinians to march to Gettysburg in order to obtain shoes.  Upon reaching the outskirts of town, the North Carolinians encountered a small picket of Union cavalry.  Pettigrew believed the small force was part of the Army of the Potomac and advised caution following General Lee's orders not to engage.[8]  Both Hill and Heth were wrongly convinced that the small Federal force was only Pennsylvania militia and ordered Heth's Division to march back to Gettysburg the next day, 1 July.[9]  The first engagement of the Battle of Gettysburg began as Gen. John Buford's dismounted and entrenched cavalry met General Henry Heth's division near McPherson's Ridge west of Gettysburg.

## General Ewell's Dilemma

On 30 June, Gen. Richard Ewell was still marching south when he received a third set of instructions from General Lee ordering him to proceed either to Cashtown or Gettysburg as circumstances required.[10]  Ewell had heard rumors that Federal troops were in the area of Gettysburg but previous scouting parties turned up nothing of substance.  The absence of a threat at Gettysburg prompted Ewell to keep his course toward Cashtown, but when Heth's division encountered Buford at Gettysburg, Ewell was just north of town.

The order from General Lee to Ewell was discretionary and indecisive. Lee's style of leadership contrasted greatly with General Thomas "Stone-

wall" Jackson.  Jackson would frequently carry out his own orders for the purpose of efficiency and self-satisfaction.[11]  Ewell now commanded this group of young men who had experienced combat with Jackson and were used to the decisive commander.  Ewell served under Jackson as well, understood his autocratic methods, and rarely questioned his orders, but did not maintain the authoritarian personality his late commander possessed.  Now he was the commander of Jackson's old Second Corps and he had to make the decisions that could potentially send these young men to their deaths.

On the morning of 1 July, General Ewell received a dispatch from General Heth that Third Corps had engaged General Buford's Union Cavalry and the Federal First Corps at Gettysburg.  Using the discretion given by Lee, Ewell made a quick decision to march toward Gettysburg by the sound of artillery.  He received another order from Lee to avoid a "general engagement" if the enemy was in large force and to wait for the rest of Hill's Corps and Longstreet's Corps to move in from Cashtown.  Ewell was the senior commander on the field at that moment and considered the situation well at hand.  He decided to take the initiative and "push the attack vigorously".[12]  Here again Ewell showed his ability to make a decisive decision according to the circumstances.

Upon Ewell's arrival, the Confederates had the advantage of the high ground; Rodes occupied Oak Ridge and Oak Hill, rising at the north end of the ridge and commanded the area west of town where artillery was able to enfilade the Federal lines.  Heth's division was beginning to push the dismounted cavalry from its breastworks back into First Corps' line.  However, despite being outnumbered, Buford's undersized cavalry division was able to hold off two Confederate divisions until First Corps' lines were formed.  Gen. John Reynolds's First Corps formed a skirmish line along McPherson's Ridge and Gen. Oliver O. Howard's Eleventh Corps formed its ranks just north of town.[13]  Ewell quickly ordered General Early's Division to attack the Federal right flank, which had formed a line through the town, while General Pender's division was moved up to counter the Federal First Corps' fierce attack.[14]  This worked beautifully, stopping the Union advance to a halt.  With the Federal advance broken, Ewell was in good position for an assault.  A sharpshooter had killed the Union First Corps Commander, General Reynolds, and Gen. Abner Doubleday assumed command.  With First Corps stunned and Eleventh Corps smashed by Early, Doubleday ordered a withdrawal from Seminary Ridge and the town and re-positioned the Federal lines on Cemetery Ridge and the hill at its northern end.  Here First and Eleventh Corps met up with the hard-marched Twelfth Corps commanded by Gen. Henry Slocum.[15]

In the victorious aftermath, Ewell was pressed by several of his exuberant

brigade commanders to immediately assault Cemetery Hill, but he waited to make a decision until he consulted with his division commanders.[16] Rodes and Early had already positioned troops at the base of Cemetery Hill and recommended an attack "provided Lee could support his right". Ewell agreed and sent a message to Lee describing his position and circumstances.[17] The returning dispatch from Gen. Lee again was discretionary, giving Ewell the option of attacking "if at all practicable".[18] However, Lee was not able to offer Ewell any reinforcements, as Longstreet's Corps was still at least a half day's march from the field. Obviously Ewell was willing for an assault but he did not know how many troops were on the hill and how many were marching up in support. A scouting report found at least forty pieces of artillery and an entrenched brigade already positioned on the hill.[19] Ewell knew the remaining corps of the Federal Army would be reaching the field soon.

General Ewell was perplexed at what to do next. The last dispatch from Lee before the Federal retreat asked him to avoid a general engagement if possible, which he interpreted to mean that Lee wished not to bring on a full-scale battle at Gettysburg. Ewell did not want to go on the offensive without specific orders from Lee who was still back at Cashtown and he ordered his commanders to form defensive positions.[20] Nevertheless, his brigade commanders were begging him for an attack. Brig. Gen. John B. Gordon toyed with the idea of disobeying Ewell's order. Gordon wrote, "In less than half an hour my troops would have swept up and over those hills…I think I should have risked the consequences of disobedience even then but for the fact that the order to halt was accompanied with the explanation that General Lee did not want to give battle at Gettysburg".[21]

## General Ewell's Disadvantages

To understand what Ewell's Second Corps was challenged with after the Federal withdrawal to Cemetery Hill, a geographical description of the battlefield immediately south of town is in order. Ewell's position occupied the town of Gettysburg and the two main roads heading south out of town, Washington Street and the Baltimore Pike, which extended further south on either side of Cemetery Hill. The more densely wooded Culp's Hill commanded the town adjacent to East Cemetery Hill and was distinctly more elevated. The Federal line of sight on Cemetery and Culp's Hills was a sweeping panorama from Seminary Ridge and the open fields opposing Cemetery Ridge on the left around to the open, rolling fields east and south of Gettysburg where the remaining Union Corps were arriving. In contrast, the sloping and rolling bases of the two hills and the town's

many buildings limited the Confederate line of sight.[22]

Given this position, Ewell faced several liabilities. An assault on Cemetery Hill, Ewell wrote, "was not assailable from the town" and posed many problems.[23] The north face of Cemetery Hill was very steep and rocky, with entrenched troops at the crest who could fire from well defended positions downward into the Confederate ranks. Columns advancing down the streets to Cemetery Hill would be immediately exposed to fire from Federal artillery batteries.[24] Southern soldiers who survived the artillery bombardment would be faced with the steep and rocky slopes of the hill. Union soldiers, though spread thin along their lines, were well covered behind their fortifications. Breastworks and entrenchments were solidly constructed from available materials, which included felled trees, stones and existing terrain such as boulders and earth.[25] Culp's Hill would also need to be attacked to avoid enfilading artillery on Ewell's lines.[26] Furthermore, Ewell as well as Lee were still uninformed of the position of the Army of the Potomac. Ewell could not attack without adequate knowledge of the enemy's strength and position. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart, who was deployed weeks before in order to keep Lee informed of the enemy's position, still had not shown himself on the field.[27] Only two Federal Corps had been engaged on the first day of fighting, so where was the bulk of the Federal Army? In what direction would they be coming to the field of battle? These questions among others must have been on Ewell's mind.

Even if Ewell knew he could attack successfully, he was not prepared for an assault. His third division under Gen. Edward Johnson was still marching south from its rear guard position near Carlisle and Rode's Division, though victorious in the initial battle, was nursing numerous casualties. Scouting reports identified two Federal corps were entrenched on Cemetery Hill, First Corps on the left and Eleventh on the right of the Baltimore Pike. The two corps only numbered 7,500 men spread out along the crests of Cemetery and Culp's Hill's and Ewell knew their ranks had been badly depleted. First Corps' fighting earlier in the morning of 1 July had cost them seventy-five percent of their forces and Eleventh Corps lost sixty percent. This was a much greater rate of loss than the Confederate divisions experienced; Gordon's Brigade of Georgians had the highest casualty rate at thirty percent.[28] What Ewell did not know was that while his brigade commanders were squabbling over orders, Wadsworth's Federal Division of First Corps took position atop the unoc-cupied Culp's Hill, reinforcing the battered right end of Eleventh Corps. Furthermore, Gen. Henry Slocum's Twelfth Corps was marching up the Baltimore Pike to replace Eleventh Corps on Culp's Hill.[29] What he *did* know was his troops were not going to be reinforced by Hill as he had

hoped and that the fortified federal line, despite being thinly manned would be a formidable task to attack by his exhausted boys.[30]

Any attack would take many hours to plan. The earliest Ewell would have been able to mobilize for an attack was between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m., when darkness was beginning to creep up.[31] Three hours earlier, General Early had attacked the Union's Eleventh Corps in the town and driven them back to Cemetery Hill. By the time division commanders Rodes, Early and Johnson situated the prisoner guard, cared for their fallen comrades, and moved into their positions facing the hills, it was already 5:00 p.m. By 5:30, Twelfth Corps had arrived on Culp's Hill and Eleventh Corps reinforced Cemetery Hill.[32] By 6:00, when Ewell's troops were sufficiently organized for an assault, Federal Gen. Henry Slocum's Twelfth Corps was now in position on Culp's Hill, relieving the under-sized and exhausted Wadsworth's Division, veterans of the fighting at McPherson's Ridge that morning. The Union troops, now 20,000 strong had transformed their thin lines on the two hills into solid formations and created formidable fortifications at their crests.[33] With these circumstances surrounding Ewell's position, he made the decision not to attack until Lee commanded the field.

This pivotal decision, however, was not the cause for defeat for the Confederate forces. On the second day of battle, Longstreet and Ewell commenced their assaults on both ends of the Federal line with good results considering the well fortified, defensive positions of the Union forces. Ewell's divisions had pushed the Federal positions on Culp's Hill back several hundred yards and occupied the enemy's entrenchments by nightfall. It was a very favorable position because now several of Ewell's regiments were poised to flank the Federal Twelfth Corps and sweep in behind them. This was Longstreet's plan however, during the evening of 2 July, Lee issued orders for an assault on the center of the Federal line, culminating in the famous failure of Picket's Charge. Lee had disregarded the near victory of the second day's assaults and doomed any chances of victory. A frontal assault was destined to fail against carefully placed artillery and the solidly constructed Federal defenses on Cemetery ridge.

## Conclusions

"Stonewall" Jackson may have been able to organize an attack more quickly than General Ewell, but that is only speculation. Lee should not have expected Ewell to conduct his campaign in a manner identical to Jackson. He made his decisions based on justifiable reasons and kept his wits about him while his impatient subordinates, full of exuberance,

begged for an immediate, albeit hasty assault. Considering the limitations of time, fatigue, geography and lack of information, Ewell decided the situation warranted Lee's scrutiny before a surely bloody assault. Would "Stonewall" Jackson have attacked the hills on 1 July? Given his tendencies in past conflicts Jackson would no doubt have commenced an immediate assault, but probably with great cost in lives. If the key to the battle was commanding the high ground, then maybe Lee should have followed Gen. James Longstreet's advice of accepting the glory of the first day's victory: re-deploy and assume the tactical defensive, just as the Union Army had done. Lee dismissed Longstreet's idea and later wrote, "[Gettysburg's] loss was occasioned by a combination of circumstances. It was commenced in the absence of intelligence. It was continued in the effort to overcome the difficulties by which we were surrounded…"[34] It is possible that Lee may have blamed himself rather than his generals for the defeat by pressing for a continuance of the engagement on the second day knowing the disadvantage of his position. His statement certainly helps to explain the controversy General Ewell faced when confronted with his decision of whether to attack the hills.

The war would continue for almost two years, but the Army of Northern Virginia would never again match the matériel strength as it had prior to Gettysburg. Even after Lee's surrender in 1865, controversy over the Confederate command at Gettysburg would continue for generations. Southern opinion believed that if only "Stonewall" Jackson had been able to participate in the Battle of Gettysburg, the outcome would have been much different, but it can only be speculated. Many Southerners refused to blame Robert E. Lee because of his heroic stature and they wrongly placed the onus on others. Lee was the architect of Confederate strategy and as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia should have been accountable for the actions of his crew. After all, he was the captain of a sinking Southern ship. Nonetheless, Marse Robert would go down as the South's greatest hero, as the "Little Napoleon" of Chancellorsville, and it was inconceivable to many southerners that Gettysburg was his Waterloo.

### Notes

[1]      United States Military Academy, *The West Point Atlas of American Wars* (New York: Praeger, 1959), maps 85-86.

[2]      Edwin B. Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign; A Study in Command* (New York: Scribner's, 1968), 4.

[3]      Clifford Dowdey, ed., *The Wartime Papers of Robert E. Lee* (Boston: Little Brown, 1961), 534-535; Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg: Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 11-13.

[4]      Donald Pfanz, *Richard S. Ewell: A Soldier's Life* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1998), 302; Coddington, 192.

[5]      Ken Bandy and Florence Freeland, eds., *The Gettysburg Papers* (Dayton,

OH: Morningside Bookshop, 1978), 60, 171.

[6] Coddington. 180-184. South Mountain is the northern extent of the Blue Ridge chain of the Appalachian Mountains, which extends from northern Virginia into southern Pennsylvania. South Mountain served as a natural barrier for Lee's armies as they marched north.

[7] Ned Bradford, ed. *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (New York: Appelton-Century-Crofts, 1956), 362.

[8] Ibid., 359.

[9] Coddington, 263-264.

[10] Donald Pfanz, 303.

[11] Catherine Cooper Hopley, *"Stonewall" Jackson, Late General of the Confederate States Army* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1863), 92.

[12] Donald Pfanz, 305.

[13] Jay Luvaas and Harold W. Nelson, eds., *The U.S. War College Guide to the Battle of Gettysburg* (Carlisle, PA: South Mountain Press, Inc., 1986), 5-9.

[14] Donald Pfanz. 306-307.

[15] United States Military Academy. map 97.

[16] Luvaas and Nelson, *U.S. War College Guide*, 46.

[17] Ewell quoted in Donald Pfanz, *Richard S. Ewell*, 309.

[18] Lee quoted in Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg; Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill*, 76.

[19] Ibid., 310.

[20] Peter G. Tsouras, *Gettysburg; An Alternate History* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1997), 36-38.

[21] Gordon quoted in Tsouras, *Gettysburg: An Alternate History*, 38.

[22] William A. Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time* (New York: Scribner's Sons), 104, photos 5 and 6; 130, print of oil painting; United States Military Academy, *The West Point Atlas*, map 97a and b.

[23] Luvaas and Nelson, *U.S. War College Guide,* 48.

[24] Harry Pfanz, 76.

[25] Frassanito, 129.

[26] Harry Pfanz, 76.

[27] Ibid., 33.

[28] Coddington, 305-307.

[29] United States Military Academy, *The West Point Atlas*, map 97.

[30] Luvaas and Nelson, *U.S. War College Guide*, 50.

[31] Bradford, ed., *Battles and Leaders*, 365.

[32] Tsouras, 41-45.

[33] Bradford, ed., *Battles and Leaders,* 365-366.

[34] Lee quoted in Gary Gallagher, "If the Enemy is There, We Must Attack Him: R. E. Lee and the Second day at Gettysburg," in Gallagher, ed., The Second Day at Gettysburg: Essays on Confederate and Union Leadership (Kent OH: Kent State University Press, 1993), 3 and 9-10.

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