Featuring

The Highest Power to Command
Jean Bodin’s Theory of Indivisible Sovereignty

Tocqueville and the American University
Virtue and Justice: A Ciceronian Perspective
“Civil Society” and Judaism: Anti-Semitic Rhetoric in Marx
World War I and the Rise of Italian Fascism
Islam During the Pakistan Movement
On Platonic Mythology
A Kuyperian Manifesto for Contemporary American Christianity
Greece Driven Mad: Portrayals of Barbarism in Euripides
The Monstrous State and the Malevolent Criminal
The Art of Insanity in Vladimir Nabokov’s Despair

Reflections on a Conversation with
Father Matthew Carnes, S.J.

Interview with Professor Marcia Chatelain
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Dear Reader,

Academics try to answer questions. Their investigations certainly vary in terms of the data examined, but the spirit of inquiry that grounds those investigations is common to scholars across disciplines. Nevertheless, even when intellectuals are concentrated in a single location—as is the case in a university—that spirit of inquiry can be eclipsed by other concerns. It is tempting to treat one’s circumstances as fixed and obvious. It requires great effort, by contrast, to challenge inherited prejudices and to entertain unfamiliar possibilities.

It is precisely as an effort to accomplish those goals that *Utraque Unum*, Georgetown University’s undergraduate-run scholarly research journal, is compiled and published every semester. The essays in this journal are intended to display the kind of critical thinking that is not only valuable in itself, but whose cultivation is beneficial for society as a whole. “Critical thinking” is often praised but seldom defined. One explanation will be attempted here: to think critically is to raise questions, to investigate, to discover answers, to support those answers, to construct arguments, and to do so with elegance, precision, and clarity in expression. It is the hope of this editorial staff that by encouraging and celebrating these abilities we can not only promote intellectual pursuits for their own sake, but also maintain these rare and dignified skills for the sake of our fellow human beings. For ignorance unchecked is tyrannous, and a free society can only benefit from the deeper analyses and enlarged perspectives afforded by thoughtful and mature reflection. Whatever material gains the future holds in store, let us hope that they are matched in grandeur by the academic achievements of those who will enjoy them.

This journal is the end product of the efforts of a great many individuals, all of whom deserve praise for their contributions. I owe thanks to Bill Mumma and George Mimura, as well as the Collegiate Network, for their continued support for this journal, whose publication is only possible as a result of their generosity. Professor Richard Boyd, the new Director of the Tocqueville Forum, has settled in nicely this semester, and Professor Thomas Kerch, the returning Associate Director, has been a familiar mentor. Both deserve recognition for their invaluable advice, encouragement, and assistance throughout the publication process. I am grateful to our section editors—Micah Musser, Benjamin Brazzel, Amelia Irvine, Annee Lyons, and Jake Dyson—who have exhibited nothing but the highest degree of enthusiasm and dedication to their editorial tasks. Mitchell Tu, our managing editor and president of the Tocqueville Forum Student Fellows, never failed to inspire, aid, and amuse us. Finally, I would like to thank the authors of the articles published in this journal. The excellence of their writings has been matched only by their sustained and commendable efforts to improve them over the semester.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Richards
Editor-in-Chief
I write with great pleasure to introduce the latest issue of *Utraque Unum*. It is a privilege, in my first letter since taking over as Director of the Tocqueville Forum for Political Understanding last summer, to contribute some remarks to this distinguished journal which showcases the very best academic writing in the humanities and social sciences by undergraduates at Georgetown University.

In the spirit of the Tocqueville Forum’s eponym let me start by offering some general observations about the task of higher education in America. One of the most curious omissions of Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* is his relative neglect of universities in the United States. There are a few scattered thoughts in *Democracy* about finishing schools for women, but little or nothing on American colleges and universities as they existed in the 1830s. Why this apparent oversight? Surely it cannot be because Tocqueville was uninterested in the subject of education, or the fate of the arts and sciences in a democracy. He extols the Puritan emphasis on primary education in New England, especially how this served to disseminate enlightenment broadly, if not deeply, throughout at least some sectors of American society. Nor is it likely that Tocqueville was oblivious to the many distinguished institutions of higher learning already gaining renown in places like Cambridge, MA, New Haven, New York City, Philadelphia, or right here in Washington, D.C. Might his inattention stem not from ignorance, but rather from the fact that the very existence of America’s many great universities—then and now—bely the Frenchman’s complaints about the “middling,” “mediocre,” or “debased” standards of so many other American institutions? Arguably in the 1830s, and certainly today, the sterling quality of America’s system of higher education seems to falsify any alleged incompatibility between democracy and excellence.

The following probably goes without saying, but it is worth emphasizing anyway: academic institutions like Georgetown are bastions of excellence—a greatness that we like to consider democratic, and which may be reconcilable with certain conceptions of democracy, but also which any frank assessment must concede often smacks of a kind of intellectual aristocracy, for better or worse. Rather than being plagued by mediocrity, as Tocqueville would have predicted, America’s leading universities—public and private alike—dominate international rankings across the arts and sciences. Undergraduate and graduate students flock to the United States from all over the world seeking the wisdom and specialized training that our universities have to impart.

Like so many American institutions, our universities are ostensibly dedicated to advancing the democratic equality Tocqueville saw as fated
or inevitable. At their very best institutions of higher learning such as Georgetown facilitate an equality of opportunity. Rather than stuffy bulwarks of elitism and inherited privilege, most American universities at least pay lip service to democratic ideals. Thomas Jefferson’s thoughts on social mobility might hold true of today’s universities: “Instead of an aristocracy of wealth, of more harm and danger than benefit to society, to make an opening for the aristocracy of virtue and talent, which nature has wisely provided for the direction of the interests of society and scattered with equal hand through all its conditions, was deemed essential to a well-ordered republic”.1 Universities are places where students from all walks of life come to advance themselves by their native talents and good old-fashioned hard work. Could it be because this democratic ethos has only belatedly—really in the second half of the twentieth century—suffused American universities that Tocqueville elects not to spend much time talking about them? Or maybe that their elitist predilections—certainly in the 19th century, and arguably now as well—lead him to regard them as quasi-aristocratic exceptions to the prevailing egalitarian rule? Whatever the case, his silence is telling—and regrettable. Had he spent more time discussing higher education in the United States we might profit from his able guidance as to how the modern university can balance democratic aims with its emphasis on excellence.

While the eminence of America’s elite universities may serve to leaven Tocqueville’s pessimism about the middling standards of democratic culture, Democracy in America offers other reasons for caution. His observations about the pragmatic manner in which knowledge is pursued in a democracy cast a more critical light on the project of higher education. Speaking generally of the arts and sciences, Tocqueville’s allegation is not that great poets, novelists, philosophers, and scientists will never emerge in America or other democracies. His complaint is that the spirit in which Americans cultivate the arts and sciences will be colored by democracy’s preoccupation with what is timely, immediately relevant, lucrative, or crudely instrumental. Lamenting our gravitation toward practical applications at the expense of theoretical knowledge, Tocqueville worried that all institutions in America—not just the universities—would be tainted by a “selfish, mercenary and industrial taste for the discoveries of the mind”.

Was Tocqueville right to be concerned? Even if the American university has succeeded in fostering a climate of excellence, as I’ve suggested, there remains the danger that our worship of subjects most serviceable will come to “predominate over the love of the beautiful in the heart of man”. Undoubtedly there is some truth to his suspicions. After all, the American research university has tended to manifest its greatness precisely in those areas where the practical fruits of knowledge are most abundant. And yet this outstanding journal and the superlative undergraduate essays that follow are tangible evidence that Tocqueville’s criticisms aren’t insuperable. Ultraque Unum proves that a love of theoretical knowledge may flourish even in the midst of a modern culture otherwise oriented toward utilitarian ends and the restless pursuit of well-being.

Thus I urge you to read, enjoy, and learn from these stimulating essays. They are testaments not only to the hard work of its editors and contributors but to the enduring value of a liberal arts education and the humane goods whose appreciation it makes possible.

Very truly yours,

Richard Boyd
Associate Professor of Government
Georgetown University
Director, Tocqueville Forum for Political Understanding
Jean Bodin lived and wrote in a France marked by political chaos: feudal nobles challenged royal power, and the potential outbreak of civil war between Catholic and Huguenots was a perpetual threat to stability. Fully cognizant of the imminent dangers of anarchy and bloodshed that beleaguered Europe, Bodin committed himself to defeating the politically disintegrating forces of his day. He feared that a republic of competing factions provided a weak foundation for social order, and thus felt the need to formulate a theory of politics that would point to an indisputable source of political authority. Consequently, Bodin set out to inquire into the nature and locus of sovereignty, “the absolute and perpetual power of a commonwealth … the highest power to command.”

Indeed, this investigation was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that Bodin’s perception of politics was colored by the emergence of the nation-state as the prime actor in early modern Europe. Discourse on the nature of sovereign power was certainly “bound up with the growth and consolidation of the State itself as a political reality, an autonomous structure or set of structures built upon the rubble of imperial and feudal systems and the ruins of a once universal Christendom.” Moreover, Dan Engster contends that Bodin’s emphasis on the notion of sovereignty was motivated by his realization that there was no universal law of nations undergirding the multitude of laws of different cultures; thus, in order to properly locate a secure foundation of politics, Bodin turned his attention from law as such to the sovereign authority which gives law its force.

Bodin ultimately came to the bold conclusion that sovereignty is indivisible, and that the whole power of the state must therefore be concentrated in a single individual or group. The assertion of indivisibility was grounded in Bodin’s assumption that power functioned as property. He writes, “if the absolute power conceded to a lieutenant of the prince were called sovereignty, he would be able to use it against his prince, who would then be no more than a cipher, and the subject would then command his lord, and the servant his master, which would be absurd. … For he is absolutely sovereign who recognizes nothing, after God, that is greater than himself.” Thus, in order for the state to possess real power, its political authority must necessarily locate its basic footing in an indivisible point of origin: the sovereign will.

The most necessary component of indivisibility is sovereignty’s unrestrained law-giving authority. The law, therefore, obtains its legitimacy from its source, and not necessarily from its substance. While the “rightness” of a law is an open question, the people must obey the
positive decrees of the sovereign because they have “dispossessed and stripped [themselves] of its sovereign power in order to put [the prince] in possession of it and to vest it in him.”8 It is here that Bodin differs perhaps most clearly with the late medieval tradition of political philosophy. Earlier thinkers saw natural law and constitutionalism as the source of political authority, which consequently led them to define sovereignty as a series of assigned powers derived from reason. Bodin, however, saw the legislative authority of the sovereign as the “general power to command, so that it implicitly includes [all other prerogatives of the state].”9 In other words, he identified the law-making capability of the sovereign as the singular principle and foundation of political authority. He did this most obviously by portraying the sovereign as God’s deputy on earth: “Since there is nothing greater on earth after God than sovereign princes, and since they have been established by Him as His lieutenants for commanding other men … whoever despises his sovereign prince also despises God, of whom he is the earthly image.”10

What is more, the sovereign acts as a source of stability and order in a world that otherwise consists of constant change and disarray. Wherefore Bodin writes, “Because human history flows mostly from the will of mankind, which ever vacillates and has no objective … so, in general, human actions are invariably involved in new errors unless they are directed by nature as leader.”11 Thus, in order to temper the social disorder that originates in the individual’s will, human beings must seek out some natural principle that can lead them out of chaos. Bodin believed that by mirroring the hierarchical structure of God’s creation, human society could arrive at a degree of political stability in the temporal order:

For just as the great God of nature, very wise and just, commands over the angels, so the angels command over human beings, human beings over beasts, the soul over the body, heaven over the earth, and reason over the appetites . . . But contrarily, if it happens that the appetites are disobedient to reason, individuals to magistrates, magistrates to princes, and princes to God, then we see that God moves to avenge his injuries and to secure the execution of the eternal law established by him.12

In a Europe that was increasingly unstable, Bodin located the only secure basis for politics in the indivisible authority of the sovereign, not in the constantly changing laws of mankind.13 This is because undivided sovereignty, by reflecting God’s simplicity and the unity of creation, enables the state to unite its members under a corporate will in pursuit of the common goods of order and stability. Moreover, monarchy most fully corresponds with the divine and natural order, for it most perfectly imitates the indivisibility of God’s sovereignty over creation.

As God’s ambassador, the sovereign should wield a power that is “absolute and perpetual,” wholly separate from the forces of temporality: “Just as the great sovereign God cannot make a God parallel to himself, because He is infinite and by logical necessity there cannot be two infinite things, so we can say that the prince whom we have posited as the image of God, cannot make a subject equal to himself without annihilating his power.”14 In this way, the sovereign prince is no longer a part of the commonwealth; he is separate from the people, and has been made into a transcendent whole. Herein lies the implication of Bodin’s claim that the very person of the sovereign is the lieutenant of God: accountable to God alone, the prince governs with a sovereign power that is completely unaccountable to anything on earth.15

Bodin is still careful, however, to maintain that the sovereign is subject to divine and natural laws, the authority of which he did not want to challenge by suggesting that their legitimacy was derived from the will of the sovereign: “For if we say that to have absolute power is not to be subject to any law at all, no prince of this world will be sovereign, since every earthly prince is subject to the laws of God and of nature and to various human laws that are common to all peoples.”16 It is on this basis that Bodin draws
the distinction between tyranny and royalty. A tyrant is one who “makes himself into a sovereign prince by his own authority,” abuses the laws of nature, and violates people’s rights to property. At the same time, however, a tyrant is just as sovereign as a just and rightful king, because “sovereignty is a political fact, consisting only in the possession and exercise of supreme power.” Thus, there seems to be an apparent contradiction in Bodin’s claim that the sovereign is both bound and unbound by the natural law.

Furthermore, Bodin qualifies his legal voluntarism with the claim that sovereignty is further constrained by factors other than the natural law. For instance, the sovereign is forbidden to change the constitutional laws that govern succession, and he is also prohibited from levying taxes without the consent of the Estates. Bodin thus seems to be putting forward an internally inconsistent doctrine, for the sovereign is simultaneously unlimited in his power and circumscribed by restraints that are outside of his control. At one point he claims, “the prince is acquitted from the power of the laws,” while also maintaining “all princes of the earth are subject unto the laws of God, of nature, and of nations.” Throughout the Republic, Bodin balances his absolutist claims with qualifications that limit the sovereign’s power.

These apparent contradictions reveal glimmerings of constitutionalism in Bodin’s thought. Interestingly enough, Bodin’s restrictions on the power of the sovereign are actually proposed as means to further secure the majesty of the prince. Stephen Holmes notes that imposing limitations often has the effect of enabling one to do things that he or she would otherwise not be able to do, and he uses the example of grammar to illustrate this notion. It would be erroneous to view the rules of language as strict impediments to speech. Indeed, by abiding to the constrictions of grammar, we gain the capacity to communicate in ways that would otherwise be impossible. Rules such as these, by virtue of their existence, make a previously unattainable endeavor possible and cannot be described as restraints on freedom.

Similarly, Bodin seems to make the implicit claim that the natural law, the laws of succession, laws against taxation without consultation, and certain long-established traditions actually serve to strengthen the authority of the sovereign prince, opening up possibilities that would not otherwise exist. Thus, Bodin’s solution to the ostensible contradiction of his doctrine was to reconceptualize limits on the sovereign’s authority as stipulations for the successful exercise of power. This is a case of relinquishing power in order to gain it: “The less the power of the sovereign is (the true marks of majesty thereunto still reserved), the more it is assured.”

This did not necessarily entail that the prince’s reign be just, but simply that it have the ability to safeguard the sovereign’s power and thereby maintain civil order. It is therefore in the strategic interest of the sovereign to obey the natural precepts of morality to the extent that doing so solidifies his power. Bodin, however, firmly disavows Machiavelli, who he believed “taught that commonwealths could be stably founded on injustice;” he therefore pointed to “the political harvest to be reaped by a prince who respects limitations on his power,” and prescribed the natural law as a prudential set of norms for avoiding political unrest. So although Bodin did not want to question the sovereignty of tyrants who abuse their power, he did not deny that injustice threatens the security of his authority: “If he be cruel, he will stand in fear that some one in so great a multitude will take revenge.” The constant possibility of revolution thereby incentivizes rulers to adopt some degree of limited government.

Although not legally mandated, the voluntary sharing of power by the sovereign with the Estates and the Parlements is a prudent tactic for achieving the cooperation of the people and cementing his legitimacy. By accepting checks on his power and sharing his authority, the sovereign is able to govern in a manner that demands the obedience of his subjects. Bodin underlines the possibility-expanding nature of separation
of powers in his justification of the use of magistrates. For example, an independent judiciary has the capacity to increase the sovereign’s power by absolving him of the resentments that go along with handing down condemnations: “[They] who receive the benefits shall have good cause to love, respect, and reverence the prince their benefactors; and those who are condemned shall yet have no occasion at all to hate him, but shall still discharge their choler upon the magistrates and judges.”  

Furthermore, consulting with representative assemblies like the Estates enable the sovereign to stabilize his authority, for Bodin writes, “so far it is from that such an assembly in any thing diminisheth the power of a sovereign prince, as that thereby his majesty is the more increased and augmented.”

In sum, Bodin appealed to raison d’état to legitimize a semi-constitutional framework that operated alongside the sovereign prince. His unwillingness, however, to accept the possibility of a mixed constitution resulted from the flawed assumption that the unity of legal authority necessarily required the unification of power in an indivisible point of origin. This conclusion was ultimately rooted in Bodin’s lack of a formal distinction between legislative and executive sovereignty, a concept we now take for granted. Thus, while Bodin’s theory of indivisibility was systematically thought-out and logically sound, later thinkers would have to take his semi-constitutional framework to its natural end by explaining how sovereignty, though indivisible in its essence, could be shared among different parties with regard to its parts.

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Because Cicero’s political theory is grounded in natural law and the need for virtuous leaders, one is tempted to assume that virtuous individuals are simply those who desire to uphold the natural law. Viewing virtue as behavior which upholds justice is consistent both with a reading of Plato and with Cicero’s *On the Commonwealth* and *On the Laws*; however, Cicero in *On Duties* suggests that virtue sometimes requires mercy even when mercy contradicts with the pursuit of justice. Much later, Hugo Grotius attempted to resolve the tension between virtue and justice by positing that justice need not always be pursued for humanitarian reasons. However, Grotius’ attempt to reconcile virtue with justice accepts passivity in the face of injustice. For that reason, I propose that active forgiveness, which extends beyond passivity, is a legitimate means of pursuing justice. This conceptualization allows us to reconcile the conflict between demands for justice and obligations to virtue.

In *On the Commonwealth* and in particular *On the Laws*, Cicero outlines natural law and its importance to the state. Although *On Duties* is his primary work on the issue of virtue, he does clearly indicate in his earlier two treatises that he considers virtue to be fundamental to the right operating of the state, stating with regards to the Roman people that “If the state had not had such morals, then the men would not have existed.” It is clear that the two are intrinsically linked, since law is meant to “encourage virtues.” This association can be understood by the fact that both natural law and virtue are the result of reason, according to Cicero. On the issue of law, Cicero states that “Law is the highest reason, rooted in nature, which commands things that must be done and prohibits the opposite.” Similarly, “Virtue is reason brought to completion, which certainly exists in nature.” The connection between virtue and the natural law seems straightforward: if the natural law is based upon reason, which also undergirds virtue, then living virtuously simply means living in accordance with the natural law.

The idea that virtue consists of upholding one’s duties extends much further back than Cicero. In Plato’s *Republic*, Plato argues that “doing one’s own work . . . is justice.” Moreover, the ideal city of *kallipolis* “was just because each of the three classes in it was doing its own work.” Underlying Plato’s philosophy, as with Cicero, is an inherent connection between justice and upholding the natural law, conceptualized by Plato as a set of duties pre-assigned to all people on the basis of their type of soul. Plato’s proposition is further consistent with Cicero’s *On Duties* in that it advocates for a universal conception of justice yet holds that the fulfillment of justice may place different requirements upon different individuals. However, Cicero is more of an individualist, arguing that of our two roles, one is “assigned specifically to *individuals* [emphasis added],” and not to classes (as with Plato’s three classes). Nonetheless, the point which Plato’s definition
of justice underscores is that justice entirely consists of performing one’s duty.

It is also worth noting a viewpoint that Plato records, although Plato himself does not advocate for it. In an early dialogue, the Euthyphro, Euthyphro states that “holiness is . . . prosecuting the wrongdoer who commits murder or steals from the temples or does any such thing, whether he be your father, or your mother or anyone else, and not prosecuting him is unholy [emphasis added].”8 Cicero would likely agree that the natural law requires the persecution of those who commit injustice (hence why wars may be undertaken in order to secure a life free from injustice).9 Plato therefore would to agree with the work of On the Commonwealth and On the Laws, holding that virtue consists entirely of doing what is in accordance with the natural law.

And yet, years later, Cicero cast doubt on this interpretation of virtue when he wrote On Duties. Cicero writes this work with far more attention to individuals than universal demands of natural law. In Book I of On Duties, Cicero argues that nature in fact places two obligations upon us: we all have certain obligations as humans, but we also have personal duties that must be respected. The differences among the duties of different individuals can be so great, in fact, that “sometimes one man ought to choose death for himself, while another ought not.”10 Cicero encapsulates his point by arguing that “many things that seem to be honourable by nature become honourable no longer through circumstance.”11

This problem could be avoided if we simply interpreted Cicero to be saying that at least some requirements of natural law are relative, at least for some individuals. However, a few key phrases demonstrate that Cicero in fact viewed natural law as something distinct from virtue, something with which virtue could potentially conflict. For instance, Cicero states that after adopting a life in accordance with nature, a man should remain constant, “unless perhaps he comes to realize that he has made a mistake in choosing his type of life [emphasis added].”12 If a man can make a mistake in choosing his type of life even if the life he has already chosen is entirely in accordance with nature, then it must follow that the obligations of natural law alone is not sufficient for living a truly virtuous life. Similarly, Cicero states that the Stoics hold that one must always take actions that concur with virtue and do those things which are in accordance with nature, “if they do not conflict with virtue [emphasis added].”13 Again, we see hints that a life in accordance with nature is not automatically a life in accordance with ultimate virtue.

Two other quotes demonstrate potential conflicts between obeying the natural law and upholding one’s own, personal virtue. In Book II of On Duties, Cicero states that it may be worthwhile and virtuous to concede something that is one’s right.14 In a clearer explanation of this idea, Cicero also posits that, “there is a limit to revenge, and to punishment. I am not even sure that it is not enough simply that the man who did the harm should repent of his injustice, so that he himself will do no such thing again, and others will be slower to act unjustly.”15 This quote clearly demonstrates that it might, at times, be virtuous to limit our pursuance of justice. If we contrast this final quote with the perspective articulated much earlier in the Euthyphro, that it is “unholy” to not prosecute a wrongdoer, we see that Cicero’s suggestion is in fact a break with older notions that virtue requires perfect fidelity to the demands of justice.16

Cicero’s conception of virtue can thus be summarized in this way: virtue, instead of simply being the fulfillment of the natural law, in fact places higher obligations upon us than natural law does. For instance, the natural law permits “that each man should prefer to secure for himself rather than for another anything connected with the necessities of life.”17 Nonetheless, if a drowning man is truly virtuous, not only can he not take a plank of driftwood from another man, but he cannot even appropriately take the piece of driftwood in the first place if he knows that another man is drowning near him.18 Similarly, despite the fact that political community requires the paying of debts to function, still
Virtue and Justice

it is more honorable to provide a loan to a needy man who will feel true gratitude but cannot repay the debt than to provide aid to a wealthy man who will feel entitled to your aid.19

It is clear that Cicero struggled with this distinction between the obligations of natural law, most notably in its unflinching requirements for the exercise of justice, and the obligations of virtue. His constant insistence that justice is commanded by natural law seems to highlight a deep psychological disconnect between what Cicero perceived as the demands of the natural law and what he perceived as the demands of virtue. How could justice be served if people were willing to forsake the obligations imposed upon them in order to requite wrongs in the name of virtue? Although Cicero was among the first to introduce the possible division between the obligations of justice and the merciful nature of virtue, Hugo Grotius much later provided a response to this problem.

Grotius is most well known for his work The Rights of War and Peace. In this work, Grotius argues (often referencing Cicero) that, “From the law of nature then which may also be called the law of nations, it is evident that all kinds of war are not to be condemned.”20 Although this work is typically taken to be a defense of war as a means of effecting punishment for the breaking of the natural law, Grotius includes a critical chapter on the role of mercy. In a chapter titled “Precautions Against Rashly Engaging in War, Even on Just Grounds,” Grotius states that “Many reasons might be brought to dissuade us from urging the full infliction of a punishment.” In the same breath, Grotius states that “Sometimes indeed men are so circumstanced, that to relinquish a right becomes not only a laudable act, but a debt of respect to that law, which commands us to love our enemies.”21 And again, a few sentences later, Grotius posits that “It is often a duty, which we owe to our country and ourselves, to forbear having recourse to arms.”22

The lesson which Grotius seeks to impart is that, although the natural law may justify the exercise of force to requite a wrong, nonetheless having a right to engage in war does not require us to do so; the law permits us to seek retributive justice but does not require us to do so. This is essentially a reformulation of the distinction between obligations to natural law and obligations to virtue which Cicero originally introduced, however hesitantly, in On Duties. Cicero clearly struggled to reconcile his belief that the natural law obligated men to uphold justice with his belief that virtue could prompt us to be more forgiving towards others. Ultimately, Cicero argued that we should prefer a life of virtue to a life of perfect justice, although he was unwilling to provide a full-throated defense of this position. Grotius sought to resolve the conflict by instead positing that the natural law permits but does not require us to uphold justice through violent retribution if necessary. Thus, Grotius was able to pick up on Cicero’s conflict and develop it by minimizing the role of the natural law in demanding the fulfillment of justice.

Yet Grotius’ approach does not fully resolve Cicero’s problem but rather simply avoids it. If it is true that the law can distinguish between what is just and what is unjust, that without justice, “nothing can be worthy of praise”, and that the law requires punishment of criminals to uphold justice, then how can the removal of a debt be a praiseworthy action when the law requires the payment of all debts?23

Of course, nobody would suggest that a lender who removes his debtor’s debt has committed an injustice. Grotius might say that the lender has simply elected not to exercise his just right to demand repayment—neither injustice nor justice is created out of the situation. Another interpretation, however, could hold that in the action of forgiving the debt, the lender has taken the debt upon himself and has paid its price through the action of forgiveness. The debt has been fully paid by the action of the lender, and justice is fully served, not simply removed from the discussion. The fulfillment of a debt which cannot be paid requires active forgiveness from the lender, not simply a passive acceptance of a wrong.
The practical distinctions between these two theories differ minutely; their philosophical and psychological differences, however, are vastly different. In order to fulfill justice, we must either actively prosecute or actively forgive; passivity is unacceptable. The fulfillment of justice does, however, require both the aggrieved party and the offending party to participate in some resolution. In an outright war, the aggrieved party must defeat and the offending party must accept defeat in order for justice to be achieved; similarly, in a process of reconciliation, the aggrieved party must forgive and the offending party must repent. We should recall Cicero’s hesitant statement: “I am not even sure that it is not enough simply that the man who did the harm should repent of his injustice, so that he himself will do no such thing again, and others will be slower to act unjustly.” Cicero is correct: repentance can serve as a means of achieving justice, but only if paired with forgiveness. He should not have been so hesitant about asserting repentance as a legitimate creator of justice.

If forgiveness can be seen as a means of fulfilling justice, then we can uphold Cicero’s philosophy while resolving his dissonance. Cicero worried that some things in accordance with nature (particularly the enforcement of retribution for wrongs) might conflict with virtue. But if the forgiveness of a wrong can restore justice, then virtuous acts need not conflict with the demands of justice created by natural law. Cicero regards beneficence, like justice, as a great virtue. This perspective on forgiveness seeks to elevate the significance of beneficence in relation to justice by viewing forgiveness as a legitimate means of attaining justice.

In short, when the natural law is violated and injustice is committed, justice must be restored. However, an unjust action creates a new status quo which is inherently unjust; therefore, it is unjust to simply uphold the status quo after an unjust act is committed (for this reason simply refusing to pursue a legitimate right to war is not a legitimate means of restoring justice). Rather, something active must be done to right the wrong. This can take the form of legitimate retribution, as is sought by just war theory. More complexly, however, the restoration of justice can take the form of active forgiveness paired with active repentance. This means of attaining justice permits us to act towards one another with extraordinary beneficence, forgiving a multitude of injustices while still succeeding in upholding justice (thus reconciling Cicero’s dissonance).

Late in his writings, Cicero began to realize that the claims of virtue, particularly beneficence towards others, could conflict with a dogmatic enforcement of justice. In identifying this distinction, he diverted from the philosophy of Plato which had grounded his own writings. Hugo Grotius much later addressed this problem but reconciled the conflict through an acceptance of passivity as a means of overlooking injustice. To avoid the problem of passivity and to reconcile the tension within Cicero’s writings, active forgiveness paired with active repentance must be viewed as a legitimate means of restoring justice in accordance with the highest callings of virtue.

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In modern America, the Jewish Question is an anachronism. Thankfully, Jews in the United States are not an oppressed minority whose future in the country is contested by the American intelligentsia. However, in 1840s Germany, the Jewish Question captured the attention of two prominent thinkers: Bruno Bauer and Karl Marx. Bauer proposed the “political emancipation” of Jews in Germany, which first required Jews to distance themselves from their religion and to seek to incorporate themselves into an atheistic, secular state. Marx used his response to Bauer as an opportunity to create a distinction between “civil society,” or the realm of private life, and “political society,” or the realm of public life. Having done so, Marx used anti-Semitic rhetoric to link Judaism to egoism and “huckstering” in an effort to show that Judaism strengthened “civil society” at the expense of “political society.” Marx therefore concluded that Judaism was inherently antithetical to the communist project of economic liberation from capitalism.

Bauer initiated the two thinkers’ philosophical discourse by arguing against Jewish demands for political equality as it was currently being presented. Bauer began by arguing that the secular state was the source of all political discrimination. Like Marx, Bauer was a social revolutionary who believed that the emancipation of all people required the complete transformation of society. In this new society, Bauer believed, all people would exist as liberated equals.1

It is in this context that Bauer responds to Jewish demands for political equality. He argues that, by demanding equality as Jews, the Jews in Europe are in fact seeking to preserve sectarian conflict between themselves and Christians. They can be liberated only as individuals and not as Jews, because to specifically liberate one group of religious adherents only preserves sectarianism and works against the establishment of a free and human state.2 Bauer pointed out that the Jews could only be demanding equality from two groups of people: if they were asking free and liberated people for equality, they should first prepare themselves for their own liberation by abandoning their religious beliefs; and if they were asking Christians for their liberation, they were asking Christians to first put aside their religious prejudices and therefore to cease being authentically Christian.3 In either case, it was necessary for Jews to cease being religiously Jewish—if they were appealing to Christians, how could they ask one group to put aside religious prejudices without putting aside their own, and if they were appealing to free and liberated people, who had overcome the need for religion at all, how could they insist on clinging to their own religious sentiments?

Bauer therefore argued that the Jewish Question could only be solved if Jews abandoned the religious aspects of their identity and joined in the effort to secure the liberation of all peoples. He identified many forms of oppression with the relationship between Christianity and the state, and argued that true “political emancipation,”
not just for Jews but for all people, could only be brought about through the complete secularization of the state.

In his essay “On the Jewish Question”, Marx responds to Bauer’s prescriptions while putting forth some of his core philosophical tenets. Marx uses this essay primarily to draw a distinction between “political society” and “civil society,” a distinction which he uses to criticize Bauer’s ideals of “political emancipation.” In making this argument, Marx fleshes out Industrial-era anti-Semitic stereotypes in an attempt to grapple with his society’s underlying issues. Because his argument is so deeply based on anti-Semitic conceptions of Judaism, specifically an association of Judaism with egoism and “huckstering,” Marx’s assessment of the “Jewish Question” is not applicable to other minority groups or marginalized religious identities.

According to Marx, egoism lies at the core of “civil society.” Firstly, Marx separates society into “political society” and “civil society.” He defines “political society” as a shared sphere where man “regards himself as a communal being”. Marx separates this from civil society, or essentially the private sphere, where man is “in his most intimate society”. Marx argues that modern liberal states have moved man from the “political” into the “civil” sphere. At the core of this transformation is the liberal, right-enshrining constitutional law, which Marx argues is the foundation for egoism. Marx states that because man is considered a “sovereign being, not species-being”, society has been atomized into a jumble of millions of individual entities: “Liberty, as a right of man, is the separation of man from man”. The logical result of this is competition, self-interest and, in the end, egoism. Marx goes so far as to say that “The rights of man are simply the rights of the egoistic man”, because when laws separate humans from each other and make them focus on their individual rights and needs, they naturally breed egoism. Egoism is so ingrained in civil society that simply “the security of the state is the assurance of its egoism”.

The most glaring and egregious example of this is the relegation of religion from its privileged position as a tool of state power into a “strictly private affair”.

However, Marx does not hold, as Bauer does, that separating religion from the state apparatus has the effect of weakening religious practice. In fact, privatized religion has only strengthened man’s “real religiosity”. Neither Bauer nor Marx believed that religion could be a part of the final liberation of mankind; nonetheless, Marx disagreed that the separation of religion from the state was an appropriate prerequisite to the liberation of mankind more generally. Marx instead believed that the historical separation of religion from the public sphere had forced people to practice their religions within the privacy of “civil society,” thus intensifying religious practice while weakening the bonds between people in “political society.” Even religion, a fundamentally communal exercise, is reduced to the private and perverted by egoism in liberal civil society.

Marx viewed Jews with suspicion because he associated them extremely heavily with egoism. He discerns in Judaism “a universal anti-social element of the present time, whose historical development, zealously aided in its harmful aspects by the Jews, has now attained its culminating point.” Marx stresses that Judaism’s “anti-social element” has its origins in its historical development, and that its egoism has ascended to a dominating status in modern liberal constitutional states: Judaism “reaches its apogee with the perfection of civil society.” Marx further associates the egoistic character of Judaism with its reliance on legal codes and law, which, like the enshrinement of constitutional rights, has the effect of isolating individuals further into “civil society.” Marx states that “Jewish Jesuitism [...] is the relationship of the world of self-interest to the laws which govern this world.” Judaism’s reliance on the law, in the form of the Torah and the Talmud, its foundational texts, show how egoism, derived from law-sanctioned narcissism, is unique to Judaism’s theological foundations. Meanwhile,
Marx theorizes that Judaism’s “civil” character emerged during the feudal era, when “all elements of civil life such as property, the family, and types of occupation had been raised, in the form of lordship, caste and guilds, to elements of political life”.19 Because Jews were a separate and downcast minority, they were excluded from the then-“political” society, and were forced to adapt in “civil society”. There, Jews took on the characteristics of all men who enter in civil society: “self-interest, greed and egoism”.20 Due therefore both to its legal character and its development during the feudal age, Marx associated Judaism directly with egoism.21

It is important to note that, for Marx, even after liberal states guarantee freedom of religion, the dominant religion (which, in the case of the West, is Christianity) actually grows in strength. Marx states that “The perfected Christian state calls itself atheist”22; in America, the “state continues to evangelize”23 as those who are not Christian are increasingly marginalized, and religion takes on a more aggressive, capitalistic manner. For Marx, this type of Christian-dominated liberal state gives rise to “civil society.” Marx states that “only under the sway of Christianity, which objectifies all national, natural, moral and theoretical relationships, could civil society separate itself completely from the life of the state”.24 Here, Marx shows how Christian values are necessary to creating a “civil society”.

The fact that a Christian state supposedly most effectively establishes Marx’s detested “civil society” as the foundation for all human interaction only serves to heighten Marx’s distress regarding the Jewish question. Because Judaism is so historically interconnected with Christianity, Marx believed that Jews had an undue influence on society. Marx states that “Judaism has existed alongside Christianity because it constituted the religious criticism of Christianity and embodied the doubt concerning the religious origins of Christianity”, and that “Judaism has perpetuated itself in Christian society”.25 Because only Christian values can create the modern liberal state and Christianity has its origins in Judaism, Judaism can easily re-integrate itself into society and spread its egoistic “civil” and “legal” nature. Thus, not only is Judaism a highly egoistic religion with an innate drive towards the propagations of “civil society,” but Jews also hold an undue sway over society due to their historical association with Christians.

Huckstering is another crucial element to Marx’s critique of “civil society.” For Marx, ownership of property is a key element of civil society’s obsession with money.26 Marx says that even if property is suppressed, “the state none the less allows private property [...] to act in its own fashion [...] to manifest their particular nature”.27 Clearly, private property is both established and cherished in the liberal constitutionalist state. Furthermore, because liberty enables men to “enjoy and dispose as one will, one’s goods and revenues, the fruits of one’s work and industry,” people are “equally regarded as a self-sufficient monad”.28 This societal atomization engenders egoism (as explained above), which, with property, makes people focus entirely on their own goods. This in turn causes men to fetishize their private belongings.29 Marx states that “liberty of the egoistic man [...] is the recognition of the frenzied movement of the cultural and material elements which form the content of his life”.30 Marx makes clear the fact that the obsession with which people aggressively pursue the acquisition of property is enshrined in liberal laws. The “consummation” of this state results in the elevation of money or the way that the value of property is measured, to the status of a “world power”.31 What emerges is huckstering, or the relentless pursuit of money, as a key characteristic of liberal society.

The example of “Captain Hamilton” (a reference to Thomas Hamilton) is telling: according to Marx, “in his view, the world is no more than a Stock Exchange, and he is convinced that he has no other destiny here below than to become richer than his neighbor.”32 Marx also argues that “in North America [...] Christian preaching has become an article of commerce, and the bankrupt trader in the church behaves like the
A prosperous clergyman in business.”33 Even religion has been commercialized in American liberal society, as the relegation of faith to “civil society” results in its tainting by the forces of huckstering and greed. Monetization of all facets of “civil society”, along with the freedom to covet property, is the incarnation of huckstering, the driving force of capitalism.34 Marx ties Judaism to huckstering on explicitly anti-Semitic grounds. He plainly states: “What is the profane basis of Judaism? Practical need, self-interest. What is the worldly cult of the Jew? Huckstering. What is his worldly god? Money.”35 Marx states that Money is “the expression of Jewish self-interest and egoism”; the egoism inherent in Judaism logically results in huckstering. Furthermore, the Jewish obsession with money underscores Marx’s criticism of modern civil Christian society because (as previously discussed), Judaism is both the predecessor and successor to Christianity. Just as Judaism was imbued with egoism and huckstering during the feudal era, Jewish property-worship has re-integrated itself into Christian society and is in fact the root cause of “civil society’s” problems.37 Marx labels capitalist North America as an expression of “the effective domination of the Christian world by Judaism”;38 he states that “Christianity issued from Judaism. It has now been re-absorbed into Judaism.”39 Since its integration into the Christian liberal state, Jewish huckstering is therefore not only unique to Judaism as a religion but also central to the idolization of property in modern “civil society."

Marx is clearly going further than Bauer: he suggests not only the abolition of religion (as Bauer does) but also the abolition of civil society’s drive towards profit, or, as we see it today, modern consumer capitalism.40 Marx’s extension of Bauer’s prescription shows his antipathy to the modern system of economic incentives (which some anti-Semites blamed on Jewish bankers). Marx’s response to the “Jewish Question” demonstrates his deeply anti-capitalistic tendencies, and for that reason should be considered alongside his greater works such as Das Kapital and the Communist Manifesto. However, it is also based on explicitly anti-Semitic thinking, which links Judaism with egoism and “huckstering” as Christianity’s “evil twin.” Both Bauer and Marx disdained the role of religion in society, but Marx did not believe as Bauer did that religion could easily be removed from society in order to pave the way for the economic liberation of all people; for this reason, Marx viewed those Jews seeking political equality with far more skepticism than did Bauer. While Bauer’s proposal to remove all vestiges of religion from society is radical, Marx’s proposal to overturn the current civil and economic order is world-beating, and lies at the core of his other arguments concerning political theory.

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Fascism seemed sudden and inexplicable when it appeared in Italy during the interwar period. Famously characterized "as a 'parenthesis'"¹, the rise of fascism was an unexpected break in the progression towards democracy. Fascism was initially regarded as an aberration springing entirely from a period of conflict and uncertainty. However, its long history has since become clearer: it is "a large tree whose roots found nourishment and were entwined deep in the soil of modern Italy".² In spite of this foundation, however, it is unlikely that Italian fascism could have resulted without the catalyst of World War I. Although the ideological roots and political history of Italy lay the groundwork for fascism, its rise only occurred in light of the destabilizing political, economic, and social effects of World War I, indicating that the war was instrumental to the ideology's proliferation.

Historical Origins of Fascism

Prior to World War I, the concept of national identity had already taken hold in Italy, creating feelings of racial superiority. Nationalism played a critical role in public sentiment: the idea of Italy possessing a uniquely valuable culture had been a major argument of proponents of nationalism, such as 19th century unification activist Giuseppe Mazzini. Mazzini had attempted to cultivate a politically aware Italian populace with a sense of identity and power as Italians.³ Although his movement failed, his ideas still influenced Italy’s political development. Additionally, other emerging European thought traditions gave rise to further justification for nationalism. By the twentieth century, Charles Darwin's theory of evolution had spread throughout Europe, and was being "misapplied to contemporary human societies" to create 'social Darwinism', extending the concept of 'survival of the fittest' to human society. 'Social Darwinism' gave the illusion of scientific justification to the idea of cultural or racial superiority.⁴ Most importantly, it was used to justify employing force against those of other nationalities and cultural groups, making it appear natural for the stronger variation of a species to stamp out the weak. At the same time, the concept of using violence in politics was also gaining popularity. Georges Sorel, a French socialist thinker, “emphasized the need for violence in the revolutionary process”.⁵ For Sorel, violence was essential to destroy the old order and usher in a new one. His views had a profound impact on many other French and Italian thinkers, including Benito Mussolini, who was already a politically active socialist prior to the First World War.⁶

Mussolini would ultimately take the lead role in the rise of fascism in Italy. Although he was a member of the Socialist party in 1910, he also had political ties to the revolutionary movement of syndicalism.⁷ Syndicalism was the idea of replacing capitalism with an economic system of confederations or unions, and became deeply entangled with Italian nationalism in the pre-war years. Although Mussolini doubted the power
of trade unions, he adopted their “advocacy of direct revolutionary action,” and consequently became popular with the younger generation of socialists. By 1912, he had such a following that the party was compelled to make him the editor of the Avanti!, the party newspaper. Many of the ideas he collected from pre-war revolutionary socialism and nationalist syndicalism eventually became a part of fascism. Like Mazzini, he believed deeply in a national identity as Italians. Mussolini wrote in his autobiography that his studies and experiences had convinced him that he “was desperately Italian”. Much of the groundwork of the Fascist party he eventually founded was already laid prior to World War I, but it was not until afterwards that he managed to gain a following of similar believers.

Even without Mussolini, political unrest took root in Italy well before the First World War. Although Italian suffrage was expanded under the rule of Giovanni Giolitti in the 1900s, for the most part political power still lay in the hands of the elites. Only two percent of the Italian population voted, and consequently governments were often composed of a random mix of political ideologies. A combination of the splintering of elite political factions and growing resentment from the lower classes as a result of repression and government corruption led to a fragmented and unstable political system. Consequently, “the first mass party organizations in Italy were either hostile or indifferent to the liberal state”. This uncertain and dissatisfied political society left a weak foundation for an overarching political system to take control in the uncertainty of the tumultuous interwar years.

Well before World War I, many of the key features of Italian fascism—a power vacuum in governance, advocacy of violence and nationalism in politics, and the charismatic figure Mussolini himself—were already in place, laying the groundwork for its future rise. However, it is unlikely that even this hostility and lack of direction would have given rise to fascism without the conditions created in the aftermath of World War I.

Interwar Factors Contributing to Fascism

The profound individual and national impact of World War I on Italy ultimately led to the rise of fascism in the interwar period. Individuals involved in the war effort were acutely affected, and a population-wide sense of dissatisfaction resulted. The typical divide felt during wartime between those on the front lines and those on the “home front” was compounded by a second divide, “between the frontline of the trenches, inhabited by troops and their junior officers, and the military bases to the rear and out of the firing line, inhabited by senior and commanding officers”. The experience of war had a profound effect on these soldiers, as many struggled to reintegrate into society after the war. They felt that they had lived through “their own kind of hell beyond the experience and comprehension” of those who had not fought on the front lines. These divisions contributed to the soldiers’ sense of separation from the larger Italian society and cultivated a sense of community among their compatriots.

Italy’s participation in the war was a terrible experience. Approximately a million men died along the Austro-Hungarian and Italian border for land gains that were even smaller than those along the western front for most of the war. The casualties during the conflict were so high that on several occasions Austrian forces urged the Italians to retreat so that they would not be slaughtered entirely. Conditions on the front were horrific—one Italian soldier wrote of a battle in July 1915 that left Italian troops “squatting among…corpses”. By August 1915, casualties were so great that one general ordered that losses should no longer be reported. Those who survived were left with deep trauma and significant mistrust of the Italian social order. They were faced with a nation that had treated them as utterly disposable in a war that provided few concrete gains. As a result, they clung to “the comradeship and fraternity of the trench community,” believing that their experiences earned
them a special place in society. This conception of the situation was exacerbated by the fact that the government had assured them of “a better post-war world”.19 The government had promised land reforms to peasant soldiers to keep up their morale, and they were further disenfranchised when these promises were broken.20 Consequently, the interwar period was partially characterized by ex-soldiers looking for something to compensate them for their suffering, and they found it in fascism.

Former soldiers were not the only ones searching for a better aftermath to the war. The Italian economy was ill-prepared to meet the needs of a middle class aspiring to grow. The large number of young men leaving the military had no jobs to return to after the war, and unemployment skyrocketed to two million by 1919. A 42 percent rise over the prewar period in university graduates and a much smaller increase in available positions did little to improve the situation, while a 256 percent increase in graduation from technical training schools left limited job options even for skilled workers.21 Italy had too many workers and not enough positions to fill, regardless of training or talent. Education ceased to serve as an equalizing force. With few opportunities available even for those with degrees, the ability of lower class individuals to climb the social and economic ladder had significantly diminished. Many skilled laborers turned to politics, forming trade unions in an attempt to gain bargaining power, but this only served to create further instability.22 High unemployment created a working class that felt stifled by its inability climb higher in society, and a middle class that felt threatened by the growing competition for a relatively low number of positions. The unstable situation between social classes contributed to growing bitterness towards the government, which had failed to deliver on its promises of benefit or glory to Italy from the war. This class struggle led to violence, including occupations of factories and landed estates, as workers attempted to make their voices heard.23 They were searching for a political outlet, something that would give them the power to shape the state and have a voice in the Italian government. For the first time, a large percentage of the Italian populace became politically engaged.

The economy as a whole suffered as a result of the end of the war. Italy’s production had expanded rapidly during the conflict, and domestic consumption was not enough to meet production capacities.24 General European instability meant international trade remained disrupted even after the fighting had stopped, and so Italy had no markets for its excess goods. By 1919, exports covered only 36 percent of imports, leaving Italy with a severe trade deficit.25 Standards of living were falling—in sharp contrast to the promises of power and success from military victory. The political system was unable to respond to the concerns of the people, who began to seek more power to combat issues of high unemployment and inflation. This dissatisfaction, and the conflict that resulted as groups fought to maintain their own interests, led to further unrest.

These social and economic problems of the interwar period further destabilized Italian politics. The war brought to the forefront “the consequences of a longer-term, unbalanced process of industrialization” that granted more power to major industries and less power to the state.26 This exacerbated the power imbalance between the elite few and the masses that had plagued Italy for decades, triggering greater resentment towards the government. The lack of stability may have dated back to well before the war, but the system became increasingly unstable under the new pressures of economic suffering and dissatisfaction. In the face of war, “the old electoral and parliamentary mechanism had broken down under the stress”.27 In this way, the outcome of World War I symbolized the failure of democracy as a sustainable political regime. This left Italian society open to the entrance of a new political party that ultimately transformed into a new regime, one that promised to fulfill the expectations of the Italian people left wanting
more after the war and willing to get involved in politics to promote their interests.

Perhaps most critical to the rise of fascism was the resurgence of nationalism and a sense of belonging to Italy as a state. This new sense of solidarity, engendered by the experience of collective suffering, led to new aspirations of political involvement and pride in Italian citizenship.\(^{28}\) The majority of Italy’s expectations for the war remained unfulfilled: the nation felt entitled to its historic possessions, including the entirety of the Dalmatian coast. In the end, Italy’s land gains were virtually nonexistent. Italians felt their nation had been cheated out of its due, and the new sense of national belonging made such a slight feel personal. Change became necessary in Italy—to justify the suffering of those who fought in the war, to stabilize the political system and provide political power to the masses, and to save the struggling Italian economy. The interwar period was uniquely poised to welcome an ideology that offered a solution to the destruction of World War I, and fascism seemed to provide that answer.

**Mussolini and the Rise of Fascism**

By the end of World War I, Mussolini was an ex-socialist leading a collection of similarly disillusioned ex-socialists and ex-syndicalists. Throughout the war, the Socialist Party had clung to neutrality, while Mussolini himself began to advocate for the conflict, believing that it would become a revolutionary opportunity. At odds with the party over the issue, he consequently was removed from his position as the editor of the Avanti!, and eventually left the Socialist Party altogether.\(^{29}\) Mussolini himself fought in what he later described as “one of the bloodiest and most terrible spots of all the Allied battle fronts”\(^{30}\), and thus was intimately familiar with the suffering that characterized the Italian war experience. He considered it “the most tortured period humanity ever knew”.\(^{31}\) At one point Mussolini was seriously wounded by a grenade, an experience he described as an “infernal life of pain;” he underwent “twenty-seven operations in one month”, the majority of which were without anesthetic.\(^{32}\)

Rather than turning him against war and violence, however, he came away with the conviction that Italy was united by its experience in battle. In fact, he declared, “It is impossible for me to show my development and feelings from war without showing how my nation entered war, felt war and accepted war. My psychology was Italian psychology.”\(^{33}\) For Mussolini, the experience of World War I was a unification of Italy. Just as he had suffered in the war, the nation as a whole had suffered, and both the soldiers who had fought and the rest of the nation deserved the better future promised by their victory. He was one of many who were left bitterly disappointed by the outcome of the war, and particularly the Treaty of Versailles. He wrote, “the conclusion of the treaty...was a complete shattering of ideals”.\(^{34}\) The great destiny that was promised to Italy—and that had seemed within reach after the Allied victory—was snatched out of their grasp. In particular, the loss of the Dalmatian coast was a significant blow, because he considered it to rightfully belong to Italy “by tradition and history, by manners and costumes, by the languages spoken”.\(^{35}\) He shared in the disillusionment of the Italian people, and was able to seize upon it during his rise to power in the coming years. This nationalism and the sense of the individual as being truly part of a greater whole became central to Fascist ideology, driving much of the greater sense of political engagement that Mussolini encouraged. Every citizen was an Italian, and thus had a stake in Italy’s future and a place in political life. It was this rhetoric that allowed Fascism to gain power as a popular movement, by invigorating large amounts of the population in a common mission—to achieve the Italy that they deserved as a result of their struggle and victory.

In 1919, Mussolini founded his new political movement: the *Fascio di Combattimento*. Mussolini’s fascists were primarily other disillusioned socialists and syndicalists from his earlier days and army veterans, particularly the *arditi* who
had served in special combat units. All of them shared the belief that Italy’s current system was insufficient, and that the preexisting political parties—the syndicalist, nationalist, and socialist groups that had existed prior to World War I—were inadequate at responding to the problems of a new Italy. However, Mussolini’s group of political dissidents were not enough to create a movement large enough to disrupt the political system of Italy. It took the incorporation of the “agrarian fascism” movement for fascism as a coalitional movement to gain traction. Most Fascist party members in rural areas were students or lower-middle-class professionals who were struggling with Socialist groups and peasant leagues trying to gain power. It was here that Fascism drew from Sorel’s advocacy of violence—in the first half of 1921, Fascist military squads attacked 83 peasant league offices and 107 cooperatives. This strategic violence was highly effective against the remaining Socialist party in Italy; already unable to gain enough power to take control of the government and effect real change, Socialism began to buckle under the new force of Fascism.

Fascism’s basis in historical ideas of nationalism and violence became clear during its rise in the early 1920s. In October 1922, Mussolini announced, “We Fascists do not intend to turn our backs on the first recruits of our movement, such fearsome and ideal followers, for a miserable dish of ministerial pottage!” Instead of legitimizing itself during the climb towards government authority, the Fascist party remained true to its roots as a movement of revolutionary violence backed by disillusioned soldiers. Mussolini emphasized Fascism as a legacy of the war, born of the suffering that Italy had undergone during the conflict on the Austro-Hungarian border and the suffering that continued during the war’s aftermath. He declared that Fascism was “a question of injecting into the liberal State... all the force of the new Italian generations which resulted from the war and our victory”. Fascism was a move to create the legacy of power and success that Mussolini and his followers felt that they were due. This idea resonated deeply within the Fascist party—in November 1921, half of the members of the movement were war veterans. The current government and the Treaty of Versailles had failed to provide for the people, and Fascists were determined to shape this better future by any means necessary.

The initial course of Fascism—taking down the Socialist movement—was also a major reason for its survival, as it provided a common enemy for the disparate factions of the Fascist movement. Although they had some common goals, tensions remained between the war veterans, lower-middle-class workers, students, and other disparate factions that made up the Fascist movement. Mussolini preserved the movement’s power and prevented infighting by pitting all of the groups against the common Socialist enemy. Consequently, the Fascist party had much more unity than any other political group, which granted them significant success in the Parliamentary elections of May 1921. It was then that the Fascist movement transformed into the National Fascist Party and began its era as a powerful political movement. Like the initial attraction of Fascism, this strategy was dependent on the idea of a unified group fighting for a common goal against a common enemy. The Socialists had opposed World War I and then failed to ameliorate the devastating economic situation; anti-Socialism coincided effectively with the nationalism and pro-war focus of the Fascist movement, helping to temporarily gloss over the differences in the party factions.

The same sense of disillusionment and national identity that had driven the Fascist movement from its inception culminated in the breakdown of the liberal government, which was condemned in the name of the greater future of the Italian people and taken down by violence and force. By 1922, Italy’s current political system seemed so weak that Fascism was believed to be inevitable, a “corrective for a system gone awry”. Mussolini’s demonstration of Fascist influence through his March on Rome and subsequent political negotiations,
as a result, were more “psychological warfare” than revolution. Fascism had already captured the support of the Italian people, and the Socialist party had crumbled to the point of offering little resistance. Mussolini became prime minister in 1922 not with a bang, but a whimper. The breakdown of democracy in Italy was not immediate. There were four years between Mussolini’s appointment as prime minister and the Fascist declaration of a single-party state, and it was not until the 1930s that Mussolini took absolute control. This combination of the slow rise of the totalitarian nature of the Fascist regime and the widespread support offered by the Italian populace to the party gave the party a legitimate appearance in spite of its violent roots. Sergio Panunzio, a left-leaning member of the Fascist movement, insisted that there was “no need…for consternation at the apparent dissolution of contemporary Society” and that the Fascist movement was “a symptom of vitality and not of death”. In 1925, philosopher Giovanni Gentile wrote that Fascism was, “while being a party, a political doctrine”, more than anything else “a total conception of life”. Despite its origin in violence, Fascism maintained a reputation as a political party of a better future, a renewal of Italian national identity and power and a true victory for a nation that had gained little and lost much from its experience in World War I. Ultimately, the widespread appeal of Fascism allowed it to supersede its violent history and gain power as a legitimate political party rather than a revolution, an advancing nation rather than a collection of militant rebels.

Conclusion
The suffering of World War I and the subsequent economic and social struggles that plagued Italy ignited the nation’s ideological roots of violent struggle and nationalism, propelling Fascism to the totalitarian dictatorship it eventually became. Even before World War I, the roots of Fascist ideology were present in Italy. The nation’s history of nationalism, the rise of social Darwinism and the violent, revolutionary philosophy of political intervention of Sorel, compounded with nationalist and revolutionary syndicalist ideals to exert an influence on Italian society and particularly Benito Mussolini. World War I left in its wake a destabilized economy with skyrocketing unemployment and limited opportunities for social advancement, providing the necessary catalyst for these ideas to solidify in the Fascist movement. Most importantly, the profound impact of the suffering of World War I and the resurgence of Italian identity created the ripe conditions for a mass political movement. Ultimately, it took World War I to create what Mazzini had once dreamed of: a nationalist movement driven by the masses, whose new sense of Italian identity and political agency ultimately redefined Italy in the years before World War II.

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More than a decade after the end of the Khilafat Movement—a campaign led by Indian Muslims to pressure the British government to protect the Ottoman Sultan’s position as Caliph of Islam after the Ottoman Empire fell following World War I—that had unified India’s Muslims in common cause and with the resumption of Hindu-Muslim communal tensions, Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s reelection to the presidency of the All-India Muslim League (AIML) in 1935 slowly awakened the party from its dormancy as it sought to prevent Muslims from becoming persecuted minorities in a country on the road to independence. After being presented as a “nebulous” idea by Muhammad Iqbal in his 1930 Allahabad address to the AIML, the goal to create a separate Muslim state of Pakistan was formally recognized by the AIML in 1940. Although there has been considerable debate about whether Jinnah actually supported the creation of an independent Pakistan during the 1930s and early 1940s and how his Muslim League came to speak for all Indian Muslims, there is a dearth of literature about the aspirations of the Muslim religious community. The dominant voice among Indian Islamic scholars at the time was the Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind (JUH), a group of Deobandi religious leaders who opposed the AIML-led Pakistan Movement. However, not all Indian Islamic leaders endorsed the JUH’s opinions. The Bareli Ulema supported the Muslim League; whereas, Maulana Maududi, who would become one of the most influential proponents of political Islam in the Pakistan, liked the idea of Pakistan in theory but vied with the AIML for control of the movement to determine its future. Despite their disagreements, the Muslim religious leaders determined their political positions in regards to the Pakistan Movement based on what they believed would most effectively promote governance according to Islamic principles in South Asia after independence and advance the rule of Islam throughout the world. The paper will argue that the united nationalism of the JUH and like-minded Muslim religious leaders intended to pave the way for Islamic rule in a federalized India and for the revival of Islamic governments in other Muslim-majority countries; that the Bareli Ulema supported the Pakistan Movement because they envisioned Pakistan as the first step towards global Islamic dominance; and that Maulana Maududi’s Jamiat-i-Islami wanted to make Pakistan an example of the benefits of implementing its idea of political Islam.

The JUH embraced mutahida qawmiyat, or united nationalism, as a political exigency to liberate India from the British in order to set the stage for Islam’s resurgence. United nationalism meant that the Indian people were one nation despite religious differences and implied that Muslims should support Congress in its quest for independence. The JUH justified its advocacy of united nationalism by pointing out that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had lived...
in the same city as non-Muslims and that cooperation between “Muslims and infidels” was permissible when fighting a common enemy. Husain Ahmad Madani, president of the JUH, further vindicated united nationalism by referencing India’s Mughal history, alleging that neither Muslim governments nor Hindu governments discriminated against members of the other community and there was no political discrimination or communalism during the period of Muslim rule. Recalling the memory of an empire whose opulence and relative impiety the ulama probably should have scorned may seem a bit strange. However, because India’s Muslims were well aware of their declining power and prestige in India ever since the dissolution of the Mughal Empire in 1857, the JUH’s appeal to Mughal history makes sense for a group hoping to revitalize Islam’s fortunes in the subcontinent. Nevertheless, although the JUH complemented its religious justification with a justification from the Mughal past, its reasons for advocating united nationalism were more singularly religious in nature. Apart from its primary goal to free India from “domination by the [British] infidels,” the JUH objected to the AIML’s secular use of Islam to pander to the Indian Muslims on the basis of their communal interests rather than to properly implement Islamic principles in the governance of the proposed Pakistan. The JUH feared that the creation of Pakistan would endanger the rights of the reduced Muslim minority remaining in India and hamper the propagation of Islam in the subcontinent by fueling communal hatred. Moreover, the JUH espoused the idea that Muslims were a separate nation, but that Muslims of India were not. Arguing that Muslims of India comprised a distinct nation, as Iqbal, Jinnah and the AIML did, would create a barrier between Indian Muslims and the wider Muslim community, thereby, impeding the prospect of a speedy global liberation of Muslim lands after India’s independence. The JUH’s political affiliation with the Hinduized Congress and repudiation of the secular AIML served to facilitate the expansion of Islam in the absence of communal hatred and to keep alive the hope for a pan-Islamic revival in which Muslim governments would be restored to power. Although the JUH hoped for a restoration of Islamic governments in other Muslim-majority countries, its conditional support for Congress highlights the desire to also revitalize Islam’s influence in India’s future government. The mufti Kifayat Allah voiced the JUH’s demands that, once India gained independence, Congress would give the Muslims influence in the government of the new Indian state, maintain the personal status law for Muslims, maintain Muslim religious institutions and Islamic culture and guarantee a highly federalized structure in which the five provinces in the northwest with Muslim majorities would have the authority to deal with their own internal affairs. These four safeguards suggested that the JUH understood the renewed danger to Muslims posed by the resurfacing of Hindu-Muslim communal tensions and underscored one of the Deobandi Ulema’s key principles: Islam was not to be dominated, either by the British or by the Hindus. If Congress met these conditions, the JUH believed that Muslims’ dwindling prestige and power in India would increase. In fact, Madani hoped that the Muslims’ contributions to India’s national struggle would reduce communalist tensions and increase Muslims’ influence to the point that a Muslim president would be elected in India from time to time, that Muslims could influence Indian foreign policy to not oppose global Muslim interests and that other Muslim countries currently ruled by oppressive Western colonizers could benefit from India’s liberation. More specifically, the JUH’s desire for a highly federalized structure in which the Muslims would be left to govern themselves would not only avoid exacerbating communal tensions, but would also provide a platform from which Islam in the subcontinent could be revived. Although Muslim religious leaders probably did promote united nationalism in part because they felt like they belonged in India, their demand for significant federalization of
an independent India demonstrated their ultimate desire for Muslims to flourish according to their own principles. Even though Maulana Azad was a member of Congress and not of the JUH, he was the voice of an important Muslim religious leader that also encouraged united nationalism.19 In his 1940 Presidential Address to the Indian National Congress in Ramgarh, Azad seemed to prove the notion that his support for united nationalism was based on a feeling of belonging when he claimed he was “proud of being an Indian.”20 However, he betrayed his desire to restore Islamic governance when he tried explaining how Muslims’ rights would be protected in independent India:

In the texture of Indian politics, nothing is further removed from the truth than to say that Indian Muslims occupy the position of a political minority…It is true that they number only one-fourth of the total population; but the question is not one of population ratio, but of the large numbers and the strength behind them…If [Muslims] are in a minority in seven provinces, they are in a majority in five. This being so, there is absolutely no reason why they should be oppressed by the feeling of being a minority…

The federal centre will be concerned only with all-India matters of common concern, such as, foreign relations, defence [sic], customs, etc.21 In this speech Azad tried to mollify Muslim fears that the Hindus would be able to strip them of their rights in independent India since they only constitute one quarter of the population. Suggesting that Muslims would form the majority in five of India’s twelve provinces, Azad reveals his confidence that an independent India will be a highly federalized country, like that demanded by the JUH, in which the central government will only deal with “all-India matters of common concern.” Since the bulk of political decisions affecting Muslims would be made by the Muslim-dominated provincial legislatures, Muslims should not worry about being outvoted three to one in the central government, according to Azad. He believed that the Pakistan Movement did not take into account that Indian Muslims would be protected under such a federal scheme. So although he expressed in his speech that he and all Indian Muslims were “part of the invisible unity that is Indian nationality,” Azad’s defense of the future protections afforded by India’s presumed federal structure suggests that he, too, hoped Muslims would be allowed to flourish according to their own principles.

Azad’s previously manifested desire to revive Islamic governance suggests that his support for a state comprised of autonomous units was not simply meant to resolve the Hindu-Muslim communal problem. Although he probably saw resolving communal tensions as extremely important, Azad’s “chief aim was re-alization of shariat [Islamic law] and integration of the millat [the Muslim community].”22 Unlike Iqbal and the AIML leaders who believed that certain socio-cultural elements defined a specifically Indian Muslim identity, Azad believed that Islam gave all Muslims a unique cultural heritage without regard to nationality, ethnicity or territory.23 In his speech, Azad mentions that he has a “special interest in Islamic religion and culture” and that he is “unwilling to lose even the smallest part of [his Islamic] inheritance.”24 This commitment to Islam along with the idea that Islam and nationality were separate led Azad and the like-minded JUH to espouse seemingly conflicting political objectives, significant federalization and united nationalism, in order to move towards a revival of Islamic governance that transcended national boundaries. By promoting united nationalism, they would be able to bargain for a highly federalized state in which they could remain Indian, avoid communal tensions and ultimately revive Islamic religion and culture for all Muslims.

In this way, the JUH and Azad employed a similar negotiating strategy as Jinnah but for opposite purposes. According to historian Ayesha Jalal, Jinnah ostensibly supported the creation of Pakistan as a bargaining chip to extract concessions from Congress and the British. As a man
“whose entire career and thinking had concentrated upon the centre,” Jinnah wanted Indian Muslims to have representational parity in a potent central government, preventing their rights from being threatened by the Hindu majority; he did not actually want complete separation for majority-Muslim regions.26 On the other hand, the religious leaders hoped their support for united nationalism would boost Muslims’ standing in the eyes of their Hindu countrymen,27 giving them a stronger hand with which to negotiate for a federated system in which Muslims could live according to their own principles.

Although the JUH fought against the Pakistan Movement, the Barelwi Ulema, a group of religious scholars opposed to the Deobandi JUH, sought the creation of a separate Pakistan for India’s Muslims because they hoped that Pakistan would be governed according to Quranic principles.28 The Barelwis institutionalized their support for the AIML by setting up the All-India Sunni Conference in 1925.29 In the 1946 All-India Sunni Conference in Benares, at the climax of their two-decade long endorsement of the Pakistan Movement, the Barelwi Ulema adopted a resolution that formally declared their support for Pakistan:

This Session of the All India Sunni Conference fully supports the demand for Pakistan; and announces that the Sunni (Barelwi) Ulema and Masha’ikh are prepared for whatever sacrifices may be necessary in the struggle for the creation of an Islamic Government. And they consider it their Shar‘i duty to establish such a Government which should be based on the principles of fiqh in accordance with the Qur’an and ahadith.30

The Barelwis’ equation of Pakistan to “Islamic Government” highlights their belief that Pakistan’s government would create and administer laws according to religious doctrine. Since they believed it was their “Shar‘i duty,” or religious obligation, instead of their commitment to Indian Muslims’ communal interests to bring about this country governed by Islamic principles, the Barelwi Ulema hoped for Islamic revival that encompassed more than just Indian Muslims. In fact, the Barelwi alim Sayyid Kachhuchhawi stated that the Barelwis wanted “a grand ‘Pakistan,’ i.e. rule of Islam all over the world” instead of an “independent state in a small part of India.”31 How the creation of Pakistan would initiate the global propagation of Islam remains unclear. But Kachhuchhawi’s statement insinuates that the Barelwis were not actually concerned about the communal interests that motivated the AIML to agitate for a homeland in Northwest and East India specifically for India’s Muslims. They supported Pakistan because it would allow for a conducive environment in which Islamic rule could be implemented and subsequently spread all over the world. In fact, the Barelwis made it clear that they only supported the AIML because they hoped that fiqh law, or Islamic jurisprudence, would guide Pakistan.32

In one of the most contentious arguments about the developments that led to the creation of Pakistan, Ayesha Jalal, the Mary Richardson Professor of History at Tufts University, posits that Pakistan so poorly fit the interests of most Indian Muslims because of the political blunders of Muhammad Ali Jinnah;33 however, she does not account for how the religious leaders who supported the Pakistan Movement allowed themselves to be duped by vague promises for a state governed by Islamic principles. Jinnah wanted to extract concessions from Congress and the British, but to do that he needed to claim to speak for all Muslims. As a result, he purposely prevaricated about the future constitution of Pakistan being based on Islamic principles by saying in 1943 that “the Constitution and the Government [of Pakistan] will be what the people will decide.”34 Despite ostensibly leaving open the possibility of Pakistan developing an Islamic government, Jinnah’s adoption of Western culture and manifest lack of interest in the Islamic problems the ulema cared about35 should have alerted the Barelwis that the AIML did not envision a state governed by strict Islamic law. In fact, given the JUH’s demonstrated aversion to the AIML-led Pakistan Movement for this
very reason,36 the Barelwi Ulema most likely did understand the dissimulation in Jinnah’s promise. Nevertheless, the prospect of creating a new Muslim-majority country presented them with a chance to institute Islamic rule in that country. As devout Muslims with the duty to “struggle for the creation of an Islamic Government,” the Barelwi Ulema decided to take the risk of supporting the AIML’s call for Pakistan in order to have a chance at moving closer to their ultimate goal of implementing Islamic governance all over the world.

Although the Barlewi Ulema did not know exactly how Islam was supposed to rise to global preeminence, Maulana Abul ‘Ala Maududi worked towards developing a detailed plan of how Islam could be combined with politics to eventually sweep the world. During the 1930s and 1940s, Maududi maintained his independence from both the Muslim supporters of Congress and the Muslim League proponents of the Pakistan Movement. He denounced the Muslim supporters of Congress, such as the JUH and Maulana Azad, for undermining the formation of an Islamic state of Pakistan. But he also vied with the AIML for leadership of the Pakistan Movement because he opposed the Muslim Leaguers’ secular communalism.37 In 1941, he founded the Jamiat-i-Islami, or the Islamic Association, to work towards the establishment of an Islamic world order. From opposing the creation of Pakistan based on communal nationalism to claiming to have supported the Pakistan Movement all along, Maulana Maududi may appear to have changed his mind about establishing a separate state for Indian Muslims. He wanted Indian Muslims to completely dissociate themselves in the political sphere from the Hindus by creating an Indian Muslim homeland, but the reason for that was so the Muslims could live according to a “purified Islam.”40

Maududi articulated a political theory in which his idealized version of Islam would undergird everything from economics to social interaction.41 Consequently, he believed that the first step to achieving that world order was through the establishment of a Muslim Pakistan. After he had moved to Pakistan following Partition,42 Maududi in 1963 denied allegations that he had opposed the creation of Pakistan by saying, “As mankind incorporated in a cultural and political system...Whatever the principle of human good Islam defines, and whatever the scheme of life it prescribe... Appeal to mankind in general only when they would free themselves of all ignorant prejudices and dissociate themselves altogether from their national traditions, with their sentiments of racial pride.”39 Clearly, Maududi’s end goal is for Islam to transcend the ethnic and national “prejudices” that divide the global Muslim community. He sees these differences as shackles from which Muslims need to free themselves in order to achieve an Islamic “world-state.” Furthermore, Maududi has complete confidence that the spirit of Islam would appeal to all of mankind and be adopted on a global scale once people detach themselves from their parochial national allegiances. Therefore, he rejected the communal nationalism encouraged by the AIML in its quest to create a Pakistan specifically for the Indian Muslims because it would imply that the Muslims of India were unique from the Muslims of the rest of the world. Similar to the JUH’s fear of communal nationalism, Maududi initially feared that the creation of Pakistan would undermine the ultimate goal of Islamic revival on a global scale.

Although he shared the JUH’s sentiments about communal nationalism undermining pan-Islamism, Maududi still advocated the establishment of a separate state for Indian Muslims. He wanted Indian Muslims to completely dissociate themselves in the political sphere from the Hindus by creating an Indian Muslim homeland, but the reason for that was so the Muslims could live according to a “purified Islam.”40 Maududi articulated a political theory in which his idealized version of Islam would undergird everything from economics to social interaction.41 Consequently, he believed that the first step to achieving that world order was through the establishment of a Muslim Pakistan. After he had moved to Pakistan following Partition,42 Maududi in 1963 denied allegations that he had opposed the creation of Pakistan by saying, “As
a matter of fact no other organization has presented more literature to intellectually justify the creation of Pakistan than the Jamaat-Islami.” By this he meant that his party had supported the creation of an Islamic regime, not a secular state representing the communal interests of Indian Muslims. In an earlier interview in 1960, Maududi claimed that, due to the “various measures taken by the westernized ruling junta,” Pakistan had moved away from the Islamic ideals on which he believed it should have been based. He laid out a three-pronged approach for translating his vision of political Islam into practice. In his conclusion, he posited:

When we accept Islamic system [sic] after careful deliberation, the impact of Islam on every department of our life including morals, manners, civilization, literature, arts, economy, laws, judiciary and politics will be so spectacular that the world instead of reading books need only observe us to realize how Islam moulds the life of man. Here, he reasserts his vision for a revival of a comprehensive Islamic way of life that extends beyond the Indian subcontinent. His acknowledgement that a westernized secular elite was stymying the implementation of Islamic ideals in Pakistan accorded with his fears during the Pakistan Movement in the 1930s and 1940s that the secular leaders of the movement only sought to preserve Indian Muslim communal interests instead of wanting to create an Islamic state. However, since Pakistan had already been established, Maududi accepted it as a laboratory in which the Jamiat-i-Islami could attempt to sway public opinion in favor of adopting Islam as the basis of governance. This staging ground would allow other, non-Pakistani societies to “observe” the splendor of Islamic civilization instead of having to “read books” to try to imagine its greatness. Maududi’s support for Pakistan did not, in fact, contradict his initial opposition to communal nationalism, even though the communalist AIML spearheaded the movement to create Pakistan. From opposing the AIML’s Pakistan Movement to supporting its brainchild once Pakistan was actually established, the foremost champion of political Islam insinuated that the Pakistan Movement itself was a temporary political vehicle for bringing about his real end-goal: fomenting Islamic rule throughout the world.

Whether they encouraged united nationalism, supported the AIML or developed a separate political theory of Islam, the Muslim religious leaders of India during the Pakistan Movement held their respective political positions insofar as they believed these positions would further their shared end goals of reviving Islamic governance in South Asia and Muslim-majority countries and promoting Islam’s eventual dominance in the world. Although Maulana Maududi’s vision of political Islam gained a receptive audience in Pakistan for a short while during General Zia ul-Haq’s rule in the late 1970s and 1980s, none of the religious leaders’ visions of reviving Islamic governance in South Asia and beyond successfully came to fruition. Perhaps their religio-political goals were inherently incompatible with the modern political structures introduced to India by the British. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the religious leaders were neither the most influential supporters nor the most vociferous opponents of the Pakistan Movement, theirs constitute oft-neglected voices of the Muslim community that added to the confusion of deciding who had the right to represent all of India’s Muslims in the years leading up to Partition. If for no other reason, it is the job of the historian to recount the stories of those Muslims ignored by the AIML and often overlooked by the history books.

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A careful reading of Plato’s Republic should leave the reader in a state of perplexity. Among the various intricacies and dramatic tensions of the dialogue, Socrates’s treatment of poetry and myth is perhaps the most confounding. He ends his great conversation on the nature of justice with an eschatological myth despite sharply criticizing mythology in book III and banning the poets in book X. How does the reader make sense of this apparent contradiction? This paper will argue that what may appear to be contradictory remarks from Socrates serve as a demonstration of Plato’s nuanced and purified use of myth in service of philosophy. Socrates does not oppose mythology outright, but instead opposes the uncritical acceptance of myth that was common for his time. This paper will first analyze how Socrates, like the Pre-Socratics before him, desired to develop a rational understanding of the world in opposition to the mythological culture of the ancient Greeks. To do so, this paper will briefly explore Socrates’s metaphysical turn in the Euthyphro as a preparation for his developments in the Republic. Next, there will be an analysis of Socrates’s criticisms of myth in books III & X of the Republic, for these probings reveal his moral and metaphysical concerns with the improper use of myth. Finally, this paper will analyze Socrates’s own use of myth as it seeks to reconcile his philosophically crafted myths with his criticisms of unreflective mythmaking.

The Pre-Socratic pursuit of mathematics, astronomy, and science subtly subverts the thought of the ancient Greek world. The Pre-Socratic philosophers sought to develop rational insights of a philosophical character in opposition to the uncritical acceptance of their contemporary mythology, which often explained the world through the arbitrary will of the gods. These early philosophers desired an explanation of the world that was not simply based upon mythological stories but upon well-justified principles, and their use of a high standard of cognitive justification made it possible to have a critical view of mythology. Socrates further develops the work of the Pre-Socratic in his unwavering quest to discover the essence of things
and the knowledge of reality in its totality, or, in other words, of all that is. While the Pre-Socratic developed rational explanations for the natural world, Socrates searched for a deeper and more robust understanding of the human being. As we will see in the Euthyphro, Socrates searches for the first principles of things in and of themselves and tries to explain them apart from the sort of explanations that resorted to the arbitrary willfulness of the gods. It is here that Socrates breaks from the natural philosophers and develops an even deeper—and more subversive—movement against the contemporary mythological culture. Instead of concentrating on an investigation of the natural world, Socrates turns his philosophical attention to the human world by concentrating on human nature and on the virtues needed by human nature. This is evident even when he turns his attention to questions about the piety or devotion that human beings should presumably show toward the gods.

In the Euthyphro, Socrates raises a profound metaphysical question that strikes at the heart of this philosophical revolution against the mythological worldview: is something pious because the gods will it, or do the gods will it because it is pious? In other words, Socrates wants to know if piety has any intrinsic value for the human being or if the value of piety is derived purely from the arbitrary willfulness of some outside source. The contemporary mythology of the time did not have the ability to answer this question. Socrates’s metaphysical question to Euthyphro regarding the origins of piety turns our attention away from arbitrary mythological answers as inadequate and toward a more rational philosophical approach that is independent of the willfulness of the gods.

Thus, the Euthyphro sets a clear example of Socrates’s continuation and expansion of the Pre-Socratic movement in order to place the philosophical journey outside of a mythological framework. Additionally, the dialogue helps us to better understand Socrates’s moral and metaphysical critiques of myth in the Republic, for in book III he criticizes the gods for their immorality, and eventually he ban the poets from the city altogether in book X for their metaphysical shortcomings. It seems quite out of place, then, for Socrates to continue using myth in many of his dialogues, but most notably in the Republic, in light of his philosophical revolution against ancient Greek mythology.

In book III of the Republic, Socrates expands upon his concerns in the Euthyphro and raises serious moral objections against contemporary mythological poetry. He states,

I think that...what poets and prose-writers tell us about the most important matters concerning human beings is bad. They say that many unjust people are happy and that many just ones are wretched, that injustice is profitable if it escapes detection, and that justice is another’s good but one’s own loss. I think we’ll prohibit these stories...

At this point in the dialogue, however, Socrates does not yet entirely ban these sorts of myths and stories, for he recognizes that the very question of justice is still up for debate. Nevertheless, Socrates senses that the emotions and lessons conveyed through the mythological stories of curious actions of the gods within Greek mythology reveals the deep inadequacy of mythology’s ability to answer questions about the nature of the virtues, especially when the gods themselves demonstrate inconsistent behavior not only in regard to piety but toward other virtues such as justice, courage, and so forth. Socrates’s metaphysical question to Euthyphro regarding the origins of piety turns our attention away from arbitrary mythological answers as inadequate and toward a more rational philosophical approach that is independent of the willfulness of the gods.
his time set a negative example for the guardians and others in the city. Instead of guiding one toward justice and piety, these stories drag the soul down toward injustice and impiety. As Father Schall observes in his comment relating to what Socrates is wrestling with in book III, “[the gods’] attraction and disorder of soul were too striking not to notice.” Socrates recognizes the power of these stories to move the soul and to produce vivid images that stir base passions. He clearly fears that the attraction and disorder of the gods would lead others, most notably the guardians, to imitate their behavior.

Socrates’s concern over mythology is deeply connected with his reflections of the unsettling possibility that the world may have been conceived in injustice. If the gods themselves perform actions that appear to be unjust, and if good goes unrewarded and the bad unpunished, is there any order to the universe? Is justice even worth pursuing or must we opt for a nihilistic view of the world? This possibility haunted Socrates and became the central topic of conversation in the Republic, beginning first with Cephalus, but most clearly with Socrates’s heated conversation with Thrasymachus. For Cephalus, justice is merely telling the truth and paying off one’s debts, but these are only examples and not a definition of justice. The fiery Thrasymachus gives a definition of justice as power and then argues that the very definition of justice is the advantage of the stronger. In other words, might makes right. These two positions set the stage for the project of the rest of the Republic as a quest to know the truth about justice. Additionally, the example of Gyges’s ring also exposes the troubling possibility that there may be no objective order of justice, for this story turns on a consideration of the temptations that would befall someone who had a ring that made him invisible. The story allows Plato to raise the question why anyone would ever be just if it were possible to avoid all the consequences of being detected in injustice. Given his concern with seeking wisdom about justice even while objecting to uncritical mythology, it is no wonder that Socrates would end the Republic with an eschatological myth, the myth of Er, which seeks to solve this problem of possible injustice by rewarding the just and punishing the wicked in the afterlife. Only then, in light of an eschatological view of the world, can justice be preserved and a just city emerge. It seems, then, that a philosophically tutored myth serves as the best means of revealing and explaining such an eschatological vision of the order of things. It combines the insights of philosophical inquiry with the artistic cogency of the uncritical myths that it needs to replace.

Before Socrates introduces the eschatological myth of Er, however, he first renews his criticism of the popular poets and their uncritical mythology. In Book X the men now have their entire conversation regarding justice and the good behind them. Socrates now has the ability to follow up on his initial criticism of poets in book III. Given that the actions of the gods fall short of their vision justice and the good, Socrates is now in a position to ban the poets from the city altogether. This time, however, he is mainly focused on metaphysical concerns, for he is arguing that what culturally passes for poetry and myth are risky imitations of what is true that masquerade as truth itself. Socrates states that:

the imitation [of the poets] is far removed from the truth, for it touches only a small part of each thing and a part that is itself only an image...[the poet] therefore can deceive children and foolish people into thinking that the image is truly [what is].

Socrates fears that by placing a “bad constitution” in one’s soul through images that are removed from the truth even “decent people” will be “corrupted,” as it will cause the irrational part of the soul to overtake one’s use of reason. The absence of a solid metaphysical foundation in truth will lead one to drastic epistemological errors that result in the subjection of human beings to the arbitrary will of the gods, whether they be in mythology or the “shadows” on the wall of culture. These metaphysical concerns, combined with the moral objections raised in book III, are enough to ban the poets from the city.
Unless one distinguishes between the un-critical use of mythology and a philosophically tutored way of storytelling, it would appear odd that after banning the poets and their mythology Socrates begins to tell his interlocutors of the myth of Er. The reader can make sense of Socrates’s use of myth here, including the various myths spread throughout the Republic, by determining if this particular myth is objectionable on moral or metaphysical grounds. Socrates bans the poets because he recognizes that a great majority of them will negatively influence citizens, but the need for this prohibition comes about precisely because Socrates recognizes the power of myth to move one’s soul. Socrates does not oppose myth outright, but opposes its un-critical acceptance—as seen in the Euthyphro—and its improper moral and metaphysical use, as demonstrated in books III and X of the Republic. Socrates believes that if there is a philosopher, however, who uses the great power of myth to serve logos by attempting to express an inexpressible truth, then it is more than fitting to use myth in the philosophical pursuit. Plato’s use of myth reveals his recognition of the limits of speech and its inability to grasp things beyond the here and now, things of the highest realm of thought and being. Joseph Pieper argues that, “it is only possible to use the language of symbol [to understand things beyond the here and now] not for the sake of some literary device, but because there is no other possibility.” For example, Plato’s allegorical tales, such as the famous allegory of the cave in which he uses a marvelous story to explain the difference between mere opinions and critically justified claims to knowledge, contain an “incomparably valid truth, a truth which, in a completely unique way is inviolable and beyond all doubt.” The “unique” truth that is revealed in the allegory of the cave is one that reaches far beyond standard philosophical discourse, and rather, conveys a fundamental truth about human nature. The vivid tale of the allegory of the cave is likely to be embedded upon the mind and soul of the reader, and it serves as a way for the reader to think more deeply about its meaning. Although all myth seeks to teach listeners about reality and how to live, Plato differs from the other ancient poets as he purifies myth from any moral and metaphysical contradictions so that myth can be used in service of truth.

The myth of Er, however, is perhaps the most mysterious of all since it occurs at the end of the great dialogue on justice. As Josef Pieper notes, at first glance the myth “makes no logical connection” with the elements that have preceded it, especially since Socrates just spent a considerable amount of time explaining his reasons for banning poetry and myth. Paradoxically, one can only understand the myth of Er in light of Socrates’s criticisms of myth and his concern for justice. As noted in Books III and X, Socrates bans the poets based on moral and metaphysical grounds, respectively. Socrates did not, however, outlaw any poetry or myth that were morally and metaphysically sound. When analyzing the myth of Er, the reader must ask himself if Socrates knowingly sets up a flawed myth in order to test his interlocutors, or, if the myth itself passes the scrutiny which Socrates has previously laid out for the proper use of myth.

The myth of Er directly counters the immoral myths that Socrates despised. The myth seeks to solve the injustices of the world by positing in rich detail that the just will indeed be rewarded and the unjust punished after death. The myth explains:

for each in turn of the unjust things done and for each in turn of the people they had wronged, they paid the penalty ten times over…but if they had done good deeds and had become just and pious, they were rewarded according to it.

It is only in developing this great eschatological myth that Socrates is able to solve the great dilemma of justice and build a well-ordered city. Indeed, without an eschatological vision of justice there would be “serious faults in the very structure of the world” and the quest for justice would end in vain. Here also, Socrates provides a definitive answer to Thrasymachus:
might does not make right, for indeed, the unjust will be punished hereafter.

Why must such an eschatological vision be presented in the form of a myth, and how does this tale pass Socrates’s metaphysical scrutiny? There are in fact matters of the most important reality that can only be expressed in story. As Pieper observes:

Could it not be the case that the reality most relevant to man is not a ‘set of facts’ but is rather an ‘event,’ and that it accordingly cannot be grasped adequately in a thesis but only, to use Aristotle’s words in a praxeos mimesis, in the representation of an action—in other words, in a story?18

It is difficult, Pieper argues, to express higher things “without recourse to sense images.”19 And so, Socrates channels the persuasive and influential nature of myth to convey a fundamental truth, which paradoxically escapes the ability of logos alone to explain. In this way, Socrates demonstrates that myth and logos are not opposed to one another; rather, myth serves logos along the philosophical pursuit, and in its best sense, is not irrational but addressed to critical reason itself. Moreover, Socrates’s criticism and use of myth goes beyond the work of the Pre-Socratic philosophers by providing a deeper explanation of first principles that does not shy away from using myth and story to convey the inexpressible truth of the order of things. In this way, the myth’s service to logos not only obliterates the uncritical acceptance of myth, but also corrects and expands upon the philosophical revolution sparked by the Pre-Socratic philosophers.

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To understand an effect, one examines its cause. To know an end, one finds its beginning. If when visiting the Sistine Chapel, one looks up to see the beautiful frescos and looks around to see the breathtaking architecture, one naturally inquires after its painter and architect. So, too, to know the design of human society, one must know its Designer. For Abraham Kuyper, God is the Designer of human society. Indeed, he is the fountainhead from which flows all existence—“The sun, moon, and stars in the firmament, the birds of the air, the whole of Nature around us, but, above all, man himself.”

Accordingly, Kuyper prescribes timeless principles for society based upon his construal of God as Trinity. Because God is one in being, the Father possesses original sovereignty over all created sovereign spheres. Because God is three in person, he distributes his sovereignty into a multiplicity of social spheres. Because Christ is the God-man, he supremely reigns as Lord over the physical and spiritual realms. Because the Holy Spirit governs the conscience, society should be democratic among humankind and the government should steward its public power to protect the holy conscience of all persons.

Kuyper applied these timeless principles for society onto his own country at the time, the Netherlands in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Since the Netherlands was a Christian nation, Kuyper only sought separation between Christian churches and the state. He supported separation because he saw discontinuity between biblical testaments. While the dispensation of the Mosaic Law was theocratic, the dispensation of the Church is temporally democratic and yet eternally monarchical. The New Testament does not contain “the slightest hint commanding the practical merger of state and church.”

Kuyper also promoted confessional Christian pluralism. First, he claimed that the government must be ecumenical, at least, Christianly ecumenical. In his argument, because there exists a “diversity of views,” confessional unity among churches “cannot be realized” in this present dispensation until Christ’s return. Second, Kuyper applied his principle of sphere sovereignty to the church and state. Each should independently “command a unique zone in life where each functions as a minister of God.” For instance, Government should not pay salaries of church ministers and not interfere in baptism. Likewise, church ministers should serve in the military because they are not exempt from government’s interest in national security. A third way Kuyper promoted ecumenical Christianity is the regularization of church and state interactions. Kuyper explains “that church and state cannot each go their own way except at great

A Kuyperian Manifesto for Contemporary American Christianity

Hope Edwards
harm to themselves, and that they do best when they are in regular correspondence with one another.” To facilitate this regular communication, Kuyper envisioned a “committee of correspondence.” The committee comprises delegates of each Christian denomination and excludes government representation. The state has opportunity to consult this church committee “about all matters pertaining to denominational affairs, religious questions, and public morality.” The government, in turn, could advise the committee delegates on matters of government regulation of Christian churches.

Kuyper’s ecumenical Christianism may have been an appropriate model for his time given the nation’s Reformed heritage. But the model cannot apply for all times. Even Kuyper knew this. He understood he lived in a period of “halfway” secularization. An ecumenically Christian government was Kuyper’s “secular” compromise for a confessionally plural Christian country that was simultaneously undergoing “dechristianization” from the modern liberals.

I offer six brief reflections on how Kuyper’s social principles could apply to Christians in the United States today. American Christians should: (1) fight for religious freedom, (2) not seek an institutionalized political Christianism, (3) protect freedom of conscience, (4) obey civil authorities, (5) immerse themselves in all spheres of society, and (6) adorn the gospel with right conduct in ordinary life. As a caveat, I do not provide here corporate guidance for Christian churches but rather individual encouragements for believers.

First, American Christians “should not yet take to the catacombs.” A “Christian public struggle remains meaningful” because humanity has not reached the apex of its moral depravity. It is appalling to think there remains tremendous room for moral decay in our world when more than three quarters of all people experience high restrictions on and hostility toward religious belief and expression, of which Christians are the most severely persecuted. The previous year, 2015, saw a record high of 7,100 Christians murdered for their faith. According to Open Door USA, each month there are 322 Christians killed for following Jesus, 214 churches and Christian properties destroyed, and 772 acts of violence against Christians, including beatings, abductions, rapes, arrests, and forced marriages.

As Katrina Lantos-Swett, chairwoman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, said, “We are witnessing levels of persecution of ancient Christian communities of the Middle East at levels that are something that we have not seen, one could almost say, in millennia. It’s very disturbing and disheartening….”

Religious freedom, especially for Christians, is undeniably in crisis today. But it will get worse. The Lord has not yet returned for that terrible Last Battle to vanquish the Prince of this world and to consummate his eternal reign. While God continues to administer his progressive common grace on America, Christians should continue to fight for social justice now and witness the eternal salvation of Jesus Christ in America and abroad. American Christians and other Christians granted religious freedom around the world have a particular moral responsibility to pray and to fight politically and socially for the freedom of persecuted Christians. Of course, Christians should fight for religious freedom of everyone regardless of their religion because all humans bear the image of God. However, I say this charge is a particular obligation of free Christians to persecuted Christians because we are spiritually bonded to one another as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ for eternity, both now and in the life to come.

Second, American Christians should not impose a political Christianism, either an ecumenical one or a denominational one. In fact, I think it would be immoral for Christians to impose a Christian regime on a religiously diverse nation. Christian politicians do not sit in God’s judgment seat over people’s souls. God will judge every one—Christian and non-Christian—on that Last Day. Thus, the Christian politician is unauthorized to legislate obedience to Jesus Christ. God
will bring about salvific obedience to Himself without laws of Congress.

Third, American Christians have the duty to defend freedom of conscience for everyone. In doing so, Christians honor God by dignifying his divine image that he stamped on human hearts. What does this look like practically in the United States? We should accommodate conscientious objectors at all costs. The Kim Davis case is a salient example. After the nationwide legalization of same-sex marriage, Davis refused to issue same-sex marriage licenses, believing that appending her name would approve of an act she deemed religiously immoral. Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin accommodated Davis by restructuring state laws such that county clerks now issue marriage licenses without signing their name. Gov. Bevin’s solution upheld the Supreme Court’s ruling on same-sex marriage while also accommodating Davis’ religious objection.

Though it falls outside the scope of this essay, I admit there must be a point at which the government cannot accommodate all religious objections. Public order requires some concessions of actors in a diverse society. Yet, though the government may negatively restrict some religious actions, it may never positively coerce a person to perform an action that violates their conscience.

Fourth, Christian individuals have a moral duty to submit to all American governing authorities regardless of the election season. The American government is God’s common grace to restrain evil and to promote God for all Americans. According to God’s secret will, he allows for the appointment of officials and invests authority in them to govern. Christians must honor the gift of government and its officials by submitting to the rule of law and decisions of authorities. Of course, this submission is qualified. Christians may only submit to governing authorities insofar as it does not violate God’s order of justice. Further discussion on Christian conscientious objection falls out of the scope of this paper, too.

Fifth, American Christians should adopt Kuyper’s model of pillarization. Christians should immerse themselves in the media, commerce, family, education, politics, and so on because they have a God-given responsibility to do so from common grace and special grace. As God’s original image bearers, Adam and Eve were given a mediating role between Creator and creation. God charged them—and all humankind in them—to be fruitful and multiply and to subdue the earth. But sin handicapped humanity’s ability to complete this assignment. By his special grace, God sent his son Jesus Christ—the Second Adam—to redeem a People to be his suitable Bride—the Church. God reissued the Edenic Commission to Christ and the Church in order that they might together multiply and co-rule in the new creation. Therefore, the Great Commission both fulfills and extends the Cultural Mandate. Thus, Christian engagement in all social spheres accords with their task to cultivate the present creation and to prepare for the one to come.

Sixth, American Christians should be holy as God is holy. Holiness requires mortifying the flesh and clothing ourselves with Christ’s righteousness in our wills, minds, affections, and actions. Baldly said, Christ is Lord of the whole person. He is Lord when I pray, read the Bible, and gather with the church on Sundays, but he is equally Lord when I open my laptop to type an essay, do laundry, surf the internet, cook dinner, watch a movie, shoot hoops with friends, and the list continues. We must pursue God’s holiness as individual followers of our Lord and as the corporate Body of Christ. God empowers Christians to do this through participation in a local church and by the Spirit saturating and reshaping our minds according to God’s Word. Holiness also requires aligning our heart priorities with God’s priorities. God is chiefly concerned with his glory. The greatest means by which he receives glory is through the redemption of a People for himself. God’s soteriology exists for his doxology. Thus, American Christians should be ready and motivated to share the hope of Jesus Christ in whatever station God has called them.

In sum, Kuyper’s social principles silhouette the Trinity. In his Anti-Revolutionary Party
platform, Kuiper concludes, “life’s depths are fathomed neither in the theological, moral, and juridical world nor in the social and political domain so long as our investigations have not come to rest in God himself, that is, in the confession of his Holy Trinity.” God the Father is the absolute source of authorities in society. God the Son is the dual mediator for creation and the church. God the Holy Spirit is the democratizer of society and guarantor of freedom of conscience. Yet the application of these social principles must be different depending on historical context. In nineteenth-century Netherlands, Kuyper realized these principles as an ecumenical Christianism. In modern religiously plural America, Christians should appropriate Kuiper’s timeless principles into a “pillarized” society. By immersing themselves into all social spheres, Christians can influence the state and society. Moreover, Christians have a moral obligation to accommodate religious objectors and to fight for global religious freedom. Finally, Christians should joyfully wait in hope for the sure return of Jesus Christ. Maranatha!

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Pages 37 - 41 contain the article "Greece Driven Mad: Portrayals of Barbarism in Euripedes " by John K. Ferraro has been redacted upon request by the author.
The Monstrous State and the Malevolent Criminal
Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange

Eric S. Meyers

Without sin, we would be unable to choose between good and bad, and life would lose its fundamental tension, its poetry.
—Anatole Broyard

he antihero Alex in Stanley Kubrick’s film adaptation of Anthony Burgess’ novel, A Clockwork Orange, is a rapist and murderer—a horrifying criminal who fantasizes about persecuting Christ but nevertheless affirms how free will indispensably defines what it means to be human. This paper will explore the nuances of Kubrick’s masterful film through the interpretative lens the works of St. Augustine, Michel Foucault, Sigmund Freud, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and the Gospel of Matthew provide.

Despite his atrocious actions and fantasies, Alex becomes a victim of an authoritarian state that is even more monstrous than he is. The representatives of the state share St. Augustine’s view regarding original sin and the incorrigibility of human nature. Instead of relying upon God’s grace to redeem sin as St. Augustine does, they subject Alex to the Ludovico Technique, a fictional procedure that behaviorally conditions Alex to associate violence with nausea. By thus depriving Alex of his free will, the Ludovico Technique perfects the surveillance of the modern state Michel Foucault describes in his essay, “Panopticism.” It does so by insidiously forcing Alex to internalize that all-seeing panoptic gaze so that nothing he thinks or does is hidden from its disciplinary mechanism. The Ludovico Technique also horrifically engineers a new Freudian super ego, or conscience, for Alex that controls the powerful instinctual aggression of his id. Although Alex no longer commits criminal acts, he still has illicit desires that prevent him from doing the right thing for the right reason. By thereby denying Alex’s ability to do evil, the authoritarian state in the movie also deprives Alex of his ability to affirm his humanity by exercising moral and aesthetic choice. Like Dostoevsky’s Grand Inquisitor, it does so because it regards security as a greater good than freedom. But extinguishing the power to do evil also paradoxically denies the capacity to choose the good as well as the aesthetically beautiful. In this manner, the Ludovico Technique in Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange becomes a crime against humanity—an act of repressive social engineering that reveals that freedom is more important than security and that evil is a necessary good since choice is a sine qua non of our humanity.

In his essay “Human Perfectibility, Dystopias, and Violence,” Anthony Burgess uses St. Augustine’s postulation of Original Sin to frame
our understanding of Alex’s criminality. As Burgess explains, Augustine believes that “man enters the world in a state of ‘original sin,’ which he is powerless to overcome by his own efforts alone: he needs Christ’s redemption and God’s grace.”3 Augustine’s concept of peccatum originale ("original sin") might strike some as an odd theoretical lens to approach the distinctly modern dystopia of Kubrick’s film. Yet, in Kubrick’s film the government officials are neo-Augustinians who believe that criminals lack the ability to reform themselves just as Augustine believed humanity to be a massa damnata (mass of sin) with an “abiding inclination to turn from God.”4 These bureaucrats, however, do not believe in the redemptive grace of God’s mercy. Instead they rely upon the external intervention of the Ludovico Technique to cure what they regard as Alex’s otherwise irremediable criminality. In doing so, they monstrously experiment on Alex. Dr. Brodsky—the creator of the Ludovico Technique—subjects Alex to an aversion therapy akin to psychological water boarding. His assistant administers a drug that causes Alex to “experience a death-like paralysis together with deep feelings of terror and helplessness … a sense of stifling and drowning.”5 Alex is then behaviorally conditioned to associate this crippling terror with crime as he is forced to watch violent movies in “a straight-jacket” and with “lidlocks” that stop him from shutting his eyes.6 This aversion therapy prevents Alex from committing crimes by denying him the ability to exercise free will. As Pat J. Gehrke observes in his essay “Deviant Subjects in Foucault and A Clockwork Orange: Congruent Critiques of Criminological Constructions of Subjectivity,” “the doctors convert Alex into a model member of society—a ‘clockwork orange.’ He is sweet, bright, and delicious on the outside, but on the inside, he is just a wind-up toy ... for ... science and the state.”7 The ironic result is that the state, through Dr. Brodsky, attempts to control the monstrosity of Alex’s criminality only to grotesquely pervert his humanity. In this manner, the state becomes even more monstrous than Alex.

The full extent of these monstrosities becomes more evident when we view the Ludovico Technique through the interpretative lens of Foucault’s Panopticon. As Gehrke discerns, the Ludovico Technique constructs what Foucault might call a new “subjectivity” for Alex.8 Before the Ludovico Technique, Alex maintained the privacy of his thoughts and the inner sanctum of his own subjectivity. Thus, Gehrke discusses how Alex’s interior musings initially “resist this panoptic gaze”9 of his prison guards when he appears to be piously reading the Bible even as he is actually fantasizing about “nailing” Christ to the cross “dressed in the height of Roman fashion.”10 With the Ludovico Technique, however, Alex can no longer hide even his most private thoughts from the disciplinary mechanism of the state. In fact, he need only contemplate a criminal act to trigger the crippling nausea these thoughts cause after his treatment. In this manner, the Ludovico Technique dehumanizes Alex by denying him the ability to directly access his private thoughts and desires necessary to define the scope of his own subjectivity. As Burgess’ Alex says in A Clockwork Orange, “the not-self cannot have the bad, meaning [that] they of the government ... cannot allow the bad because they cannot allow the self.”11

In this manner, the Ludovico Treatment may terrifyingly perfect Foucault’s panoptic mechanism. In the dystopian near future of the film, the modern surveillance state has metastasized far beyond Jeremy Bentham’s original panoptic architectural design of an unseen guard watching all of a prison’s inmates from a tower. In fact, the Ludovico Technique may render that kind of Benthamite external observation obsolete. In the process, it may consummately represent Foucault’s panopticism because the “perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary.”12 By forcing Alex to internalize the controlling external gaze of the “disciplinary state,”13 the Ludovico Technique ensures that Alex “becomes the principle of his own subjection.”14 Because everything Alex thinks and does is perfectly transparent to him, nothing
can escape the all-seeing, yet unseen, panoptic
gaze of the Ludovico Technique that commands
Alex’s subjectivity. As a result, Alex is no longer
what Michael P. Lynch calls, “an autonomous
person … capable of having privileged access … to information about [his] psychological pro-
file;” indeed, Alex cannot directly approach his
“hopes, dreams, and beliefs.”15 Instead, he looks
inside himself only to experience the ever pres-
ent, yet never seen, face of the Ludovico Tech-
nique monstrously controlling his thoughts.

One might regard the film as presenting the
viewer with a simple political choice between
authoritarians who deny freedom and liberals
who affirm liberty; however, these positions
overlap in the film due to what Burgess calls
Orwellian “doublethink,”16 or the ability to hold
authoritarian and liberal views at the same time.
The state officials subject Alex to the authoritar-
ian Ludovico Technique because they believe he
lacks the free will to reform himself. Yet, these
bureaucrats simultaneously exercise their free
will to eliminate crime and therefore seek to per-
fect human nature in accordance with their dis-
torted views of society. The liberals in the film
are guilty of doublespeak as well. They profess
their concern for Alex’s free will, yet they kidnap
Alex and use the Ludovico Technique against
him. They know the Ludovico Technique has
left Alex with an aversion to Beethoven’s Ninth
Symphony. Still they induce Alex to attempt
suicide by forcing him to listen to Beethoven’s
Ninth Symphony in a locked room where his
only opportunity to escape is to jump from a sec-
ond-story window. Even after Alex survives this
fall, these Orwellian liberals regard him as noth-
ing more than an involuntary martyr for their
cause. In short, neither these liberals nor the au-
thoritarians in the film recognize Alex’s dignity
as a human being. They each use him as a means
to achieve the political ends they seek. As Illya
Lichtenberg, Howard Lune, and Patrick McMan-
imon observe in their essay “‘Darker than Any
Prison, Hotter than Any Human Flame’: Punish-
ment, Choice, and Culpability in A Clockwork Or-
ange”, Alex becomes “an object of manipulation
in which the most relevant factor was not his
state of being—either cured or penitent—but his
utility to the institutions of power.”17

Some might attempt to morally justify the tor-
ture of Alex with a utilitarian approach, arguing
that the Ludovico Technique provides the great-
est happiness to the greatest number of people.
The authoritarians in the film, for example, can
assert that the benefit of using the Ludovico Tech-
nique to “restore law and order”18 outweighs the
detriment of denying Alex’s freedom. It might be
different if the penal system actually reformed
criminals, but as the government minister in the
film says, “cram criminals together and what do
you get—concentrated criminality … crime in
the midst of punishment.”19 Hence, he considers
the Ludovico Technique the most effective means
of reform because it “kill[s] the criminal reflex.”20

The liberals in the movie invoke utilitarianism as
well. The liberal activist, Mr. Alexander, observes
how Alex’s coerced suicide “can be the most po-
tent weapon imaginable” because it will belie
the “Government’s great boast” that it has “dealt
with crime.”21 As a result, Burgess plays the
devil’s advocate to suggest that the world would
have been a far better place if “Adolph Hitler
had been forced to undergo aversion therapy, so
that the very thought of a new putsch or pogrom
would make him sick up his cream cakes.”22

Nevertheless, the film suggests that the
Ludovico Technique would not save the world
from another Hitler; instead, the above analysis
reveals how the Ludovico Technique creates a
monstrous disciplinary mechanism that enables
totalitarians on both the right and the left to exer-
cise mind control to serve their political ends. In
doing so, Kubrick exposes how the utilitarianism
of the Ludovico Treatment may simply go too far.
As the philosopher Michael J. Sandel suggests in
his book Justice: What’s the Right Thing to Do, “hu-
man rights and human dignity have a moral ba-
sis that lies beyond utility.”23 If so, dehumanizing
Alex as a necessary means to an end cannot be
morally justified regardless of one’s political per-
spective because there may come a point when
human dignity should always trump utility.
The Ludovico Technique becomes even more morally repulsive when analyzed in Freudian terms as an attempt to engineer a new super ego, or conscience, for Alex. Kubrick raises this possibility in an interview with Philip Strick and Penelope Houston where he describes Alex in Freudian terms as a "creature of the id." As Freud observes in Civilization and its Discontents, the id contains "... man's natural aggressive instinct, the hostility of each against all and of all against each that opposes this programme of civilization." Normally, the conscience of the super-ego serves as the "most important" inhibition against this aggressive instinct, but as Alex is a remorseless criminal, the Ludovico Technique creates a new and monstrously more effective super-ego for him. Thus, where civilization depends on the power of the super-ego "to render his desire for aggression innocuous," the Ludovico Technique restrains Alex's instinctual violence. Where the super-ego "introject[s] and "internalize[s]" the violent urges of the id by turning them against the ego in the form of "guilt [that] expresses itself as a need for punishment," the Ludovico Technique redirects Alex's violence against himself in the form of punishing nausea. And where the super-ego observes the id "like a garrison in a conquered city," we have observed how the Ludovico Technique functions as a panoptic mechanism where "nothing can be hidden from the super-ego, not even thoughts." The result is that the Ludovico Technique creates a new and terrifyingly effective super-ego for Alex—one that exercises thought control over Alex by completely governing the violent instinctual urges of his id.

By creating this new and unnatural super-ego, the Ludovico Treatment establishes a gap between Alex's intentions and his actions in his loss of free will. As Lichtenberg, Lune and McManimon note, Alex is "impelled towards good by paradoxically being impelled toward evil, with the physical symptoms of illness leading him from violent desire to a diametrically opposed attitude." Alex's inability to exercise his free will leads the prison priest to conclude that the Ludovico Technique has deprived Alex of the ability to exercise moral choice, while the Justice Minister dismisses the priest's concerns by refusing to concern himself with "subtleties" such as "the distinction between action and intent." He even claims that Alex "will be your true Christian, ready to turn the other cheek. Ready to be crucified rather than crucify." The problem is that the Ludovico Technique has rendered Alex incapable of exercising what the Gospel of Matthew calls higher righteousness; this gospel teaches how Jesus cares for a person's intentions as well as their deeds. Consequently, it is not enough for the Ludovico Technique to prevent Alex from committing murder—it must also redeem Alex by causing him to give up the evils of anger, lust, and hate; however, it fails to extinguish Alex's evil intentions. Instead, it ensures that Alex will never achieve higher righteousness by denying him the redemptive freedom to choose the right thing for the right reason.

One might argue, however, that the higher righteousness Jesus preaches in the Gospel of Matthew expects too much of humanity, a possibility which Fyodor Dostoyevsky explores in the "Grand Inquisitor" section of his novel, The Brothers Karamazov. The character Ivan tells a story about how Jesus visited earth and was imprisoned by the Grand Inquisitor of the Spanish Inquisition. The Grand Inquisitor provocatively claims that Jesus showed a lack of compassion when he asked humanity to freely follow him because "nothing has ever been more unendurable to man and human society than freedom." If Jesus, for example, had succumbed to the Devil's temptation to "purchase the obedience" of humanity with "loaves ... [of] bread," Jesus would have fed the needy; however, as in Matthew 4:4, by preaching that "man shall not live by bread alone," Jesus left countless millions starving for spiritual sustenance because they were "not strong enough to disdain the earthly bread for the heavenly sort." As a result, Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor attempts to correct Jesus' "mistake" by providing security instead of freedom—an action the authoritarian state in the
movie mimics in its promise to restore law and order through the Ludovico Technique. As the character Mr. Alexander recognizes, the lure of this promised security is both powerful and seductive; thus, he observes, “the common people will … sell liberty for a quieter life.”

Kubrick’s film, however, is not willing to sell liberty even if it means accepting criminal evil at the expense of security. Kubrick refuses to sugar coat or ignore the problem of evil, as he said, “Alex makes no attempt to deceive himself or the audience as to his total corruption and wickedness.” Nor does Kubrick ignore the crisis of criminal violence: even the tramp at the beginning of the film suggests that we all live in a “stinking world” where there is “no law and order anymore.”

The evil of Alex’s criminality paradoxically becomes a necessary good in the film, as the facility of choice defines what it means to be human. The prison priest, who acts as the film’s conscience, makes this clear when he tells Alex, “When a man cannot choose, he ceases to be a man.” However, this does not mean that Alex has complete freedom of choice; as Burgess humorously observes in his novel A Clockwork Testament, we are only “Freeish.” We are not “free to drink a quart of whiskey without vomiting,” but rather free with respect to what really “matter[s]”—choosing between “good and evil.” If we trade this essential freedom for security as Dostoevsky’s Grand Inquisitor suggests, we relinquish our humanity.

One might argue that this choice enables Alex to turn himself into a monstrously unrepentant criminal, not a moral human being, yet the fact that the film ends with Alex horrifically contemplating a crime spree does not mean that he will never choose the moral good. Indeed, Alex envisions this possibility when he imagines leaving crime behind to become a husband and father at the end of Burgess’ novel. Nor does it make Alex incapable of choosing the “aesthetic good.” The Alex who murders and rapes also loves Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. His visions of “bliss and heaven” when he listens to Beethoven’s Ninth suggests that he may have spirituality. His ability to experience the beauty of Beethoven’s music may even allow him to glimpse God, whom Burgess intriguingly describes as a “big symphony … all bound into one big unity … that plays itself for ever and ever … a kind of infinite Ninth Symphony.” The Ludovico Technique, however, denies Alex the ability to choose this aesthetic good because it has also inadvertently conditioned him to recoil whenever he hears Beethoven’s Ninth. Thus, the music that once divinely transported Alex makes him violently ill instead after he undergoes the Ludovico Technique.

Therein lies the monstrousity of the Ludovico Technique in A Clockwork Orange. It attempts to solve the problem of Augustine’s Original Sin, but it creates a frighteningly powerful panoptic mechanism and Freudian super-ego that deny Alex’s ability to choose moral good and define his humanity and rob Alex of his divine inspiration from Beethoven’s Ninth. Therefore, the authoritarian state in the film commits a “double sin” against human nature. It extirpates Alex’s potential to be both a “human being … [and] an angel.” In doing so, it paradoxically suggests that Alex can neither be human nor experience the divine unless he has the ability to choose, even if his choice is monstrous evil. The result is an illuminating intersection of monstrosities. Alex becomes a monster through the criminal acts he freely performs, but the state becomes an even bigger monster by using the Ludovico Technique to control Alex’s moral choice and deaden his ability to experience aesthetic beauty. Though Dostoevsky’s Grand Inquisitor would disagree, Kubrick’s film chooses freedom over security. It affirms that, “it is necessary for man to have a choice to be good or evil, even if he chooses evil. To deprive him of this choice is to make him something less than human – a clockwork orange.”

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Despair, an early work of Vladimir Nabokov, is a powerful tale of madness, obsession and despondency masterfully woven yet profoundly and strategically understated. The reader completes the novel with the feeling that what she has just read is incredibly disturbing, and yet the narrator, Hermann Karlovich, consistently endeavors to normalize the entire story and soften the true extent of consuming lunacy, an undercurrent that boils just below the novel’s surface. What follows is an examination of the fractures in Hermann’s sanity, imbalances that ultimately cause him to misconstrue reality and murder a stranger he believes to be his double. Additionally, there is the exploration of the metaphorical and literal significance of art in the text as well as its importance to Hermann, who sees himself as a master artist poised to create a masterpiece: cold-blooded murder. In Nabokov’s Despair, art and insanity are inextricably intertwined: Hermann kills Felix in a desperate attempt to extricate himself from the insanity consuming him, but his crime only makes him realize that his artistic vision is a failure, sending him down the path of despair.

In Despair, Nabokov exploits the recurring motif of duality, strategically inculcating it into the very fibers of the text. Hermann’s unreliable narration itself purveys the duality of doubt: are the events being told as they truly occurred? Are the characters truly as Hermann describes them to be? It is from this untrustworthy narration that the reader discerns the fluctuations in sanity that Hermann undergoes throughout the novel. For instance, his uncanny habit of visualizing similarities in completely dissimilar objects asserts itself most notably when Hermann visits a tobacco shop while awaiting Felix, and believes he spots one of Ardalion’s paintings: “a tobacco pipe, on green cloth, and two roses.” Upon questioning the tobacconist, he discovers that her niece is the painter. Convinced that he has seen something “very similar, if not identical, among Ardalion’s pictures”, Hermann tries to locate the painting immediately upon returning home. Once he finds what he is seeking, “it turn[ed] out, however, to be not quite two roses and not quite a pipe, but a couple of large peaches and a glass ashtray.” These as well as other, similar inconsistencies in Hermann’s perception of reality acutely demarcate the lapses in his sanity. To mistake a glass ashtray for a tobacco pipe and two large peaches for two roses is more than an error of faulty human memory. Hermann’s sincere belief that Ardalion’s painting is quite possibly identical to the tobacconist’s painting demonstrates that at this precise moment, he is misconstruing reality. His subsequent recognition that Ardalion’s picture is different from the one hanging in the shop therefore illustrates that his regular perception of reality has returned. Michel Sirvent further
The Art of Insanity in Vladimir Nabokov’s Despair

illustrates the importance of Ardalion’s art for recognizing Hermann’s true nature. Hermann’s inability to see his own likeness in the portrait Ardalion has painted of him demonstrates “the reversal of the producer/production relationship (writer/reader, or painter/model) as exemplified by Hermann’s misreading of his likeness with Felix.”4 It is in these small details that Nabokov hides the sometimes barely perceptible shifts in Hermann’s mental capacities.

The most immediately evident and also most important fracture in Hermann’s sanity occurs after the murder takes place, when he fled to Pignan and booked rooms under Felix’s name. The realization that police investigators in Germany have located Felix’s walking stick, which “[settles] the murdered man’s identity,” is the breaking point for Hermann.5 No longer can he pretend that his murder will go unsolved, no longer does the imagined physical similarity between himself and Felix matter. Hermann is no longer God, taking lives as he sees fit—he’s scheme falls apart due to a simple human error. As he expresses it: “...the thought that the whole of my masterpiece, which I had devised and worked out with such minute care, was now destroyed intrinsically, was turned into a little heap of mould, by reason of the mistake I had committed.”6 It is in this cathartic moment that Hermann finally calls into question the fundamental basis of the scheme: was Felix ever truly his double? The German police have already “expressed their surprise at [Hermann’s] having hoped to deceive the world simply by dressing up in [his] clothes an individual who was not in the least like [him].”7 Hermann thinks bemusedly: “Even if his corpse had passed for mine...”8 Such a phrase harks back to the case of Ardalion’s painting. Just as in that instance, Hermann realizes that a perceived similarity is in fact a grotesque misconstruction of reality. He falls “to doubting everything, doubting essentials...” as he comes to distrust the entire reality around him.9 As Ardalion confirms to him in his letter, “in the whole world there are not and cannot be, two men alike, however well you disguise them.”10 As the final piece of evidence that he has been trapped in a fractured mental state slides into place, Hermann’s faculties disintegrate. While reading the letter, “such a fit of trembling possessed [his] body, that all things around [him] started shaking; the table; the tumbler on the table; even the mousetrap in the corner of [his] new room.”11 The culmination comes when Hermann says that Felix made a “nasty-coloured death mask...of [Hermann’s] face...a fine likeness...”12 In this bitter admission that Felix was truly a distinct individual, Hermann’s narration betrays self-directed anger and resentment for so profoundly distorting reality. He ends the passage by proclaiming, “all go to the devil!”13

Hermann’s delusions about Felix as his double, as Ewa Mazierska argues, are born from his desire to escape: “in Despair Nabokov attempts to develop certain motifs...The most important of them is the motif of a man’s attempt to escape from himself: his social position, his psychological limitations, his past—his whole identity.”14 She identifies the central motivations for Hermann’s impulse as economic gain, sexual liberation, artistic creation, and “his desire to cross the boundaries of his self...as a means to save himself from death.”15 However, given the constant shifts between the sane and insane versions of Hermann, it is more plausible that Hermann desperately seeks to disentangle his sane self from his insane one. Recognizing himself to be internally divided, Hermann becomes deluded into perceiving Felix as an external division of himself. Just as he encounters similarity in two unrelated paintings, so too does Hermann experience similarity in himself and Felix. His constant division of the world into identical halves reflects his internal schism, and indeed he describes himself as being “all alone in a treacherous world of reflections.”16 In order to extricate himself from his insanity, Hermann employs the cathartic action of murder—by eliminating his perceived physical externality, he may also eradicate his insanity.

Felix becomes irrevocably entangled in the constant fluctuations in Hermann’s sanity. From their very first meeting, Hermann’s state
of mind is in question. When he stumbles upon the sleeping Felix, Hermann himself concedes that “[he] doubted the reality of what [he] saw, doubted [his] own sanity, felt sick and faint...”17 He then reveals how “while [he] looked, everything within [him] seemed to lose hold and come hurtling down from a height of ten stories.”18 Finally, as he describes himself walking along thinking of nothing in particular before coming upon the tramp Felix, he says that “a clever Lett whom [he] used to know in Moscow in 1919 said to [him] once that the clouds of brooding which occasionally and without any reason came over [him] were a sure sign of [his] ending in a madhouse.”19 Hermann admits that the “frolics of the intuition, artistic vision, inspiration... may...strike the layman...as the preface of mild lunacy.”20 From the beginning, the relationship between Felix and Hermann is overcast with the dark shadow of madness.

Given that Hermann freely admits to displaying several signs of a fractured mental state, it is no wonder that he should be frantic to emancipate himself from insanity. Following his admission about “the preface of mild lunacy,” Hermann enumerates his strengths: “[his] health is perfect, [his] body both clean within and without, [his] gait easy; [He] neither drink[s] nor smoke[s] excessively, nor [does he] live in riot.”21 However, good physical health is not the same as sanity, and Hermann knows this. Following his meeting with Felix, he calls the entire concept of the double into question but ultimately decides he is correct, saying that he is “in a better position than others to notice [his] double” because he “knew and liked [his] own face” and “not everyone...is so observant.”22 Unfortunately, Felix disagrees with Hermann’s idea that they are identical. As Hermann’s narration is transparently unreliable from the start, the reader presumes that there is a high probability that the two are indeed not identical. Hermann himself appears unconvinced, as can be seen in the poorly concealed anxiety in his exclamation to the reader: “How I long to convince you! And I will, I will convince you! I will force you all, you rogues, to believe...”23 The plea is clear: if Hermann is delusional and imagines Felix’s similarity, then he is mad. For a controlling, narcissistic man, having such a deep and tragic flaw as insanity is both unacceptable and profoundly distressing. By murdering Felix, Hermann rids himself of the living, breathing reminder of his insanity. Indeed, he may have only become aware of the extent of his madness when he meets Felix and truly questions his construction of reality. Therefore, Hermann comes to believe that Felix is the root cause of this madness and that, by murdering Felix, he will so rid himself of his lunacy.

Hermann’s passion for “artistic creation,” noted by Mazierska, is a central feature of Despair. It is a salient point that many have analyzed: for example, Karin Olson explains that, “The artist creates an individualized world out of the fragments of reality that surround him and in order to accomplish this ‘he must possess the inborn capacity not only of recombining but of re-creating the world.’”24 She goes on to state that Nabokov’s “art demonstrates a serious attempt to examine the structure of human perception, the internal processes through which we become what we are and create our individual realities in that image.”25 In the case of Hermann, it is evident that upon realizing that “the fragments of reality that surround him” are not to be trusted after meeting Felix, he attempts to “re-create [his] world” and purge himself of his flagitious secret. He is, as Olson says, “creat[ing] [his] individual realit[y]”, trying to exorcise his madness in an effort to truly make himself as perfect as possible.

There are two works of art in Despair: the murder of Felix, and the novel itself. The creation of art may be divided into three different steps: the proposal/premise, the acting out, and the reflection. Both works of art in Despair fit neatly into this process. As Misty Hickson explains, Hermann’s desire for perfection and resulting obsession is an attempt to fill a personal void, but only leads to more acute anguish.26 Hermann appeals to the audience to see him as
“a [person] who truly sees reality”, rather than a madman. By contrast, his memories, which comprise the tale and which are formed from his madness, “are often constructions made to fit [his] distorted tale.”

Writing the novel is Hermann’s first work. He proposes from the start that he is not mad, and desperately begs the reader to accept this premise: “How I long to convince you! And I will convince you! I will force you all, you rogues, to believe…” Although this passage directly attempts to convince readers that Felix is Hermann’s double, it also indirectly attempts to convince them that Hermann is mentally sound. If Felix is not Hermann’s double, then Hermann is delusional and therefore mad. Thus, by begging the audience to believe his claim about his double, Hermann is actually begging the audience to believe that he is not misconstruing reality and that his narration is trustworthy.

Of course, the novel itself is a work of art, the creation of which encompasses practically the entire text. The act of writing is Hermann’s tale of self-discovery: by the end of the text, at the moment of self-reflection, Hermann realizes that his grandiose artistic vision is void. Beginning with the novel’s opening lines, he infuses the work with the rhetoric of an artist: “If I were not perfectly sure of my power to write and of my marvellous ability to express ideas with the utmost grace and vividness...The gift of penetrating life’s devices, an innate disposition toward the constant exercise of the creative faculty...” As Misty Hickson explains, Hermann speaks as an artist to his audience of readers, “elucidating the stylistics of [his] written art and [his] art of life.” This is clearly demonstrated when Hermann says that he is “both painter and model, so [it is] no wonder [his] style is denied the blessed grace of spontaneity.” His habit of identifying the colors of all objects around him is reminiscent of a painter as well: his “delightful little car—a dark-blue two seater,” his “silver pencil,” “a golden cigarette-end,” and “several emerald flies” are only a miniature handful of examples from the entire text. Thus, Hermann creates both a written and a visual record of his artistic vision for the reader to appreciate.

The final pages of the novel comprise his reflection and ultimate realization that his entire artistic vision is null. While Hermann first toys with sending his manuscript to a “penetrating novelist” or to “some editor—German, French, or American”, hoping for its publication, by the end he disparages his own writing. He admits that “[his] tale degenerates into a diary... [which] is the lowest form of literature.” The declaration of his own work as “lame” is telling of how Hermann has grown to identify his own failure to produce a truly magnificent work of art. His last speech, delivered to the inhabitants of the small town he has exiled himself to, is the most revealing. He labels his performance “a rehearsal”, and in this theatrical fashion steps down from his post as godlike artist. His final words—“That’s all. Thank you. I’m coming out now” constitute a bathetic ending to his masterpiece. In choosing to end the text on an apologetic note, Hermann indirectly admits to his failure as an artist as well as to the bankruptcy of his entire premise. With the crumbling of the premise comes an implicit acceptance of his madness. Hermann turns himself in to the police, descending placidly from his room into the arms of justice, understanding that the great game is finished, and finally accepting his lunacy.

Felix’s murder reveals a similar tripartite structure but simultaneously provides a reversed mirror image of the premise of the novel itself. As shown, the novel’s most essential premise is that Hermann is sane. By contrast, the premise underlying Felix’s murder is that Hermann, by expunging the living reminder that he is delusional, will destroy his insane half. Ironically, a novel that tries to justify the sanity of the writer is based around the murder of the writer’s personal deceptions.

If the subplot of the novel is Hermann’s realization of his own insanity, then carrying out the actual murder is, effectively, the central plot of the text. Hermann clearly discerns a romantic side to murder, suggesting to readers that he and
they “discuss crime, crime as an art...”. He then goes on to explain the similarities underlying this unlikely pairing: “If the deed is planned and performed correctly, then the force of creative art is such, that were the criminal to give himself up on the very next morning, none would believe him, the invention of art containing far more intrinsic truth than life’s reality.” The suggestion that this “invention of art” (in this case, Felix’s untimely death) contains more intrinsic truth than life’s reality further proves that Hermann is more in tune with his murderous hallucinations than with the world around him.

The comparisons to crime and art become more poignant once Hermann has committed the act, the authorities have discovered the body as well as his car, and the police have launched an investigation. Hermann is truly outraged by the fact that the police and press do not perceive the similarity between himself and Felix:

In getting into their heads that it was not my corpse, they behaved just as a literary critic does, who at the mere sight of a book by an author whom he does not favour, makes up his mind that the book is worthless and thence proceeds to build whatever he wants to build, on the basis of that first gratuitous assumption.

He calls his crime “my masterpiece” and compares it to “a beautiful book.” By means of these ostentatious statements, Hermann makes clear to his readership that he bears no guilty feelings for his murder. His most negative feelings stem from the public’s incomprehension and lack of appreciation for his “masterpiece.”

The harshest moment of artistic self-reflection is found near the end of the novel, when Hermann realizes that the German authorities’ discovery of Felix’s walking stick means that his grand scheme has fallen apart - due to his own human error. It is the crippling realization that he is not the godlike artist that he would like to be, but instead as human as the next man: “... the thought that the whole of my masterpiece, which I had devised and worked out with such minute care, was now destroyed intrinsically... by reason of the mistake I had committed.” The “shattered remains of [his] marvellous thing”, evidence of his failure, prompt the cathartic understanding that he is flawed and cause him to re-evaluate his sanity. In a telling passage he laments: “That mortal inextricable pain... Pointed with his stick. Stick. What words can be twisted out of ‘stick’? Sick, tick, kit, it, is, ski, skit, sit. Abominably cold...What on earth have I done?” His rhetoric is overwhelmingly miserable, and the inclusion of the word “skit” among the words derived from “stick” suggests that Hermann has internalized the fact that his grand scheme is a folly that has come to an end. It presages the end of the novel, when he suggests that his misadventures have all been just a rehearsal, and are ultimately a preamble to his final acceptance of his mental decomposition.

 Accordingly, Nabokov’s Despair becomes a successful work of art by virtue of being built on the ruins of Hermann’s failed artwork. As Hermann explains, the failure of his masterpiece is his greatest fear:

What I feared...was to break down instead of holding on till a certain extraordinary, madly happy, all-solving moment which it was imperative I should attain; the moment of an artist’s triumph; of pride, deliverance, bliss: was my picture a sensational success or was it a dismal flop?

Thus, I agree with Michel Sirvent, who explores the metafictional nature of Hermann’s narration—the simultaneous construction of his text and his masterpiece—as he discusses the relationship between the structure of Despair and its plot. As author Jean Lahouge summarizes:

The life and literary work of Hermann become blurred to the point that, at the end of his story, when he is at bay, when he is no longer in control of events and can no longer construct his own destiny, he is simultaneously reduced to no longer constructing his narrative and to adopting the form of a diary.

The resulting jolt back to reality is contained within the very concept of the double since, as
Lahouge explains, the essence of the double changes. Initially, it constitutes a “novelistic theme,” wherein A and B are identical; however, at the novel’s close this equivalence is undone by the revelation that, in reality A and B are distinct. Although Hermann has worked to hoodwink and persuade his audience into believing in his sanity and as well as in the veracity of his tale, the physical structure of the novel betrays him. The fictitious beginning where Hermann and Felix are indeed identical soon unravels, and the novel becomes a simple diary—rooted in reality, where Hermann’s insanity bleeds through the pages as the reader realizes that the two men are really quite different. The simple narrative transformation from novel to diary tracks with the degradation of Hermann’s mental health.

Thus is the relationship between the sane and the insane permutations of the protagonist Hermann Karlovich in Vladimir Nabokov’s *Despair*, an artistic formulation of Hermann’s search for reprieve from his sanity through the murder of Felix. The most appropriate question raised at the end of the novel is whether Hermann’s final speech, delivered from the window of his rented rooms, indicates his sanity or insanity. The suggestion that all his actions have been a rehearsal, and that he is in reality “a famous film actor,” could be interpreted in both ways. In one view, Hermann is expounding his crime as a rehearsal of his artistic vision and, upon fathoming that it is void and that he is not the god-like entity he imagined, he is announcing the end of his little spree and turning himself in. This is supported by Hermann’s final sentences in which he says “That’s all. Thank you. I’m coming out now.”

The sheepish, meekness of these words suggests that Hermann has come to terms with his wicked actions and has accepted the need to face justice. However, the same passage could also be read as indicative of his having sunk completely into madness and now being unable to cope with the reality that his worst fear— artistic rejection—has come true. He makes a mockery of the policemen, telling the crowd to “Hold those policemen, knock them down, sit on them—we pay them for it.” Hermann has also completely disassociated from the situation, describing himself as “a famous film actor...he is an arch-criminal but he must escape.” Therefore, his comparison of the situation with theatre may not be a finalizing rehearsal of insanity, but instead a tell-tale sign of Hermann’s ailing mind on a desperate quest to salvage the remnants of his artistic vision. It is telling that Nabokov chooses to end the novel with his protagonist caught in limbo between mental and physical imprisonment and freedom, a struggle which Hermann has grappled with throughout the work. He is trapped in the grip of the lunacy he is so desperate to escape—but maybe never will.

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Remembrance and Reconciliation
Reflections on a Conversation with Father Matthew Carnes, S.J.

Perhaps no other moment in Georgetown’s history has proven more profoundly moving, or has inspired greater self-reflection, than the sale of 272 enslaved men, women, and children that occurred in 1838. This event—which was conducted by the Jesuit owners of the University to pay for the school’s debts—has been the subject of intense evaluation and discussion over the last year. From a series of poignant articles in the New York Times, to the exhaustive research conducted by students and staff here at Georgetown, to the myriad emotionally stirring discussions organized in classrooms, seminars, and conferences on campus, these past twelve months have been a time of keen reflection for our student body.

Those attempting to investigate a historical event such as the 1838 sale are faced with a number of difficulties; chief among these is the need to strike a balance between historical reflection and an active confrontation of racism and inequality in our society today. This past month I sat down with Father Matthew Carnes—an esteemed member of the Georgetown community and a member of the University’s Working Group on Slavery, Memory and Reconciliation—to find out how these efforts were going. Over the course of our conversation I was struck by the way the University’s strides towards expiation have begotten novel insights into how we explore instances of discrimination and inequality, both within our own past and in the world around us.

When the Working Group was first formed, one of its salient functions was simply to explore the historical connection between the University and slavery. After all, as Father Carnes noted, “despite the fact that a lot of [this history] is written, it hasn’t been fully explored and certainly hasn’t been owned.” Thus, as the University worked to move forward, it first had to begin by looking back. The Working Group devoted a sizeable portion of its report to a survey history of Georgetown’s relationship with slavery. And a number of the recommendations made by the group, including “[incorporating] the Historical Walking Tour of Black Georgetown into programming for new students” and erecting public memorials to enslaved individuals, deal explicitly with educating the community about these neglected facets of our past.

This educational approach is significant for two reasons. First, it prevents these 272 individuals from being reduced to the role of a mere abstraction. By renaming Mulledy and McSherry Halls as Isaac and Anne Marie Becraft Halls, and by including memorials to the enslaved individuals sold, the University is reminding the world that these were human beings—not simply names on a document. As the report reminds
us, “Isaac was a real person with a name and a family. His labor and his value helped build Georgetown and rescue it from financial crisis.”

The same holds true for Anne Marie Becraft—a tenacious, inspiring leader who founded a school for African-American girls in 1827.

The report’s valuable reminder of the humanity of Isaac stands out for another reason as well: by exploring the history of Georgetown’s relationship with slavery we are reminded of how much we owe the very existence of the University to these enslaved individuals. As Father Carnes observed, in the early 19th century, Thomas Mulledy (the Provincial of the Jesuits and one of the men who carried out the sale) was actively trying to “recruit students just to keep the University open.” Debts were piling up for the Jesuits who owned Georgetown, the plantations intended to finance the school were struggling, and the construction of several new buildings acutely augmented the University’s deficit. Thus, not only was the money from the sale used to fund the University, but it was also used, quite literally, to save the school. And this historical understanding—this knowledge of the condition of the University at the time of the sale—serves to elucidate the true depths of our indebtedness to these 272 individuals. As the Working Group’s report notes, “there is a link between knowledge and reconciliation.”

According to Father Carnes, one of the most significant catalysts for this shift in outlook—in which knowledge of the 1838 sale moved from its nebulous, half-forgotten place in Georgetown’s memory to being the focus of widespread discussion and analysis—is a growing recognition that, on a societal level, “America has not lived up to its promise of achieving a racial equality.” From a mass shooting in a predominantly black church in Charleston, South Carolina, to the killing of unarmed black men by the police, questions of race and systemic injustice have featured prominently in the public discourse. And, as Father Carnes observed, in a society struggling to bridge the cognitive dissonance between the egalitarian principles it espouses, and the unjust realities it faces, it was perhaps inevitable that Georgetown, too, would eventually follow suit. Over the last year we have seen a dialogue on campus—a dialogue that has led us to examine more fully those issues of race, reflection, and reconciliation that challenge and confront us all.

As Father Carnes went on to remark, “[finding] ways of leading a conversation on campus about these issues” was one of the central duties of the Working Group. To do this, the organization coordinated listening circles, arranged a symposium, and, over the course of Emancipation Week, hosted fifteen events in twelve days—all devoted to analyzing the impact of slavery on Georgetown and the broader society.

However, during all of these events, the various members of the Working Group were keenly aware of the temporary nature of their project. The group was, after all, a one-year charge from President DeGioia. As a result, the board had to find ways to ensure the continuity of this dialogue—to guarantee that the lessons we are beginning to learn from this transformative
experience are absorbed and incorporated into the very core of the University’s identity. And for that, the group recognized the need to institutionalize this conversation—to create a vehicle for these discussions to be continued and expanded upon in the future. It was for this reason that the group worked on ensuring that records of the sale—many of which had been left behind in the burgeoning tide of digitization in the 1990s—were made fully and easily available for anyone who wishes to access them. It was also for this reason that the Working Group proposed, in their list of recommendations made to President DeGioia, the creation of an Institute for the Study of Slavery and Its Legacy at Georgetown—an establishment that could work in partnership with existing Georgetown institutions (e.g. the Center for Social Justice) to examine the history and nature of slavery and race relations at the University.

Indeed, as the members of the Working Group realized, it is imperative that the University put institutions in place that can help us understand the ways that the legacy of racial injustice manifests itself in society today—institutions that can grow and evolve alongside our study and understanding. It is also critical that these establishments extend beyond a basic analysis of the sale of 1838. After all, as Father Carnes observed, “the Jesuits didn’t stop owning slaves in 1838.” From slaves rented out for construction projects (such a practice was very common in the neighborhood of Georgetown) to those leased to the University by students to pay for room and board, the institution of slavery remained indelibly wedded to Georgetown long after the 1838 sale.

There is one final area in which the University, based on the recommendations of the Working Group, is seeking to expand: outreach to the descendants of the enslaved individuals. As the Group’s report observes, efforts towards atonement for the sale are complicated because “the parties directly involved in the offenses—perpetrators and victims—are long deceased.”5 However, the echoes of this terrible crime have reverberated on through the corridors of history, directly and deleteriously affecting descendants today. Many of these individuals, whose families were torn apart long ago, have been robbed by this sale—robbed of their past, robbed of their voice throughout history, and robbed of any recognition of their ancestors’ role in helping build the institution of Georgetown University.

Indeed, if we are to fully come to terms with the events of 1838—as well as with Georgetown’s pervasive, abiding history with the institution of slavery—it is crucial that we directly incorporate the voices of descendants in our efforts towards understanding and reconciliation. After all, it is only these individuals who will allow us to comprehend the gravity of our past actions, to truly ascertain how we need to move forward, and to help us continually define Georgetown as a bastion of understanding and inclusion, and not disregard or prejudice. During our conversation Father Carnes shared that one of the most powerful facets of this transformational sojourn has been hearing the voices of descendants—individuals “[who] did not have a voice in the sale, [who] have not had a voice in our history, but now are inviting our community to move in a new direction.” In this way, the voices of these descendants are an invaluable asset in understanding how to foster a holistic and compelling dialogue about Georgetown’s place in both the past and in the future.

Thus, the Working Group—and the subsequent working groups and projects that have been created—have established three key goals in exploring the troubling realities of our past: education, understanding, and continued dialogue. The first has been epitomized in the Group’s efforts towards preservation and memorialization: ensuring that students, staff, and neighbors are aware of the details of both the sale, as well as of the discomfiting legacies of racism within our community. The second necessitates a more holistic evaluation of the themes of slavery and injustice. This means that not only must we analyze the initial sale within the context of

Jacob Dyson
broader historical trends, but we also must bring the voices of descendants in to provide a complete picture, and a clearer path forward, as we continue to grapple with these issues. Finally, through the creation of institutions, studies, and centers, Georgetown is working to actively cultivate dialogue about these significant issues. In doing so, we are ensuring that the story of these 272 enslaved individuals is made, once again, into a profoundly human issue. Through this process, we can only hope to be transformed, humbled, and enriched—to learn about the failings of our past, and to begin to figure out how to move forward into the future.

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Interview with Professor Marcia Chatelain, Associate Professor of History

Professor Marcia Chatelain is associate professor of History and African-American Studies at Georgetown University. A recipient of the Truman Scholarship and a Ford Foundation Diversity Fellow, Professor Chatelain has produced an extensive corpus of work exploring the intersections of race, culture, gender, and history. In her spare time Professor Chatelain also runs a podcast, Office Hours, in which she talks with students about their passions and interests. Professor Chatelain recently spoke with Utraque Unum about topics ranging from her time at Georgetown to podcasts to the purpose of education.

Q: I’ve just have to begin by saying that I’ve been listening to your podcast and I’ve been absolutely loving it.

A: Thanks; it’s a lot of fun.

Q: Actually, that’s really where I wanted to begin. From your work at the University of Oklahoma, to your involvement with the student affairs division at the University of Missouri, you seem to take more of an interest in the lives of students than almost any other professor I’ve met. Here at Georgetown you’ve obviously created Office Hours. So why do you find yourself so drawn to trying to connect with the lives of students?

A: A few reasons. I find students so fun and imaginative and interesting—how could I not? But I think there’s a practical reason, and then there’s a political and social one. The first one is: when I started my career about ten years ago, I heard all of these horrible, scary stories of faculty—particularly women faculty and faculty of color—who would teach students who were really resistant to respecting their authority, their ideas, and the content of their classes. When I was an undergraduate there was a multicultural requirement in one of my majors and I remember the professor who taught that class had such a hard time because people were resistant to even imagining that the world doesn’t operate the way they wanted it to. So when I first started teaching at the University of Oklahoma, I knew I was teaching a population in which most—if not all—of the students had never had a teacher of color, let alone a professor of color. I made it my personal priority to say: ‘if I’m in this environment in which I’m so foreign to everyone, how can I meet my students halfway?’ And so I spent a lot of time driving around the state, getting to
know it. I also really wanted to get to know who my students were as people. I think education is about a relationship where I’m asking a group of people who don’t know me to take the things that are important to me seriously. And I think I owe it to them to at least try and do the same. One of the things that has been really important to me in class is spending time talking to students about things in their world, on their terms, in order to connect them to the things in my world, on my terms. Students know that if you ask me to look at something on YouTube, I’ll look at something on YouTube. I’ll join Snapchat—not because I think Snapchat’s that cool, but because they’re on Snapchat and I think it’s fun. I think that, because of my subject position, I’ve really had to consider what my presence in the classroom means. And I find that the best way of mediating that is by really demonstrating to students that I’m willing to see who they are. This is such an important time in your life. This sets the stage for who you are going to be in the world. I remember the influence my professors had on me. I remember how painful it was when I felt like professors were dismissive or disrespectful of what was important in my life. And I think at the end of the day, education is about showing people what is possible by learning. If you turn them off to the act of learning, then you really cut off one of their avenues to becoming free.

Q: Do you ever find it difficult to bridge the gap between ‘meeting your students halfway,’ and maintaining your place as the teacher?

A: The least important thing for me when I’m teaching is for my students to think I’m smart. I know I’m smart. But what I want my students to know is that I’m human. I don’t really care about being vulnerable—about being human—in front of them. Because what they need to learn is that there are many ways that a person can wield what we call ‘power.’ And I don’t find my power in ignoring them or not being present as a real person. The biggest thing that sometimes happens is a generational divide. I cannot keep up with the things that they think are cool. But I’m willing to find out. I’ll watch *Luke Cage* on Netflix if it allows me to have a larger conversation about the dynamics of race and power. See, we can’t take anything for granted. And we can’t take the fact that students want to go to college or get good grades as something that we can then exploit. We have to cultivate what impact we have on them. And I try to take that very seriously.

Q: And the idea of *Office Hours* specifically, where did that idea come from?

A: I often joke that because I’m a middle-aged liberal professor, all I do is listen to podcasts. I love podcasts because I don’t drive in D.C. I used to drive a lot when I lived in Oklahoma, and driving is awful. So I walk or take the bus to most places. And to pass the time, I listen to podcasts. I was always a fan of NPR’s *This American Life* and I was a huge *Serial* fan—I even hung through season two. What I like is that in a time where we have incredible technology, people just want to be in on an intimate and clear conversation or hear a good story. So I started *Office Hours* for two reasons. One, after I got tenure, I wanted to make sure that I was still learning, and learning how to do new things. Teaching myself how to record and edit the episodes was really important because it was engaging a different part of my brain. The second reason is that over the years, I’ve gotten to know such interesting and beautiful and wonderful students. And I assumed that they were sharing the stuff they were sharing with me with everyone. What I found, however, is that some of my professor friends didn’t know how to engage students at a more personal level. I wanted to model what that relationship could look like. Some of the students I have on the podcast aren’t the ones that everyone knows or who get a lot of attention. But from my perspective they’re so fascinating and interesting that I want everyone to get to know them like I do. It’s so fun—it’s everything that I love about the relationship between student
and teacher. It’s about students finding out that I’m an insecure person just like them, or that I make a lot of mistakes or that there are things that I’m really nerdy about. And we can learn a lot from students. We have to check in on the audience that we’re delivering lectures to. The podcast isn’t something that does anything for me professionally. I can put it on my resume, but no-one cares. It’s not *Serial* and millions of people don’t listen to it. But for the few hundred—maybe a few thousand—listeners we get every week, it helps them know that they’re not alone. And in these times that’s the best thing that we can get reassurance about.

Q: You cover a diverse range of topics in your podcast: everything from race and gender to video games. From talking to Georgetown students, are there any aspects of the community that have surprised you? Is there anything you’ve shifted your perspective on because of these conversations?

A: The one consistent thing on the podcast is the last question: ‘if there was one thing you wish your professors knew about you, what would it be?’ And I think that’s a constant reminder of what an impact we can have on our students. A dismissive comment, turning in a paper without feedback—all of those things can really imprint a message upon students. I’m always surprised by the ways students respect and regard us so much, but also need our validation. We often think they’re so together. Georgetown students are amazing. I have never seen a group of young people who are so ambitious. They care about the world. They want to make a difference. They want to be good people. They want to reflect and discern. They want to tend to their formation as people. And behind all of that are some really painful and difficult experiences that don’t always have a place to be expressed. At the end of the day students will say: ‘I’ve had a really difficult upbringing, so I want to help other people.’

Q: Men and women for others.

A: Right, men and women for others. And I think that’s the thing that’s so funny. I went to a Jesuit high school. And if you don’t already know what a Jesuit, Catholic education can do, then it’s really hard to convince people to invest in that idea. I hope that my podcast shows that if someone plugs into what we’re trying to do on this campus, what our students are able to manifest as a result is amazing. And I guess that’s why I’m always surprised that students look to us for things. I’ve seen that in my personal experience, but I didn’t realize just how widely professors are held in such high esteem. Because at the end of the day we’re just a nerdy kid at the front of the classroom. It’s always a nice reminder of what a difference we really can make.

Q: You talked about these ‘painful experiences’ in the lives of students. And in the last year we’ve seen a number of tragic acts of violence—from Charleston to Baton Rouge—that have shown society that the legacy of racism is far from eradicated. In particular, in response to the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, you crowdsourced Twitter to create Ferguson Syllabus. Where did this idea for a Ferguson Syllabus come from? And, with the flood of responses you got, how did you pick which ones ended up in the final syllabus?

A: What’s great about Ferguson Syllabus is that no one is in charge of it, so everyone’s really in charge of it. I went to college in Missouri. I was an out-of-state kid who had a scholarship to the University of Missouri. I grew up without very much money, so I knew I had to get a scholarship to go to college. And I ended up going to Missouri for the journalism school because it was one of the best in the country. And that’s where I learned what it meant to go to a public university and get all of its best resources while there were citizens in the state—people who had been paying taxes there their whole lives—who couldn’t imagine their children or grandchildren going to the same school that I could go to. That really bothered me. It made me think about who was
responsible for allowing my education to happen and what I owed—in the most literal sense of the word—to the citizens of the state of Missouri. So throughout graduate school I taught a gifted high school program at the campus. I return to Missouri a lot and stay very connected. I think it’s very easy for us to throw away the generosity of others. We get a scholarship and we think: ‘the donors were wealthy so it doesn’t matter,’ or we go to a public university and say: ‘it’s a public good, it doesn’t matter.’ But it does matter. It matters that people worked hard to give you something that they might never be able to have for themselves. So when I saw what was unfolding in Ferguson I thought about all of those people who I’m indebted to. And I had a choice. All of us have a choice. We can either engage in something painful or we can pretend that it’s not happening. Ferguson Syllabus was about this idea that we have power in our classrooms to ask better questions than are sometimes being asked on cable news or in online comment sections. And one of the things that was really important to me was to respect and appreciate the fact that kids in Ferguson wouldn’t have a normal school year. They may not have some normal years for a while.

Q: Even past that one year.

A: Yes. When your town becomes a shorthand for the failures of leadership and the scourge of racism, that’s very real. I just wanted to respectfully say: ‘you’re not alone. People all over are thinking about you and about the complexity of what happened.’ I get into these conversations with trolls—real-life trolls—who say: ‘well, Michael Brown did something bad that day.’ And I say: ‘ok, but what is a human life worth?’ And what does it mean for a corpse to be laying out in a residential street for four hours—for elderly people and young people, for families and friends, to watch someone’s body out on a street? What does that mean? What does that mean about all of us? I think that’s what was breaking my heart: that incredible indifference about this moment and a focus on things that didn’t matter. With Ferguson Syllabus I was simply asking the people closest to me—my colleagues at other colleges and universities—to not let this moment pass. To not forget that this was what was shaping the start of a school year. This is what our students were bringing with them. And we can either acknowledge it, or we can ignore it. To watch people think more creatively about how their classroom connects with a larger world—regardless of what they teach or what discipline they’re in—was really beautiful to see. It was a small, small contribution. But it was an opportunity to say: ‘when bad things happen we go on campus and we think about them critically.’ We don’t get in yelling matches. We don’t say: ‘what about this or that?’ What we do is we think. And we think with each other.

Q: Ferguson Syllabus offers a chance to dive deeper, to have a conversation. So when confronting serious, challenging, and often uncomfortable issues—such as racism or violence—what do you think the roles and duties of educators are?

A: This recent election is teaching us so much. When we normalize violence, abuse, sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, and xenophobia—when we normalize these things and say they are a matter of academic debate—we undermine the whole point of education as a portal to freedom. We talk about difficult things from the place of nuance, not the place of: ‘one person says A and one person says B.’ And I think we have misunderstood what it means to have discourse. Discourse sometimes includes discord, but that doesn’t mean that it’s not important. Personally, I have never had the privilege of not having to talk about things that are difficult—not only because of the subject that I teach and research, but because of the body I inhabit. When I walk into a classroom students will make a number of assumptions about my political orientation. But in the classroom I have the opportunity to demonstrate the places where
my positions are challenged, nuanced, troubled, and not as dogmatic as you would imagine. It’s one thing to imagine me as a caricature of a left-leaning, liberal professor. It’s another for me, as that person, to say: ‘here are the things I really grapple with. Here are the places where I believe in one set of ideals, but am really challenged to think about them.’ That is what it means to have serious conversation. But we don’t validate things that don’t make any sense. Our president-elect just included a white nationalist in his policy advisory team. For me to suggest that there is another side to anti-Semitism is to abuse the power I have in the classroom. Perhaps the larger question is: ‘why is anti-Semitism so submerged within our culture that we don’t have an easy language to say that it’s wrong?’ This is the conversation. And I don’t apologize for it, nor am I troubled by it. Because once we normalize the kind of violence we have seen in this country, we have already lost and there is no point of learning.

Q: Here at Georgetown you served on the Working Group for Slavery, Memory, and Reconciliation. And even though the group was only a one-year charge from President DeGioia, the group’s report enumerated a number of recommendations—ranging from increased memorialization to the creation of an Institute for the Study of Slavery and Its Legacies at Georgetown—that would serve to facilitate an ongoing dialogue about these issues. Would you mind talking a little about these proposals? What factors informed the group’s recommendations?

A: I think the recommendations are a balance between two important impulses. One is to make sure that we don’t get into the act of forgetting about what it means for an institution of this age, size, and prestige to exist. The other is the accountability for the consequences of the institution’s investment—and our nation’s investment—in slavery. Both are difficult for different reasons. The remembering makes people uneasy because it leads to the accountability. And I think the recommendations represent a process of reflection about the various places we see slavery’s touch—upon everything that we do. I think the totality of it, the fact that slavery encircled the entire nation and all of its people, is the part that’s very difficult for some people to understand. But we don’t really have another option if we’re going to move past slavery’s legacy. The recommendations are the result of a year-long reflection, and those recommendations will continue to grow and shape and expand. I hope that they demonstrate that history can be a viable tool for problem-solving in the present, and, more than anything else, that silence does very little for us. Either way we’re living with the consequences, whether we talk about them or not.

Q: One important thing that the University has been doing is reaching out to the descendants of the individuals sold in the 1838 sale. On a broader level, how do we bring in voices from traditionally disenfranchised groups to allow a more holistic conversation to occur?

A: I think the answer is twofold. First, I think we have an incredible opportunity, with the descendant community that has emerged, to learn about what happened after the sale and the consequences it’s had on their family trees. But I think it’s very dangerous to imagine the descendants we see on this campus as the only people who have suffered as a result of slavery. It is very easy for us as a community to welcome individuals who have emerged who are interesting, college-educated people about whom we say: ‘the great tragedy is that there was a time when they couldn’t go to Georgetown.’ If we really want to account for the legacy of slavery we need to account for the young people who can’t finish high school. People who are living in failing conditions. People who have been victims of mass incarceration and police brutality. People who will never hop onto a plane to Georgetown’s campus to talk about their family tree, but who are very much entangled in the consequences of
this institution and the nation’s choices. I think there is an amazing opportunity to grow and heal by knowing the descendant community as they have appeared. But the real transformation happens among the people who will never read the Working Group’s report, or who will never feel like Georgetown is part of their story.

Q: And in what ways can Georgetown serve as a model for other institutions or for other movements towards change?

A: I think Georgetown is doing what a lot of institutions have done before: thinking about how this history animates its future. That’s amazing. Once we normalize talking about slavery as a painful part of our past that informs our present and helps us think about our choices for the future, we’re all better for it. I know other universities are very excited about what’s possible. Before they engage in this process, however, they have to decide whether the community actually wants to grapple with what they’re uncovering. This isn’t like—God, I’m going to date myself—the movie Roots from the 70s. This isn’t Roots, this isn’t about individuals finding their links to universities. This is about structures. This is about things in institutions that are insidious and powerful, and that need reforming.

Q: So, in addition to running a podcast, teaching classes, serving on the Working Group, and everything else you do, you also published a book last year: South Side Girls. In it you looked at Chicago’s Great Migration, recast through the eyes of African-American girls. Would you mind talking a little bit about what drew you to that topic? I know you come from Chicago.

A: Yes, I’m a Chicagoan. I’m not actually from the South Side, though the subjects I study are. Earlier we were talking about the power of education and about teachers having an impact, and I remember once when I was at a graduate seminar one of my advisors said: ‘we write history, not to think about the past, but to grapple with the present.’ That just blew my mind. And I wanted to understand why there was a radio-silence about the impacts of racism and inequality on girls and girlhood. When I was growing up in the 1990s, why had an industry emerged around the idea of imperiled black boys and young men at the real expense of thinking about the ways girls and young women are often collateral damage among these forces? Why does no one think of girls as victims of these really insidious systems? I think our current conversations about where the women and girls are when we talk about police brutality really signal that. And so I wanted to write a story where girls and young women—and their interests and needs—were front and center. I wanted to ask: what does it mean for these girls and young women to be have been part of a movement that was about attaining a greater freedom? What were the mixed emotions that were associated with it? As I get older I realize the value of having mixed emotions. And so much of teaching on a college campus is about how young people grapple with the idea with the idea of a greater sense of freedom and independence—and then the reality of actually having to live that out. It’s that in-between space that this book talks about—this unprecedented moment for African-Americans where they were going to find their freedom, and then they realized what that actually looked like in the North. And what did that mean for girls and young women, who are the most vulnerable of the most vulnerable? This is really my love letter to girls and young women. It’s a reminder that we don’t need to believe that we’re fine when we’re not. I think this election is a reminder of the ways girls and young women are often told: ‘try, but don’t try too hard. You’ll be disciplined.’ And I just wanted to talk about that. I wanted to tell a story that has been researched and told from so many perspectives—the economic issues of the Migration, the political and labor impacts, the family relations—but never with a focus on girls and young women. And I felt like that was an injustice. Now when I go to speaking events people come up to me and say: ‘thank you, this
is my mom’s story,’ or ‘this was my story,’ or ‘this was my family’s story and I never thought about it from this perspective.’ And that’s the whole point of scholarship and teaching: to tell a person who felt like they didn’t matter just how much they do matter—telling them how wonderful and inspirational they are, and how they can recast the way that we think about things.

**Q: So do you have any ideas for topics you want to explore in the future—either in your scholarly work, or in Office Hours?**

**A:** That’s funny, a Georgetown grad gave me the idea to focus on mentoring. So maybe Office Hours season three will be about mentors. I’ve also wanted to do conversations with professors—a sort of Office Hours remix. Someone suggested that I should get interviewed, which would be interesting. I also want to focus a season on life after college—on what it’s like to be in med school or law school, what it’s like to be in a master’s program, or what it’s like to be a teacher or in consulting or finance. Students who are doing the things that are often pathways for Georgetown students. I want to have a conversation about what those are actually like. So that might also be in development for future seasons.

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Endnotes

Tocqueville and the American University
1 Alexis de Tocqueville, Autobiography of 1821.
2 Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, III.1.x.
3 Ibid., III.1.xi.

THE FORUM

The Highest Power to Command: Jean Bodin’s Theory of Indivisible Sovereignty
5 Bodin, On Sovereignty, 2, 4.
6 See ibid., 89.
7 “Thus at the end of edicts and ordinances we see the words, ‘for such is our pleasure,’ which serve to make it understood that the laws of a sovereign prince, even if founded on good and strong reasons, depend solely on his own free will.” See ibid., 13.
8 Ibid., 6-7.
12 Bodin, République, A iii r-v, quoted in Engster, “Jean Bodin.” 476-477.
13 See Engster, 498-499.
14 Ibid., 215.
16 Bodin, On Sovereignty, 10.
17 Ibid., 110.
18 Dunning, “Jean Bodin on Sovereignty,” 96.


21 See Holmes, 13.


23 Holmes, 15-16.


27 See Franklin, 303-306, 324 for a much more robust critique of this type. Unfortunately enough, the necessary constraints on this essay prevent me from offering anything more than a suggestion for further thinking on Bodin.

**Virtue and Justice: A Ciceronian Perspective**


6 *Ibid.*, 441d.


14 *Ibid.*, II.64.


16 See Plato, *Euthyphro*, 5d-e.


18 See *ibid.*, III.89-90.

19 See *ibid.*, II.84 and III.69-70 to compare the two perspectives on the repayments of debts.

“Civil Society” and Judaism: Anti-Semitic Rhetoric in Marx

2 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
8 Ibid., 39.
9 Ibid., 42.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid., 43.
12 Ibid., 35.
13 Ibid.
14 Hook, 103.
15 Kovel, 33.
16 Marx, 48.
17 Ibid., 51.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., 44.
20 Ibid., 48.
22 Marx, 36.
23 Ibid., 40.
24 Ibid., 51.
25 Ibid., 50.
THE ARCHIVE
The Spoils of War: World War I and the Rise of Italian Fascism
4 Morgan, 16.
5 Ibid., 17.
6 Ibid., 18.
7 De Grand, 16.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid., 17.
13 Morgan, 24.
14 Ibid., 24-25.
15 Thompson, 1.
16 Ibid., 2.
Islam During the Pakistan Movement


2 Ibid., 203.

3 Ibid., 262.


7 Friedmann, 162.

8 Ibid., 163.

9 Ibid., 167.

10 Ibid., 165.


13 Friedmann, 170-171.

14 Ibid., 173.

15 Ibid., 174.

16 Ibid., 168-169.

17 Ibid., 161.

18 Ibid., 169.


21 Ibid., 238-239.

22 Ibid., 240.


24 Puri, 592.


28 Ahmad, 13.

29 Ibid., 7.


Ahmad, 14.

Jalal, 4.

Jinnah’s address to the A.I.M.L., Delhi, April 1943, quoted in Jalal, The Sole Spokesman, 96.

Friedmann, 169-170.

Ibid., 170-171.


Ibid.

Ibid.


Ibid., 68.


THE SANCTUARY
On Platonic Mythology

1 This is seen clearly in Socrates’s frustration with Euthyphro, “aren’t we going to examine [this argument] in turn, Euthyphro, to see whether what we said is true? Or are we going to let it alone and accept it from ourselves and from others just as it stands?” (Plato, Euthyphro, 9e).

2 Plato, Euthyphro, 6d-e.

3 Later in the Republic, Socrates will sharply criticize the actions of the mythological gods for setting improper moral and ethical standards for young people in the city (Republic, Book III).

4 Plato, Republic, 392b.


6 Republic, 394c-395b.
10. *Ibid.*, 598c. Here Socrates uses the example of a painting of a carpenter. He argues that some people may believe that the image of the carpenter is truly a carpenter.

11. Recall that Socrates uses the city as an analogy to the soul “writ large” and so he frequently uses political language in an analogous way to the ordering of one’s soul.


17. Schall, x.


**A Kuyerian Manifesto for Contemporary American Christianity**

1. Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) was a Dutch Reformed theologian and an Anti-Revolutionary Party politician from the Netherlands.


4. Kuyper thinks Roman Catholicism is an entirely separate faith from Calvinism.


11. Examples include “incorporating new congregations, redrawing parish boundaries, church buildings, baptismal registries, the solemnization of marriages, establishing schools,” *Ibid*.


Since Abraham Kuyper is a theologian of the Reformed Christian tradition, all references to God, Christ, Scripture, Bible, and the like should be assumed in the same tradition unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Kuyper, *Our Program*, 381.

**THE PARLOR**

**Greece Driven Mad: Portrayals of Barbarism in Euripides**


3 Ibid., 1399-1400.

4 Ibid., 373-4.

5 Ibid., 1274-5.

6 Ibid., 1407-8.

7 Ibid., 398-9.

8 Ibid., 807-8, 533-4.

9 Ibid., 928-9, 952.

10 Ibid., 969-70.

11 Ibid., 1352.


13 Ibid., 305-6.

14 Ibid., 240-1.

15 Ibid., 344-5.

16 Ibid., 347-8.

17 Ibid., 566.

18 Ibid., 579-80.

19 Ibid., 754-5.

20 Ibid., 713.

21 Ibid., 90-1.

22 Ibid., 790-1; 869.


Hec., 1077.

Ibid., 1169.

Ibid., 1045, 1129.

Burnett, 172.

Hec. 1265.

Ibid., 611-2.


Ibid., 389-90.

Ibid., 87, 88.


IT, 23.

Ibid., 406-7.

Ibid., 620, 1281.

Ibid., 663-4.

Ibid., 1284.

Ibid., 1369-70.

Ibid., 1520-1.

Ibid., 1612-3.

Ibid., 1619-20.

The Monstrous State and the Malevolent Criminal: Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange


Kubrick, 38.
8 Ibid., 271.
9 Ibid., 276.
10 Kubrick, 29.
11 Ibid.
12 Foucault, 555.
13 Ibid., 557.
14 Ibid., 556.
16 Burgess, “Human Perfectibility, Dystopias, and Violence,” 158.
18 Kubrick, 43.
19 Ibid. 33.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid. 56.
26 Ibid., 83.
27 Ibid., 84.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., 86.
31 Lichtenberg et al., 439.
32 Ibid., 439.
33 Ibid.
37 Ibid., 330.
38 Ibid.
39 Kubrick, 56.
40 Strick and Houston, 322.
41 Kubrick, 3.
42 Ibid., 31.
44 Ibid.
46 Burgess, “Human Perfectibility, Dystopias, and Violence,” 159.
47 Kubrick, 9.
50 Ibid., 163.
51 Strick and Houston, “Interview with Stanley Kubrick,” 322.

The Art of Insanity in Vladimir Nabokov’s Despair
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., 105.
5 Nabokov, 199.
6 Ibid., 203.
7 Ibid., 191.
8 Ibid., 203.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., 205.
11 Ibid., 207.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ewa Mazierska, “Escape into a Different Person, Escape into a Different Reality: Despair by Vladimir Nabokov and Rainer Werner Fassbinder.” Journal of Adaptation in Film & Performance 3, no. 1 (March 2010), 32.
15 Ibid.
Nabokov, 183.

Ibid., 7.

Ibid.

Ibid., 8.

Ibid.

Ibid., 9.

Ibid., 15.

Ibid., 16.


Ibid., 5.

Misty Lee Hickson, “Perilous Refuge: Art and Obsession in Three Novels by Vladimir Nabokov” (MS: Mississippi State UP, 1999), 2.

Ibid.

Ibid., 3.

Nabokov, 16.

Ibid., 3.

Hickson, 5.

Nabokov, 19.

Ibid.

Ibid., 13.

Ibid., 17.

Ibid.

Ibid., 157.

Ibid., 208.

Ibid., 211.

Ibid., 121.

Ibid., 122.

Ibid., 191-2.

Ibid., 192.

Ibid., 203.

Ibid., 201.

Ibid., 183.

Sirvent, 261.

Ibid.

Nabokov, 212.

Ibid.

Ibid.
THE CLOCK TOWER

Remembrance and Reconciliation: Reflections on a Conversation with Father Matthew Carnes


2 Ibid., 47.

3 Ibid., 24.

4 Ibid., 51.

5 Ibid., 26.