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Editor's Note

For centuries, the Atlantic Ocean has served as the world's major corridor for the exchange of people, ideas, commodities, and technologies between the continents. In the past few decades scholars have come to realize the important function the Atlantic Ocean has served in connecting the continents, in furthering exchange and a sharing of ideas, people, and goods. This renewed focus on transatlantic experiences has engendered a host of excellent and valuable scholarship and thus cemented its role as a vital component for the field of history.

Acknowledging the significance of transatlantic exchange for the study of history, Florida International University's Department of History Graduate Student Association seeks out and supports fresh scholarship with a transatlantic perspective. In addition to this annual academic publication, the Graduate Student Association also sponsors academic events and holds an annual academic conference to contribute to the advancement of the field of Atlantic History.

This year's *Atlantic Millennium* showcases scholars' original research focusing on aspects of the transatlantic world, spanning a wide range of topics, from the depiction of slave revolts in both film and literature to the theological shifts occurring in modern America. I would like to thank all contributors to this volume for your support and dedication to continuing our mission and furthering the field of atlantic history.

We would like to express a special thank you to Dr. Kirsten Wood, Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Victor Uribe, Chair of the Department of History, and the faculty of the Department of History for their strong dedication to our graduate program and supporting the professional development of our students. We are grateful to FIU's Council for Student Organizations, Department of Campus Life, and Activities & Services Business Office for their funding of this publication.

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Jordan Malfoy
Editor

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Sven Kube

Florida International University

A Clash of Civilizations: Representations of Race and Rebellion in
Prosper Mérimée's Story "Tamango" (1829) and John Berry's Film Tamango (1958)

In the epoch of the Atlantic System, European ships transported millions of African slaves to plantations in the Americas. The fragile balance of power between large quantities of chain-bound captives and small armed crews characterized the social dynamics on slave ships. Consequentially, slave rebellions became a historically documented side effect of transatlantic slave trade. Over the span of centuries, these extraordinary events inspired litterateurs and filmmakers to produce dramatized fictional accounts. In 1829, the French writer Prosper Mérimée published his short story about a rebellion of uncivilized Africans that results in the extinction of a ship's entire population. In 1958, the American director John Berry adopted the story for his film but turned it into the heroic struggle of the enslaved against their exploiters. Story and film offer opposite perspectives on a rebellion as a result of almost diametrically opposed constructions of race. While hierarchal racial theories and the routine of slavery informed Mérimée's adventurous short story, global black emancipation and the American civil rights movement catalyzed Berry's reimagining of the narrative as a melodramatic feature film. In conjunction, the two fictional accounts of the same event show how ideologies that prevail in the moment of their production shape fictional reconstructions of the past. For the nineteenth-century writer and the twentieth-century director, the slave ship "Hope" served as a projection screen for their distinct conceptualizations of the Atlantic slave trade.

Although it inspired not only a French feature film but also literary works by Aimé Césaire and Boris Boubacar Diop, Prosper Mérimée's short story has attracted only a moderate amount of academic interest over the course of almost two centuries.¹ Most frequently, academic authors mention the piece in biographies and texts on abolitionism.

¹ Aimé Césaire, a Martinique-born poet and founder of the négritude movement in Francophone literature in the early twentieth century, drew from the slave rebellion in "Tamango" for his fictional travel diary *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (Paris: Volontés, 1939). Boris Boubacar Diop reinterpreted the fictional figure of the rebellion leader in his novel *Le Temps de Tamango* (Paris: Harmattan, 1981).

The literary scholar Adele King has theorized that Mérimée wrote “Tamango” to “support the anti-slavery movement in nineteenth-century France.”² Likewise, Mérimée’s publishers are keen to cite the short story as evidence for the Frenchman’s rejection of slavery.³ In his biography, Maxwell A. Smith argues that “Tamango” represented Mérimée’s “protest against the cruelty of the slave trade.”⁴ By contrast, the biographer A.W. Raitt vehemently opposes such notions, insisting that the text is “anything but abolitionist propaganda.”⁵ Christopher L. Miller, the only Anglophone researcher who has analyzed “Tamango” in depth, argues that the short story constituted no instant of abolitionist literature but merely an “exciting tale of the sea” that exploits slavery as a historical backdrop. “[T]he (im)morality of the trade,” Miller concludes his analysis, “is nowhere near the center of attention.”⁶ Nonetheless, the literary scholar regards Mérimée’s piece as the “most important literary representation of the slave trade in French.”⁷ Thus, he attributes a remarkable amount of significance to a text that even Mérimée’s biographers have not honored with much attention.

Mérimée’s short story is a bleak tale of a slave uprising gone awry. The narration begins with the maiden voyage of Captain Ledoux’s brig, christened L’Espérance, from the French town of Nantes to Joal, a village on the Senegambian Petite Côte.⁸ At the coastal region, which became a center of the slave trade during Portuguese colonial occupation in the seventeenth century, Ledoux plans to acquire slaves for planters in Martinique, a French-owned island in the Antilles. His business partner is Tamango, a cruel and merciless warlord who enslaves and sells fellow Africans. When Ayché, one of Tamango’s wives, disobeys him in the course of the negotiations, the irascible manhunter gives her to Ledoux as a present. A remorseful Tamango follows Ledoux’s ship to reclaim her the next day, yet the French crew trap and enslave him. Over the course of the Atlantic journey to the Caribbean, Tamango plots a revolt, promising the same Africans he enslaved freedom if they follow his lead against the Europeans. One day, while

² Adele King, “Le Temps de Tamango: Eighteen Hundred Years of Solitude,” *Komparistische Hefte* 12 (2.1985), 85.

³ Nicholas Jotcham, the editor of Mérimée’s complete works for Oxford University Press, characterizes the French author as an abolitionist in the liner notes for *Carmen and Other Stories* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 1999). Publishing many of Mérimée’s stories as booklets in its “Petites Classiques” series, the French publishing house Larousse refers to Mérimée as a French abolitionist in the sleeve notes as well, for instance in *Tamango* (Paris: Larousse, 2012).

⁴ Maxwell A. Smith, *Prosper Mérimée* (New York City, NY: Twayne, 1972), 105.

⁵ A. W. Raitt, *Prosper Mérimée* (New York City, NY: Charles Scribner, 1970), 130.

⁶ Christopher L. Miller, *The French Atlantic Triangle: Literature and Culture of the Slave Trade* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 209.

⁷ Miller, *The French Atlantic Triangle*, 179.

⁸ Mérimée’s narrator refers to “Joale (je crois)” (58). Most likely, he means the present-day community Joal-Fadiouth in the West-African Republic of Senegal.

completing their daily exercise on deck, the slaves break free, overwhelm the crew, and butcher all whites with gruesome brutality. Their successful revolt, however, does not gain them liberty. Since Tamango turns out to be incapable of controlling the ship, the freed slaves suspend him as their leader. Caught in hopelessness aboard the unnavigable L'Espérance, the Africans indulge in brandy abuse, grow increasingly violent, and eventually self-destruct. In a desperate attempt to escape death aboard the brig, most of the free slaves perish when the overladen rescue sloops capsize in stormy sea. Once Ayché has died of exhaustion, Tamango remains the only survivor on the ship. Ultimately, the crew of an English frigate find the wreck and take Tamango with them to Jamaica. After spending his last years as a governmental worker for the English, Tamango eventually dies of alcohol abuse in loneliness.⁹

“Tamango” represents a typical example of nineteenth-century adventure literature. The short story debuted in 1829, when the popular literary magazine *Revue de Paris* included it in its October issue.¹⁰ Appearing in Mérimée’s bestselling compilation *Mosaïque*, it reached a wide Francophone audience after 1833. The brief text is easily accessible. All events occur in chronological order, the author’s style is fast-paced and straightforward, and the narrator talks in short and simple sentences. Thematically, the tale about exploration, exploitation, commerce, violence, and the fight of two men over an attractive woman had deliberate appeal to a male readership. Although “Tamango” holds no prestigious place in nineteenth-century French literature, Mérimée’s short story constitutes an authentic commentary on ideologies that prevailed at the time and place of its production.

Slavery constituted a subject of fierce contention in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century France. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the first Francophone figureheads of philosophy opposed the concept of slavery: Rousseau condemned slavery as a despicable institution, Mirabeau formulated the first arguments against slave economies, Diderot questioned the nation’s right to colonize and enslave in general, and Voltaire argued against the hierarchal division of humanity in species.¹¹ Supported by British abolitionists, a French intellectual-political antislavery movement

⁹ Prosper Mérimée, “Tamango.” In: *Prosper Mérimée, Mosaïque*, Paris (FR): Le Divan, 1930. 53-92. No English translation appears to be satisfyingly accurate. Nonetheless, in order to adhere to a printed source of reference, the paper will cite the earliest translated version of the short story, which was published in: *Prosper Mérimée, The Abbé Aubain and Mosaics* (transl. Emily Mary Waller), London (UK): Grant Richards, 1903. 65-94.

¹⁰ Smith, *Prosper Mérimée*, 105.

¹¹ Roussau published *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité* in 1755. Mirabeau published his pamphlet *Ami des homes* in 1756, Voltaire addressed the problematique of Atlantic slavery in his 1762 work *Alzire, ou les Américains: tragédie en cinq actes et en vers*, and Diderot’s *Supplement au voyage de Bougainville* was eventually published in 1796.

formed under the moniker *Amis de Nègres* in the 1780s. In response to the bloody slave uprising on Saint-Domingue after 1791, the leaders of the First Republic banned slavery officially in 1794. In 1802, Napoleon reinstated colonial slave labor and state-sponsored slave trade. After repression during the Napoleonic era, French abolitionism regained strength in the 1820s, when advocates of antislavery and liberal Catholics united in the *Société de la morale chrétienne*.¹² Assembling abolitionists of elevated social rank and with different political backgrounds, the association remained active until the 1860s, although the Second Republic abolished French slavery for good in 1848. Until then, French slave traders had shipped one million Africans to the nation's overseas colonies.¹³

Although Prosper Mérimée matured in the period of antislavery discourse he did not join the cause of French abolitionists. None of his biographers characterize Mérimée as a political activist or humanitarian advocate. Raised in a well-to-do anti-Catholic family, the aspiring writer never had to acquire particular professional skills to make a good living. Mérimée spent his adulthood as a universally educated man with great interest in law, languages, art, history, the military, politics, and civil administration. He was far too busy satisfying his intellectual curiosities to devote himself to political causes. Mérimée produced the lion's share of the entertainment literature that he is remembered for while in his twenties. Born in 1803, he wrote "Tamango" in his most productive phase as a short fiction writer and published it in 1829, when the *Société de la morale chrétienne* had 388 members.¹⁴ Mérimée was not one of those although he shared a prosperous family background and artistic aspirations with many of the young members. In 1834, at the height of the reactionary July Monarchy under Louis Philippe d'Orléans, he gained the prestigious position of inspector-general of historical monuments. His literary output decreased subsequently. In 1978, the government honored his merit for the protection of France's historical heritage by naming the national list of heritage monuments "Base Mérimée." His European biographers tend to emphasize his legacies as historian and civil servant over his influence as a *littérateur*.¹⁵

Mérimée's short story "Tamango" does not constitute a sufficiently clear critique of slavery practices to pass as abolitionist literature. Mérimée clearly intended the story to first and foremost entertain readers. Christopher L. Miller has shown that Mérimée, who

¹² Lawrence C. Jennings, *French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848* (Cambridge (UK): University of Cambridge Press, 2000), 4-9.

¹³ Miller, *The French Atlantic Triangle*, 3.

¹⁴ Jennings, *French Anti-Slavery*, 9.

¹⁵ See Elisabeth Balscheit Osmer, *Prosper Mérimée als Historiker* (Bamberg (GER): Rodenbusch, 1972); and Jean Autin, *Prosper Mérimée: écrivain, archéologue, homme politique* (Paris (FRA): Perrin, 1983).

had not voyaged much in his life, drew from popular adventure fiction to produce an exciting piece of literature. Yet his consultation of historical documentation, particularly ship logs and travel diaries, shows that he looked at slave rebellions that had actually occurred in the past for the purpose of creating an authentic reconstruction.¹⁶ The European characters in Mérimée's story may not be sympathetic individuals, yet the Africans are explicitly brutish, merciless, and unintelligent representatives of a lower civilization. While the story depicts the barbarous acts of rebelling captives in gory detail, it mentions the deaths of many slaves from suffocation and starvation almost in passing. Commentators who regard "Tamango" as abolitionist most frequently cite the sarcastic tone of the narrator, who is intimately familiar with the motivations and perceptions of Europeans while he drops some snide remarks about the practices of the slavers. Regardless of whether the narrator represents the voice of the author, as Raphaël Lambert has suggested, the text's authority refrains from assuming an explicit moral position and does not express abolitionist statements.¹⁷ Although the speaker seems somewhat unsettled by the proceedings aboard the slave ship, the short story's entertainment value greatly exceeds its ideological persuasiveness. In essence, "Tamango" depicts how hard-hearted Europeans can be—and how empty-headed Africans naturally are.

Race is the paramount element of the short story. The uprising aboard a slave ship in "Tamango" is a parable about the trial of strength between white Europeans and black Africans. The color dichotomy shapes intellectual and moral construction of these two groups. White Europeans represent a technologically advanced culture while black Africans signify a primitive and inferior breed of humans. The structure of the ship's social microcosm as a two-tier system is ingrained in Mérimée's language. With the frequent use of animalistic terms in metaphors and analogies, the narrator approximates black Africans with beasts. When the crew members trap Tamango, the narrator observes that he "struggled and writhed like a wild boar caught in a net."¹⁸ During the slaves' rebellion, the deck of the ship is "swarming with a crowd of niggers."¹⁹ In order to keep the captives fit for plantation work, the crew make the Africans "dance, just as horses are made to prance when embarked on a long journey."²⁰ Conversely, the narrator refers to

¹⁶ Miller, *The French Atlantic Triangle*, 200-208.

¹⁷ Raphaël Lambert, "The Strange Career of Tamango: From Prosper Mérimée's 1829 Novella to Its 1958 Film Adaptation," *Film International* 29 January 2011, <<http://filmint.nu/?p=190>>, accessed 17 July 2013.

¹⁸ Prosper Mérimée, "Tamango." In: *The Abbé Aubain and Mosaics* (transl. Emily Mary Waller), (London (UK): Grant Richards, 1903), 75.

¹⁹ Mérimée, "Tamango," 84.

²⁰ Mérimée, "Tamango," 77.

the European characters by name, rank, or to the collective of them as “white men.”²¹ No black character enjoys the privilege of direct speech, has a name, or possesses agency of any sort other than Tamango and Ayché, the two Africans who drive the dramatization of the story. The narrator’s consistent distinction between animal-like “negroes” and “white men” reflects widespread racial concepts in Mérimée’s time. Contemporary conceptualizations of black Africans are, however, even more evident in the narrative content of the story.

“Tamango’s” creator matured in a historical period that witnessed great changes in the construction of race. Beginning in the late sixteenth century, Europeans encountered different kinds of humans in far-away places as a result of overseas exploration, colonial expansion, and globalizing trade. Astonished by differences in the physical appearance of those natives, and particularly because of their deviant skin color, explorers and scientists approached their new subjects as different species. Polygenetic theories of race influenced European science and philosophy until the mid-eighteenth century because of its nameable advocates. German ethnographers such as Christoph Meiners and Georg Forster, English explorers like Edward Long and John Atkins, the Scottish philosopher David Hume, and the French anthropologist Julien-Joseph Virey all denied that European whites and the natives of Africa, Asia, and the Americas had a common parental origin.²² Voltaire, France’s leading philosopher, contended that the black and white races “are not descended from the same man.”²³ As a strand in race theory, polygenism enjoyed popularity into Mérimée’s day and age. Studying Saartjie Baartman and the Khoi native tribe, the French anthropologist Georges Cuvier contended as late as in the 1810s that Africans did not belong to the same species as Europeans and were, instead, relatives of primates.²⁴ Such reasoning legitimized the concept of enslavement for physical exploitation.

From the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, monogenetic models became the more influential theorems in European racial-scientific discourse. France’s most influential of the early advocates of monogenism, Georges-Louis Leclerc Comte de Buffon, argued that environmental factors such as climate as well as the nutritive value of flora and fauna determined the appearance and capabilities of humans in other regions of

²¹ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 91.

²² Andrew S. Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness: Science and Slavery in an Age of Enlightenment* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 6-10.

²³ Quoted in: David Keane, *Caste-based Discrimination in International Human Rights Law* (Farnham (UK): Ashgate, 2007), 89.

²⁴ Peter J. Kitson, *Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation: Writings in the British Romantic Period (Vol. VIII)* (London (UK): Pickering and Chatto, 1999), xxiii.

the world. In the 1780s, Diderot contended that deficiencies in the black race were consequences of white planters' suppression of slaves.²⁵ Naturalists such as Pierre Barrère, ethnographers like James Cowles Prichard, and intellectuals affiliated with Samuel Stanhope Smith contended that people of all colors were representatives of one humanity. French abolitionists of the *Société de la morale chrétienne* championed this "new biopolitics of essential sameness" and the "politicized environmentalism that attributed disadvantages to bondage" in order to stimulate empathy for the suppression of Africans by Europeans in America.²⁶ Many, if not most, of those commentators who promoted monogenism and campaigned for abolition still viewed differences between whites and blacks as manifestations of degeneration, contending that unfortunate circumstances had reduced Africans to physical and mental inferior humans when compared to Europeans. Such racial stances later facilitated the wide acceptance of Social Darwinism, which became the predominant theory in mid-nineteenth-century France.²⁷

Constructions of blacks as products of a degenerative process abound in "Tamango."

Recalling how the captain designed his brig, the narrator mentions that Ledoux believed "niggers were human beings like the white men."²⁸ As a monogenist, the Frenchman also subscribes to theories of degeneration. When Ledoux and Tamango meet to conduct the business of slave trade, the captain first chooses the physically strong and therefore most profitable slaves. In order to beat down the price, Ledoux expresses his reservations about the individuals that Tamango is selling by calling them "puny creatures" and complaining about "the degeneracy of the black race." Neither contradicted nor ridiculed by the ironic commentator, the captain then proclaims what constituted the dominant perspective of the period: "'The whole race is deteriorating,' he declared. 'It used to be quite different in the olden days when every woman was five foot six, and four men could have worked a frigate's capstan and raised the sheet anchor.'"²⁹ Accordingly, the captain does not see necessity to ensure humane conditions for the slaves aboard his ship. The brand-new *L'Espérance* provides even less space for the captured individuals than on older slave ships. The narrator explains that Ledoux ordered the decks to be made

²⁵ Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness*, 20-25.

²⁶ Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness*, 198 and 203.

²⁷ Linda L. Clark, *Social Darwinism in France* (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1984), 9.

²⁸ Mérimée, "Tamango," 67.

²⁹ Mérimée, "Tamango," 70.

“narrower and less lofty” as he saw no need for his captives to stand up: “There would be more than enough standing for them when they reached the colonies.”³⁰

Mérimée’s constructions of the black characters are in accordance with contemporary commonplaces about the nature of Africans that constituted facts in the author’s society. During the late eighteenth century, Frenchmen of science and exploration like Pierre-François de Charlevoix, Jacques-Joseph Le Maire, and Abbé Demanet had contributed to widespread prejudices of Africans as hypersexual, slothful, and intrinsically barbaric.³¹ The narrator in “Tamango” confirms the validity of these truisms. On several occasions, the voice of the text refers to them as “lusty negroes.”³² After their takeover of the ship, the Africans plunder the brandy stash and throw an “orgy” that has them “roaring on deck, giving vent to the excesses of brutish drunkenness.”³³ From their entrance into the story to their death at sea, the Africans remain a group of powerless, passive, and submissive passengers. In the context of the story, there is no doubt that they would never find the strength to organize a collective uprising if it were not for Tamango, the former mercenary who enslaved them. The narrator describes the blacks as an uninspired mass of followers who gather around their inciter, “bowing their heads submissively.”³⁴ The narrator also renders Africans as shallow and childlike people with profoundly flat emotions. Ledoux’s captives are either silent or they communicate in noises. Baffled by the lack of emotional depth in the context of their predicament, the narrator recalls their reaction to the sound of music: “[I]t was curious to watch all those black faces gazing up at the fiddler [...] and then breaking forth into loud laughter—clapping their hands too, as much as their chains would allow them.”³⁵

The most appalling characteristic of the Africans is their barbaric nature. In the only section that offers background information on the native culture of the Africans, the narrator presents them as fundamentally uncivilized people. The speaker has nothing to say about professions and traditions but reveals their religious practices as hocus-pocus. The narrator explains how the men construct the image of an idol to trick women into confessing their wrongdoings in public. Impressed with the excessively basic graven image, “the women are foolish enough to acknowledge everything, and their husbands

³⁰ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 60.

³¹ Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness*, 118-119.

³² Mérimée, “Tamango,” 83.

³³ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 89.

³⁴ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 90.

³⁵ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 76.

proceed to give them a sound thrashing.”³⁶ The second half of the story substantiates the notion of Africans as inherently violent. Because of Ayché’s betrayal of her savior, Tamango receives access to a file with which the Africans are able to break their shackles. Referencing the mistreatment of blacks by whites merely in passing, the narrator records the gruesome brutality with which the Africans extinguish all European life aboard the ship. Tamango “seized the sailor near him violently [...] and shot the officer of the watch” while every sailor on deck is “disarmed, and forthwith strangled” by his accomplices.³⁷ The overwhelmed survivors begging for mercy are “mercilessly massacred,” “torn to pieces,” or “hacked to pieces and thrown overboard” until “the negroes began to feel that their thirst for vengeance was satiated.”³⁸ Moreover, their inability to strategize for the benefit of collective survival results in havoc. In the course of their attempt to escape death in rescue boats, the “brutish negroes” first fight each other and, ultimately, extinguish themselves because “[t]he weaker died, not because the stronger killed him, but because he chose to let him expire.”³⁹ Their inherent violence enables them to overwhelm the white minority, yet it is also the seed of their inevitable self-destruction.

Constructions of Africans as unintelligent and childlike compliment their depiction as violent brutes. On several occasions, the voice of the text calls them “poor” and “dull.”⁴⁰ The narrator substantiates this characterization especially in the last chapter of the story. Once they have defeated the white slavers, the blacks realize that they are trapped aboard a rudderless vessel. “They did nothing but howl and weep and tear their hair, or drink and sleep,” reports the narrator.⁴¹ Praying to the “fetishes” marks the extent to which Africans are capable of remedying their predicament, yet all their initiatives result in failure and tears of desperation.⁴² Ultimately, their attempts to gain control over the *L’Espérance* provoke the ship’s physical destruction. When Tamango decides to command the steering wheel, the brig takes fatal damage “as if she felt insulted and wished to sink together with her stupid pilot.”⁴³ The course of the narrative leaves no doubt that Africans are intellectually inept to escape the control of Europeans and, ultimately, unfit to improve their situation.

³⁶ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 79.

³⁷ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 84.

³⁸ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 85-86.

³⁹ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 92.

⁴⁰ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 86.

⁴¹ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 90.

⁴² Mérimée, “Tamango,” 86.

⁴³ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 87.

In the social microcosm of the story, white Europeans represent an advanced civilization whose overall impression is blemished by moral corruption. In Mérimée's day and age, white European regarded themselves as the distanced avant-garde of humanity with regard to outward appearance and inner values.⁴⁴ The triangular route of the ship's journey and the narrative's backdrop of three continents bear testimony to the complexity of European economy and geographic mobility. The captain's manoeuvres to avoid contact with English ships, which pursued slave ships in the Atlantic after 1807, reinforce the notion that European powers negotiate the destiny of millions who are entirely unaware of the world's macroscopic power structures. European know-how in the spheres of transport, navigation, and weaponry do not only constitute the prerequisite for Frenchmen to do business with a slave hunter at the African West Coast but also ensure that a small crew is able to exert control over the fate of hundreds of Africans on the ship. European superiority is omnipresent throughout the narrative; from its beginning, when the captives receive "iron chains and handcuffs in place of the wooden yokes" of African slave hunters to the end, when the English teach Tamango their language and make him play instruments.⁴⁵ Driven by material greed, the dehumanized Europeans reduce the crowd of black Africans to a "cargo of ebony" and enforce their will upon them.⁴⁶ Captain Ledoux and his crew ensure their survival, yet their sole motivation is exploitation.

The story's main characters embody the traits and characteristics that the narrator attributes to the respective races. The French captain, a jovial man with sharp sarcastic wit, owes his status as the most powerful character to his mental and intellectual qualities. Although seafaring is the second career for the former military man, the self-taught naval entrepreneur contributed such practicable innovations to shipbuilding as "the use of metal tanks for holding fresh water."⁴⁷ Ledoux, a lifelong opponent of the English abolitionists, spent his entire career risking his life to make a profit; first as a soldier in war, later as a lieutenant aboard a pirate ship, and eventually as captain of a slave ship. He compensates the loss of his left hand in the Battle of Trafalgar with boldness and grit. The outstanding personal traits that enable him to succeed are discipline and willpower. During the negotiations over the slaves, Tamango and Ledoux both drink rum; yet while the intoxicated African loses his serenity, the European remains insistent and scores the better

⁴⁴ Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York City, NY: W. W. Norton, 2010), 59-71.

⁴⁵ Mérimée, "Tamango," 71.

⁴⁶ Mérimée, "Tamango," 76.

⁴⁷ Mérimée, "Tamango," 66.

bargain.⁴⁸ Although he exploits the slaves for monetary gain Ledoux prevents them from being mistreated. Rather than a despicable villain, Ledoux is a strictly materialistic man with the attitude of a mercenary.

The story's only character with agreeable personal traits is a French sailor who serves as the interpreter between Africans and Europeans. Significantly, he is the only character who has insight in the traditions of the blacks and is able to speak their language, Yolof. This "charitable man" saves six of Tamango's captives in exchange for tobacco and sets them free.⁴⁹ After Tamango's capture, it is the interpreter who attends to the slaver's fast-bleeding wounds. In a twist of bitter irony, the interpreter happens to be one of the few initial survivors of the revolt. Yet neither the kin of those whose lives he saved nor Tamango himself is willing to spare the life of the interpreter, who ends up "mercilessly massacred."⁵⁰ His tragic fate suggests that humanist morality may seem agreeable to Westerners but is yet lost on Africans.

Ayché, the only recognizable black individual besides Tamango, triggers both of the story's dramatic twists. Her disobedience to her husband is the reason why Tamango ends up on *L'Espérance*, and her betrayal of the captain ultimately results in the death of every character on the ship. In the act of disobedience she saves a man from being shot, yet she does not act out of sympathy but selfishness since the man is "a magician who had prophesied that she would be queen."⁵¹ Although the captain dresses her in fine garments, "which clearly showed that she occupied a position of honour in the captain's domestic circle," she assists her abusive husband in killing the Europeans.⁵² The narrator renders Ayché as a *femme fatale*: The only female character of significance is a catalyst for the downfall of everyone.

Tamango represents the physical strength and intellectual weakness of Africans. The Europeans decide to capture him and the slaves submissively follow his lead because he is the physically fittest and fiercest of the Africans. The narrator presents Tamango as an unscrupulous character who had learnt the craft of war as a former mercenary for the Portuguese colonizers. Tamango underwent the evolution from fighting against his own kind to enslaving his own kind and murdering those captives that his business partners will not buy. In the showdown between Tamango and Ledoux, he overwhelms the captain because of the latter's physical deficiency and kills him in a gruesome fashion; the

⁴⁸ Mérimée, "Tamango," 71-72.

⁴⁹ Mérimée, "Tamango," 72.

⁵⁰ Mérimée, "Tamango," 85.

⁵¹ Mérimée, "Tamango," 72.

⁵² Mérimée, "Tamango," 77.

narrator recounts how Tamango “bit his neck with such vehemence that the blood spurted out” before he “stabbed his dying enemy through and through.”⁵³ At the same time, the brutish Tamango lacks emotional strength. When the captain tells him that he will not return Ayché, “[p]oor Tamango burst into a torrent of tears, and groaned and [...] flung himself about the deck calling for his darling.”⁵⁴ Simplemindedness complements his excessive brutality and emotional instability as his “boasted [...] knowledge of the occult sciences” fails to ensure the Africans’ safe return home.⁵⁵ Tamango turns L’Espérance into a wreck and ends up “leaning on the binnacle, his face buried in his folded arms” when the Africans discard him as their leader.⁵⁶ His subsequent scheme of escaping from the rudderless vessel results in the drowning of most blacks. Ultimately, the English save him and take him to Jamaica, where he spends the last years of his life as a drunkard. Incapable of responsibility and leadership, the violent anti-hero completes the transformation from the story’s villain to a broken spirit.

“Tamango” is a piece of adventure short fiction that uses the economic and military aspects of the slave trade as a background for its bleak narrative. At the broadest level, Mérimée’s slave rebellion depicts conflict between superior European oppressors and inferior African rebels almost as inevitable. The limited agency of black people is the consequence of whites’ monopoly on knowledge and technology. The highly developed mercantilist Europeans integrate Africans in their Atlantic System by force. Men and women become Ledoux’s *bois d’ébène* because the Frenchman can offer Africans what they are not capable of producing themselves.⁵⁷ Tamango trades his fellow Africans in return for “a quantity of worthless cotton, powder, gun-flints, three casks of brandy, and fifty rusty rifles.”⁵⁸ The middle passage is the weak link in this commercial chain: For a duration of several weeks, the sixty sailors aboard the L’Espérance keep the population of an entire village in check with the aid of iron handcuffs and firearms. Eventually, the Africans overwhelm and kill the Europeans because of their quantitative advantage. Nonetheless, they are doomed for their lack of fitness to control their own fate. Africans are barbarians and thus, in the context of early nineteenth-century globalizing economy, natural victims.

⁵³ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 85.

⁵⁴ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 74.

⁵⁵ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 81.

⁵⁶ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 88.

⁵⁷ The term translates into “cargo of ebony.” French slave traders referred to themselves as “les trafiquants de bois d’ébène.”

⁵⁸ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 71.

Mérimée's story presents slavery as a fact of life rather than a moral grievance that needs to be remedied. While slavery dehumanizes Europeans and victimizes Africans, it is a feature of the Atlantic economy in which blacks themselves hold a share. The narrator's occasional snide remarks about the grim conditions on the slave deck, for instance when he refers to the expanded legroom on the ship as "generous treatment," indicate slight discomfort over manifold human suffering.⁵⁹ Yet in sum, these comments do not outweigh the narrator's sympathy with the white crew and numerous detailed descriptions of blacks as unintelligent and brutal. Whether or not the voice of the text is synonymous with the author's, the narrator's irony and sarcasm signal detachment rather than opposition. In the context of the tale, the ship *L'Espérance* signifies the materialist aspirations of the white Europeans. For black Africans, there simply is no hope in Prosper Mérimée's story.

The film adaptation turned this message on its head. 129 years after the publication of the short story, 110 years after France freed all slaves in its colonies, and 93 years after the constitutional end of slavery in America, the film version of "Tamango" told a story of much larger proportions. Tamango, made by the American director John Berry in France, is not only an alternate account of the same fictional slave rebellion but also a parable about the power of collectivist action. *Espérance*, the Spanish ship of the Dutch captain in Tamango, is a metaphor for all the settings in which the suppressed struggle against their oppressors. Stripped of the bitter irony of the short story, in which brutish blacks destroy *L'Espérance*, the film presents *Espérance* as the setting in which proud Africans show tyrannical Europeans the limitations of their power.

Although the opening credits identify Tamango as "adapted from Prosper Mérimée's short story," John Berry's film is a comprehensive reimagining of the original sujet. The narrative runs its course as the sailing ship is en route from the Islamic state of Guinea to the Spanish colony of Cuba in 1820. The opening scene shows the march of slaves toward the ship, where John Reiker and his crew unload them from nets cast them in iron chains. Inspired by one of the slaves, the charismatic lion hunter Tamango, the Africans begin to oppose their destiny with a hunger strike. Desperate in the face of the brutal punishments inflicted upon them by Reiker and his crew, the Africans begin to look at the relentless Tamango for spiritual and strategic guidance. As Tamango is growing into the role of the Africans' revolutionary leader, he attracts the attention of the captain's mulatto mistress. Speaking from personal experience, Ayché warns the slaves that any form of resistance to the Europeans must end in disaster. Under Tamango's

⁵⁹ Mérimée, "Tamango," 67.

leadership, however, the slaves grow more self-confident with each attack against the crew. Intimidated by the unexpected persistence of the Africans, the crew members show signs of deteriorating team spirit under psychological duress. The decline of morale among the Europeans intensifies after Tamango kills the particularly violent bosun Bebe. At the same time, Ayché emancipates herself from the captain after she finds out that she is not part of his future plans. Assisted by Ayché, a group of black warriors manage to free themselves from their chains, kill some of the crew, and escape below deck. While they are freeing their fellow sufferers, the white crew realize that they have lost control over the situation. Reiker decides to smoke out the entrenched Africans, yet the slaves remain adamant in their opposition and refuse to surrender. Collectively, they decide to face death rather than to live as captives in order to deprive the Europeans of their desired profit. Even Ayché, who has realized that she belongs with her fellow blacks, refuses the captain's pardon. Ultimately, Captain Reiker orders the cannon to be fired into the lower deck. Committing an act of mass murder is the last resort for the Europeans to save their own lives from the wrath of the African collective.⁶⁰

The man who translated Prosper Mérimée's slave rebellion onto cinema screens had matured into a filmmaker in the Cold War America of the 1950s. Jak Szold was born to parents of Eastern European descent in 1917 and began to perform vaudeville on the streets of New York City in the 1920s. In the years that followed the Great Depression he found his way into the entertainment industry in order to provide financial support for his family. During the 1930s, he worked on Broadway for the state-sponsored Federal Theater Project, which dissolved in 1939 after Congressional objections to leftist political overtones in the stage productions had brought about the end of funding. After choosing the Americanized stage name John Berry, he began directing films in Hollywood after World War II. In 1950, he agreed to direct a documentary on the Hollywood Ten, the group of film artists who were banned from working during Hollywood's Red Scare era. The short documentary gained Berry the status of a suspect in the perception of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). In April 1951, the director Edward Dmytryk, who had been persecuted as one of the Hollywood Ten, stated that Berry had been a member of the Communist Party USA and participated in recruiting film workers for the communist cause.⁶¹ Although he was never officially convicted or blacklisted, Berry still found it impossible to secure work in Hollywood as a suspected communist in

⁶⁰ Tamango, directed by John Berry, produced by CEI Incom (France): 1958. DVD by Blax Film (United States): 2010.

⁶¹ Eric Bentley (ed), *Thirty Years of Treason: Excerpts from Hearings before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, 1938-1968* (New York City, NY: Viking, 1971), 328.

the aftermath of the accusations. He exiled himself to France that same year and never returned to Hollywood permanently. In an interview conducted four years before his death, Berry admitted to having developed a leftist world view during the 1930s and 1940s. Berry also indicated that he in fact had been a member of the Communist Party.⁶²

In the context of the decade's ideological climate, Berry's 1958 film about the superior qualities of collectivism was a particularly radical statement. At the dawn of the decade, diplomatic tensions between the US and the USSR reached a new post-war climax over spy scandals and steadily expanding nuclear arsenals on both sides. Claiming that "internal subversion" through agents of Soviet communism posed the greatest threat to the United States, Senator Joseph McCarthy and his committeemen created a climate of intimidation among American leftist circles.⁶³ Yet from the mid-1950s onwards, many Western sympathizers turned away from communism as an ideal for social order. In 1953, the German Democratic Republic became the first of the Eastern European socialist states to witness an insurrection of workers and peasants against the communist satellite regimes in power. At the expense of many lives, the Soviets intervened in East Germany as well as in the 1956 civil uprisings in Hungary and Poland. When Nikita Khrushchev confirmed ideological cleansings within the party under Stalin at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR in the same year, many sympathizers on the Western side of the Iron Curtain lost faith in the Soviet model of communism.⁶⁴ Khrushchev's admissions catalyzed the rise of the New Left, a new progressive socialist platform originating in Great Britain, from the late 1950s onwards. Rejecting Moscow's brutal authoritarianism, Marxist intellectuals and leftist political figures from across Europe united in an effort to propagate a leftist social order that curtailed communist principles to make room for individualism and self-expression.⁶⁵ In a period when classic revolutionary ideals of old-school communism ceased to be en vogue, John Berry's filmic ode to the power of the collective constituted a remarkable pro-communist statement.

The period of the 1950s also witnessed great changes with regard to the emancipation of non-white races and ethnicities. Aiming to end race-based segregation and discrimination, the American civil rights movement initiated major transformations

⁶² Patrick McGilligan, "John (Jack) Berry: Interview by Patrick McGilligan." In: Patrick McGilligan and Paul Buhle (eds), *Tender Comrades: A Backstory of the Hollywood Blacklist* (New York City, NY: St. Martin's, 1997), 60-62.

⁶³ William T. Walker, *McCarthyism and the Red Scare* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clío, 2011), 45.

⁶⁴ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 235-254.

⁶⁵ Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000* (Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2002), 329-336.

in American society. Organizing acts of nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience, black Americans and their supporters dominated the American public discourse of the late 1950s. Across the Atlantic, black emancipation from white domination took the shape of anti-colonialism. Over the course of the decade, the vast majority of African countries gained independence from long-standing European colonial powers. In 1955, twenty-nine African and Asian nations united to oppose politics of imperialism and colonialism. Moreover, Algeria's war against French occupation from 1954 onwards triggered a period during which Morocco (1956), Sudan (1956), Ghana (1957), Guinea (1958), and almost one dozen other countries (1960) became independent states.⁶⁶

Under the leadership of African political figures like Ghana's first President Kwame Nkrumah, advocates of Pan-Africanism propagated allegiance among black people throughout the world. Marcus Garvey, father of the Afro-centric "Back to Africa" movement of the 1930s, and the contemporary African-American intellectual W.E.B. Du Bois contributed political strategies to the international movement that sought to solidify political influence for the world's non-white population.⁶⁷ In response to these far-reaching developments, the genuinely French Négritude movement regained momentum as well as Francophone artists intensified their efforts to promote solidarity throughout the black world.⁶⁸ John Berry's *Tamango* emblemizes the period's spirit of collective black emancipation.

John Berry subscribed to the ideals of Pan-Africanism and black emancipation throughout his career as a director. Since the early twentieth century, black artists and intellectuals had moved to Harlem and transformed New York City's black district into a breeding ground of black culture and ideology. A native of Manhattan, Berry gained exposure to this setting during his teens and twenties.⁶⁹ Later, the resurgence of Négritude in the Francophone world coincided with his arrival in French exile in the early 1950s. From across the Atlantic, Berry followed the surging civil rights movement in the United States with sympathy. From the mid-1960s onwards, after the end of McCarthyism, Berry began working in America again. The television series *East Side / West Side*, which documented grievances among the minority populations in American metropolises,

⁶⁶ René Piquion, *Négritude* (Port-au-Prince (HAI): Imprimerie de l'Etat, 1961), 501-502.

⁶⁷ Prosser Gifford and William Roger Louis (eds), *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization 1940-1960* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 57-77.

⁶⁸ Frederick Ochieng'-Odiambo, "Negritude: The Basic Principles and Appraisal." In: Isabelle Constant and Kahiudi C. Mabana (eds), *Negritude: Legacy and Relevance* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 66-82.

⁶⁹ McGilligan, "John (Jack) Berry," 61.

constituted the first assignment after his return.⁷⁰ Berry's best-known work remains *Claudine*, a 1974 cinematic production about a black single mother in Harlem who has to stand her ground against the repression and prejudice in a welfare system that is governed by prejudiced whites.⁷¹ Berry's last film, *Boesman and Lena*, is a romantic drama about a couple in the racist society of South Africa during the Apartheid era.⁷² Discrimination against African-Americans and the need for blacks to overcome white domination shaped John Berry's filmic output throughout his career.

Berry designed his Tamango project for an international market. Although it was shot in the French city of Nice with a predominantly French cast, the language of production was English. This approach was the consequence of Berry's decision to cast two non-Francophone super stars. The director hired Curt Jürgens, one of West Germany's most famous actors and familiar to international audiences from other adventure movies, as Captain Reiker. Dorothy Dandridge, one of Hollywood's few popular African-American divas at the time, took the role of the captain's mistress. Dandridge's casting for the role of Ayché appears as a particularly conscious decision because the actress shared her racial experience with the character she played. Because of her light skin color, Dandridge was not able to situate herself in either camp of the de facto racially segregated Hollywood system of the post-war era.⁷³ Berry cast Dorothy at a moment in time when Pan-Africanists and other advocates of black pride adopted the concept of the one-drop rule, which was originally a construct of white racists in the American South who wanted to forego miscegenation, in order to invite all formerly excluded individuals of mixed ancestry to join the global black community.⁷⁴ Raphaël Lambert has argued that the character of Ayché lives through this change in the course of the film: While the African captives dismiss her as a collaborator of the white slavers at the beginning of ship's journey, she eventually relinquishes her pursuit of individual happiness in the world of the whites and decides to die with "her" people.⁷⁵ The importance of physicality for the film's title character is also evident in Berry's casting of the lead character. Since the movie constructs Africans as strong and physically appealing

⁷⁰ *East Side / West Side*, directed by John Berry et al, produced by Columbia Broadcasting System (US): 1963-1964.

⁷¹ *Claudine*, directed by John Berry, produced by Twentieth Century Fox (US): 1974. DVD by Twentieth Century Fox (US): 2003.

⁷² *Boesman and Lena*, directed by John Berry, produced by Kino International (ZA): 2000. DVD by Kino International (ZA): 2001.

⁷³ Walter Leavy, "The Mystery and Real-life Tragedy of Dorothy Dandridge," *Ebony* 49 (2.1993). 36-41.

⁷⁴ F. James Davis, *Who is Black? One Nation's Definition* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991), 31.

⁷⁵ Lambert, "The Strange Career of Tamango."

people, the director gave the role of the rebellious lion hunter to Alex Cressan, a black French professional wrestler who never acted in a film before and after Tamango.⁷⁶

Even prior to its release the film became the subject of controversy. Because of its positive depiction of black revolt, and possibly also for its downplaying of French involvement in Atlantic slavery, France banned Tamango from exhibition in its remaining African colonies for fear it would “cause dissent among the natives.”⁷⁷ For release in America, the studio marketed Tamango as a romantic melodrama and promptly aroused the suspicion of moral authorities. Since the quite unromantic encounters between Jürgens’s white captain and Dandridge’s black mistress violated the race-mixing rules of the Motion Picture Production Code, the film arrived in America as a censored version in 1959.⁷⁸ Cinemas recognized the potential for scandalous publicity and billed the release by emphasizing its controversial content: “Cry Tough: Tamango and the Love Slave!” one tagline ran.⁷⁹ The original film received its nation-wide uncensored release only in 1962, when American audiences could finally enjoy the “uncut, original version of Dandridge’s ‘deck.’”⁸⁰ Media critics bought into the marketing of Tamango as a melodrama rather than a period movie and referenced the controversial nature of the romantic content. One dismissive critic linked the French film’s interracial intimacy to the contemporary civil rights movement in the United States, scoffing that “[p]olemists for racial equality on the screen and the simply curious may find something enticing about the prospect of a Teuton-like Curt Jurgens [sic] making intense love to Dorothy Dandridge, a Negro in ‘Tamango.’”⁸¹ In the context of anti-colonialism in Africa and the furious public debate over racial segregation in the United States, Tamango premiered as a highly controversial film.

Like the short story, Tamango constructs a racial dichotomy of black versus white. The film, however, reverses the construction of the black race entirely. In essence, Berry’s Africans are noble without being savages. All male slaves are courageous men with athletic statures and accurately trimmed hair. The female slaves are tall and attractive women who proudly wear native dresses and even tribal jewelry. Young mothers look after their babies, who are enslaved with them, affectionately. Mental

⁷⁶ “Tamango,” International Movie Database 1990-2013, <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0051049>>, accessed 25 March 2013.

⁷⁷ Susan Hayward, *French Costume Drama of the 1950s: Fashioning Politics in Film* (Bristol (UK): Intellect, 2010), 211.

⁷⁸ Donald Bogle, *Dorothy Dandridge* (New York City, NY: Amistad, 1997), 453.

⁷⁹ Advertisement for RKO Cinemas, *New York Times* 05 November 1959. 40.

⁸⁰ “U.S. May See Uncut, Original Version of Dandridge’s ‘Deck,’” *Tri-State Defender* 25 July 1959. 14.

⁸¹ Richard Nason, “‘Tamango’ from France,” *New York Times*, 17 September, 1959.

strength compliments the physical appearance of the blacks. At all times when they act natural, the slaves appear as restrained, reflective, and brave people. They endure physical violence and demeaning insults with stoic calm. The only scenes in which Africans look primitive occur when the Europeans force them to jump, dance, and sing. While they had no professional dimension in the short story, a female black slave identifies the enslaved as former “farmers, fishermen, and weavers,” hinting at a solid level of economic development in their place of origin.⁸² The most tremendous difference to Mérimée’s non-noble savages is evident in the ways in which Berry’s slaves exert control over their fate. From one instance of opposing white suppression to another, their revolutionary designs grow in sophistication. When they plot the revolt, the rebels create a map of the ship by measuring distance in heartbeats while they listen to whites pacing on the upper deck. Creating a secret communication network, they exchange messages by drumming against the ship’s wooden walls. In the context of how quickly Berry’s Africans learn to use tools and fire rifles, it appears impossible that they, like Mérimée’s, could fail to master the navigation of a vessel and find their way home. Their techniques represent a culture of simplicity and effectiveness that Europeans are incapable of recognizing.

In John Berry’s film, the physically and mentally strong Africans become practically undefeatable once they have internalized collectivism as an advanced principle of social organization. The Africans understand themselves as a group with a common destiny while the Europeans pursue individual material goals. Ayché’s is situated between those two poles; she begins the journey as an affiliate of the white Europeans and uncovers her true spirit when she decides to bestead the black Africans who are facing death. Ayché experiences a profound change in outlook that the film doubtlessly seeks to ignite in viewers who identify with this strong and compassionate woman: She regards the superiority of European civilization as a fact of life, then begins to question her perspective when exposed to the pride and dignity with which Africans meet their predicament, and eventually realizes that her alliance with the black collective is of higher meaning than the pursuit of individual happiness in the white world. Tamango, the leader of the slave rebellion, repeatedly reassures his compatriots: “Yes, we can make it—if we stand together!”⁸³ At the end of the film, the captain probes the social cohesion of the free slaves below deck when he offers amnesty for all those who surrender. Tamango encourages his fellow captives to consider the offer, yet not a single African departs from the doomed collective. Although they lose their lives when the

⁸² *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁸³ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

captain fires the cannon into the ship, the psychological and symbolic victory is theirs. As Tamango reminds his people, “We can all stay and fight. And even if we die we’ll win because they can sell living men—but you can’t sell dead ones. Me—they won’t sell me.”⁸⁴ When the thunder of the cannon trails away, the cant of the African warriors falls silent. Yet as the camera zooms in on the lettering “Espérance” on the ship’s side, the chant of more warriors becomes audible, muffled and as if coming from a distance. This audio-visual conclusion suggests that the example and sacrifice of Tamango’s African collective will inspire the enslaved in other times and places.

The Europeans are no match for the Africans in both physical and moral terms. Compared to the black protagonists, many crew members are short, overweight, and scruffy-looking Dutchmen in filthy clothes. Convinced of their superiority over African civilization, they have difficulties recognizing the liberation schemes of the captives. All whites appear as simple-minded and uninspired people whose sole motivation is making a profit for the purpose of realizing individual goals. One sailor with a long track record of service aboard slave ship admits that slave trade is “filthy work, but it pays well.”⁸⁵ Captain Reiker introduces himself as an overly ambitious entrepreneur whose dream is to build a logistic empire on human suffering. In front of the slaves, he jokes: “I don’t want to kill you. You see, I merely exploit you!”⁸⁶ While crew whip the defenseless slaves in the background, Reiker shares his megalomaniac vision with the ship’s doctor: “Look at this boat! I’m going to build more like her. A whole fleet! I’ve got the spot picked out: A thousand yards off coast near Rotterdam. It’ll be the biggest shipyard in the world!”⁸⁷ Material greed and a sadistic nature let the Europeans inflict gruesome acts of violence on the Africans. Crew members abuse chain-bound captives on many occasion, throw one slave overboard and watch him drown, chain offenders to the deck in order to dehydrate them, and hang victims from the mast for public display. The dehumanized nature of the European spirit is particularly evident in the characters of the two highest-ranking seafarers. The bosun Bebe, who walks around rubbing the neck of his beloved cat, treats black human beings with such violence that the captain needs to admonish him: “Careful there! [...] You hurt a black and you hurt his price!”⁸⁸ The captain himself, however, views the Africans as nothing but merchandise and commits a crime against humanity when he orders that the cannon be fired into the lower deck to extinguish the lives of all

⁸⁴ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁸⁵ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁸⁶ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁸⁷ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁸⁸ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

slaves. The moral bankruptcy of the materialist Europeans is evident in their complete lack of respect for human life.

Racial constructions in *Tamango* serve the larger purpose of identifying collectivism as superior to individualism. Ironically, and although Tamango and his companions fight for the iconic American values of freedom and liberty, the main idea of Berry's film fits with the very ideology that the United States were trying to contain during the 1950s: Tamango is a parable about the power of collective action. In the course of the narrative, the black slaves mature from an unfortunate community of fate into a revolutionary collective that bears much resemblance to the Soviet ideal of proletarian committees. Conjuring up images of labor solidarity and organized camaraderie, the slaves reassure each other of undying cohesion with the greeting "Brothers in Life, brothers in death!"⁸⁹ In order to intimidate their white oppressors they intonate their warrior songs, which reverberate through the ship like battle hymns. Stressing gender equality, all African women insist on fighting side by side with the men. When Tamango realizes that the oppressors on deck are about to kill everyone below deck, he encourages his fellow slaves to save their lives. Having fully internalized collectivist morality at this point, the Africans choose to perish in unity.

The white crew on the ship, by contrast, form an alliance of expedience for the duration of the cruise. The sailors seem to have different objectives on how to spend their share and are in frequent disagreement over how to treat their captives. The ship's surgeon and the captain are united in their hostility towards one another. As the resistance of the slaves gains momentum, the crew members first turn against each other and ultimately against Reiker's authority. "He doesn't give a damn for us anymore [sic]. He only cares about his girl—just a slave girl," one crew member utters before Reiker punches him out.⁹⁰ Hinting at the crew's readiness to mutiny as a last resort, another sailor warns the weakened captain a few hours later: "There is a limit!"⁹¹ Military drill and hierarchy unite this group of greedy slave traders only until they feel the rising power of the revolutionary collective from below. In the end, Reiker not only sacrifices Ayché, the only person to which he seems emotionally attached, but also the lives of hundreds of African men, women, and children. The European whites, who intended to make a big profit on their cargo, find themselves in a situation in which all they hope to save are their lives.

⁸⁹ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁹⁰ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁹¹ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

The striking differences between Prosper Mérimée's brutish rebellion and John Berry's heroic uprising are results of the director's comprehensive reinvention of the lead characters. In the French film, the brutal captain is no longer a Frenchman. John Reiker's name, especially in conjunction with Curt Jürgens's Germanic accent, identifies the character as a Dutchman. Reiker is a physical man with hard features who treats all other characters in a menacing and authoritative fashion. In contrast to Mérimée's Ledoux, Berry's Reiker has no personal history; the only detail the film reveals about his past is that the current journey is his twelfth middle passage as a slave trader. On several occasions, however, Reiker talks about his plans. He is going to divest himself of Ayché, marry the daughter of a rich Dutchman, and use the family's money to build a fleet for the slave trade. Reiker is a profoundly pragmatic man with no foundation. "It's the future that counts," he tells the ship's surgeon, "I've got plans. Big plans!"⁹² From his prototype, Ledoux, Reiker inherited the characteristics of a dehumanized professional. Sinister sarcastic wit characterizes his interactions with the Africans. "What's wrong, boys? Why the long faces? Homesick? Seasick?," he asks chain-bound men who have to witness mistreatments of their women and children.⁹³ He ridicules torture and execution aboard his ship by informing the captives: "Nobody on this ship get punished—without reason."⁹⁴ In his role as a dehumanized slave trader, Captain Reiker is archetypal to the extent of stereotypical.

Reminiscent of Mérimée's charitable interpreter, the ship's surgeon represents the weak voice of doubt. Corot, the only Frenchman on the ship, treats the injuries that Reiker's crew inflict on Tamango and other Africans. He is also the man who opens Ayché's eyes to the marriage plans of the captain by showing her the bridal gifts that Reiker bought for the daughter of his financial backer. Nonetheless, as an affiliate of the slave traders, not even Corot is a sufficiently likable character to identify with. Not driven by materialist greed from the beginning like the others, Corot is the first to push for self-preservation by all means when he mentions the possibility of mass annihilation: "And now what are you gonna do, captain? Use the cannon?"⁹⁵ His true ambition for making Ayché aware of the captain's betrayal is his romantic yearning for the attractive woman. The surgeon identifies himself as a broken spirit and self-aware moral sell-out. "Nothing surprises me anymore," Corot admits. "When I was a youngster, I paraded through the streets of Paris for liberty, equality, fraternity. Now look at me. I saw bones on a negro

⁹² *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁹³ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁹⁴ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁹⁵ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

slave ship. Funny, isn't it?"⁹⁶ The decline of Corot from an idealist to an accomplice of slave traders bears testimony to the negative effects of the immoral business on individuals. The surgeon may have been philanthropist back in the day, when the First Republic abolished slavery for the first time, yet his subsequent betrayal of human rights rewards him with his share in an act of mass murder.

In contrast to the short story's Ayché, the film's female lead is a complex character who undergoes a learning process that eventually leads her to higher moral ground. As a black with very light skin color, Ayché serves as Reiker's exotic beauty. Consequentially, the white crew look down on the captain's "slave girl" as well as the blacks, who refer to her as "white man's trash."⁹⁷ As a culturally uprooted individual, she does not recognize the necklace of one of the women as bridal jewelry. The first scenes of the film show that Ayché has accepted her weakness as a fact of life and internalized her defenselessness. "Any man who tries to disobey the masters is a fool," Ayché informs the female slaves.⁹⁸ Yet underneath this defeatism, her fierce spirit turns out to be still intact. When she tells her tragic background story, she remembers vividly how the whites murdered her fiancé, branded signs of ownership on her skin, and inflicted brutal punishments on her. The dignified and charismatic appeal of Tamango has the effect of a wake-up call on her. Displeased by her increasing disobedience, Reiker ultimately joins the group of owners who have beaten Ayché. When she yells her disgust at him, she proudly exclaims that she was "telling the truth to a white man for the first time in my life."⁹⁹ Subsequently, she becomes an ally of the Africans, assisting them in retaliation against the crew and their preparations of the rebellion. In the film's climax, Ayché has relinquished all desires to live in material comfort as a white man's mistress and embraces death with the Africans below deck. Ayché's transformation represents the moral learning process Berry's film seeks to ignite in viewers.

Tamango is the film's heroic role model who exemplifies the favorable qualities of the black race. His unbreakable spirit resides in the lean and muscular body of a lion hunter. His first action on the ship is to physically attack and overwhelm the captain, who prevails only because of his gun-toting minions. In defense of a fellow prisoner, Tamango kills the sadistic and armed bosun Bebe with his bare hands. He endures excruciating torture because of his superior physical fitness. Tamango, whom Ayché first mistakes for the chieftain of the village because of his dignified demeanor, is a charismatic

⁹⁶ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁹⁷ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁹⁸ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

⁹⁹ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

revolutionary leader. While his fellow captives are shocked at first by the severity of their predicament, Tamango never tires of lifting the morale of the prisoners: “He will never make me a slave,” the leader of the liberation movement aboard the ship repeats.¹⁰⁰ His exceptional willpower is an inspiration for all Africans; by and by, his fellow captives volunteer to risk their lives and take responsibility. Confronted with the threat of torture and loss of companions, Tamango reiterates what becomes the mantra of the rebels: “We can make it! If we stand together!”¹⁰¹ Commenting on the civil occupations of most slaves on deck, he remains adamant that he can “make them into warriors.”¹⁰² Together, the freedom warriors develop several schemes to overthrow European oppression and, eventually, refuse to surrender in the face of certain death. The unwillingness of the Africans to abandon the lower deck bears testimony to how strongly the revolutionary leader formed the mindset of all of them in the image of his own. In fundamental opposition to Prosper Mérimée’s barbarous failure, John Berry’s Tamango embodies the strength and ability of the black race to free itself from white suppression.

Tamango’s racial opposites serve the purpose of delivering a commentary on two major developments of the 1950s; the Cold War climate and black political and cultural emancipation. The theme of a constant struggle between two hostile camps is the most obvious Cold War metaphor. “Right now there are only a few of them freed from their chains. Give them some time and they’ll succeed in freeing the others,” the ship’s surgeon warns the captain in their final conversation. “And then what? Now it is either them or us.”¹⁰³ Ultimately, Reiker decides to end the stalemate and use the ship’s weapon of mass destruction. Concluding in mass annihilation at the risk of self-destruction, the film’s finale must have appeared to contemporary audiences as an all too obvious commentary on Cold War confrontation. The film’s main motif, meanwhile, reflected the filmmaker’s political agenda. In Tamango, people who are forced to perform physically demanding labor for entrepreneurs who own all means of production rise—from below—against their armed guardians to free themselves from physical and metaphorical chains. The film suggests that the classes who enslave masses in the name of profit are ultimately vulnerable. John Berry’s work represents the very kind of tale that McCarthyists sought to prevent from being made by American directors.

Significantly, John Berry adapted Mérimée’s story about a rebellion of blacks against whites in a period when Europeans were losing control over their colonies. The

¹⁰⁰ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

¹⁰¹ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

¹⁰² *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

¹⁰³ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

signaling impact of the Bandung conference, the growing number of independent republics in Africa, and unifying movements for an international black population that began to conceptualize itself as a global community render Tamango as the condensed version of a self-fulfilling prophecy. The film suggests that with more figureheads like Tamango, who acts as the kind of revolutionary leader for the slaves on the ship that Kwame Nkrumah and Nelson Mandela had come to represent for Ghanaians and South Africans, liberation from colonial suppression was achievable. Meanwhile, the form of black protest at the beginning of the film conjures up images of the American civil rights movement of the mid-1950s. Before forced into violent confrontation by the whites, the blacks refuse to eat, intonate songs, and remain seated when told to move. On a lower scale than world politics, American civil rights initiatives were the inspiration for Berry's depiction of hunger strikes and sit-ins.

The short story and the feature film differ in how they conceptualize the slave rebellion and construct the opposite sides of the power struggle. Yet both depict the same fictional of a rebellion on a ship in the Atlantic Ocean around 1820. Using the fragile and tense situation on a slave ship as the context for their adventurous and melodramatic presentations, these two narratives also reconstruct the historical living conditions on such a vessel. Story and film are formalist works that mean to entertain rather than provide realistic depictions of historical circumstances. Consequentially, both historical reconstructions simplify and distort several important characteristics of life on slave ships with regard to social demography, communication, and hygienic conditions.

In accordance with historical realities, the slave populations on *L'Espérance* and *Espérance* consist of both sexes and various age groups. Historical slave ship entrepreneurs had a vested interest in making the slave population as diverse a group as possible. Because of the mixed demand for female domestic servants and physically strong males, slave ships generally transported African men and women. Children, especially in age groups prior to puberty, sold well since planters regarded them as one-time investments with long-term returns. As the weakest individuals on a ship, women and children were particularly vulnerable to the brutality of the crew. Emma Christopher has documented a variety of gruesome actual incidents, suggesting that ruthless sexual exploitation of black women and discarding of noisy children were the rule rather than exceptions.¹⁰⁴ Both story and film downplay this aspect and reserve all feminine sexuality to their respective Ayché characters. In Mérimée's nineteenth-century text, Ledoux treats Ayché to a combination of "caresses" and "blows" while no other intimate encounters

¹⁰⁴ Emma Christopher, *Slave Ship Sailors and Their Captive Cargoes, 1730-1807* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2006), 186-189.

occur between whites and blacks.¹⁰⁵ In the film, Reiker and Corot display a romantic interest in the mulatto beauty. Both Reiker's intimate interactions with and his physical abuse of Ayché last only for a matter of seconds since 1950s cinema permitted no extensive depictions of sex and violence. Although the film shows African women and children on the ship, the white crew only punishes other males. Both Mérimée's and Ledoux's versions of life on the slave ship mask the widespread physical abuse of women and children.

The story and film present slave populations as homogeneous ethnic groups. Throughout the short story, the narrator refers to the blacks as one dark-skinned entity, "les négres." Perhaps for the purpose of simplifying the black-versus-white dichotomy, the narrator implies that all blacks speak the same language and belief in the mythical figure of "Mama Jumbo."¹⁰⁶ When Tamango shoots the slaves that Ledoux hesitates to buy, the narrator provides background information on the familial relationships among some of them. Such details imply that the Africans on the ship form a coherent group. The film is more explicit. For the purpose of introducing Africans as members of intact communities, it contains a scene in which Tamango identifies the population below deck as "a whole village."¹⁰⁷ All slaves appear to know each other, and one of Tamango's companions is able to tell their respective professions. After the sailors throw one disobedient captive over board, his fiancée bemoans the death of her future husband. While Prosper Mérimée's narrator presents the Africans as a homogeneous black mass, John Berry's film depicts them as a functional collective that is uprooted and transplanted by the Europeans.

The structure of slave populations in story and film contradicts historical realities. Usually, slave traders attempted to keep their groups of captives as heterogeneous as possible in order to decrease the risk of rebellion. "For their part," Stephanie E. Smallwood ascertains, "ship captains and European agents in African and American ports well understood that the cargoes they assembled exhibited varying degrees of social and ethnic complexity."¹⁰⁸ Revealing particularly the film's representation of an enslaved village as counterfactual, the historian characterizes the archetypical composition of slave communities as "an arbitrary collective of isolated and alienated persons [...] that bore no correlation to the communities they left behind."¹⁰⁹ As Eric Robert Taylor has argued,

¹⁰⁵ Mérimée, "Tamango," 79.

¹⁰⁶ Mérimée, "Tamango," 78.

¹⁰⁷ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

¹⁰⁸ Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 102.

¹⁰⁹ Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, 121.

“There was often a great diversity of people enslaved in the hold of a slave ship that mitigated against the formation of a unified group. The racialized concept of black Africans coming together to fight and defeat white slaveholders was foreign to Africans.”¹¹⁰ Taylor even suggests that persistent animosities between groups of slaves tended to undermine rebellion efforts. Moreover, there was no imperative for crew members to be of white skin color. While neither story nor film features an identifiable non-white sailor, historians have shown that dark-colored individuals served on slave ships as well. Emma Christopher insists that “the popular image of a slave ship as being divided strictly along lines of black and white does not stand up to scrutiny.”¹¹¹ The sharp color line in both narratives serves as a stylistic means of simplification.

As a result of their homogeneous slave populations and rigid color divisions, neither the story nor the film pays adequate attention to the problem of communication. On slave ships, language barriers not only existed between crew and captives but also within these two multiethnic camps. In Prosper Mérimée’s “Tamango,” this problem does not impact the narrative directly as blacks do not enjoy the privilege of direct speech. Nonetheless, the story features the benevolent figure of an interpreter, “a sailor who had a smattering of the Yolof language.”¹¹² His only translation assignment occurs when Ledoux and Tamango negotiate the prices of slaves. The film chooses the convenience of monolingual dialogue over historical accuracy. All of Berry’s Africans speak fluent English. The only moment when the film indicates that language barriers existed occurs when Reiker attempts to teach Tamango typical phrases that a submissive black coachman should use, such as “giddy-up” and “mighty fine, sir.”¹¹³ In reality, however, sign language served as the primary means of communication between and among slaves and Europeans.¹¹⁴ Interpreters on ships were not European sailors with African language skills like the charitable character in “Tamango” but blacks who had acquired rudimentary knowledge as former domestic servants for European masters.¹¹⁵ Linguistic incompatibility among the slaves, by contrast, was a goal that captains pursued by mixing people with different ethnic roots and geographic backgrounds. Efforts to “create the obvious communication problems associated with language barriers” constituted a

¹¹⁰ Eric Robert Taylor, *If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2006), 79.

¹¹¹ Christopher, *Slave Ship Sailors*, 52.

¹¹² Mérimée, “Tamango,” 69.

¹¹³ *Tamango*, dir. John Berry.

¹¹⁴ Joan M. Fayer, “African Interpreters in the Atlantic Slave Trade,” *Anthropological Linguistics: Archives of Languages of the World* 45 (3.2003), 281-295, 283.

¹¹⁵ Fayer, “African Interpreters in the Atlantic Slave Trade,” 282.

common security measure to prevent the cataclysmic scenarios that occur on L'Espérance and Espérance from happening.¹¹⁶

Both the short story and the film underemphasize the criminally low hygienic standards on slave ships. The narrator of the story reports that “the cargo of ebony was in good health. There were no contagious diseases. Only twelve negroes had died of suffocation, and they were the weakest.”¹¹⁷ In order not to compromise the traditional aesthetics of visual entertainment media, the film uses the lack of space and light to create an atmosphere of conspiracy on the slave deck. At the same time, it does not contain any even remotely realistic representation of actual living conditions. The lower deck is always dry, clean, and populated by physically intact captives. The loincloths that all male Africans wear remain clean throughout the film. None of the blacks die from other cause but white violence. Since depictions of gross injuries, filth, and human waste constituted a taboo in feature films of the mid-twentieth century, *Tamango* presents the sanitary conditions below deck in a fashion that is stylized to the extent of counterfactual. Contemporary witnesses and historians insist that poor hygienic conditions constituted the most frequent cause of death for captives on slave ships. Lack of waste disposal and ventilation turned the lower decks into cesspools soon after a ship would hoist its anchor. As the eyewitness Olaudah Equiano recalled, “I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life. [...] I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. [...] The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable. [...] I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me.”¹¹⁸ Historians have estimated that the cataclysmic conditions on slave decks cost the lives of between ten to twenty percent of all slaves during a ship's middle passage.¹¹⁹ While most of the short story's blacks self-destruct after the rebellion and Europeans butcher all of the film's Africans, neither narrative identifies the most common actual threat to the lives of slaves.

The risk of a slave insurrection constituted a tangible threat for the crews on slave ships. Setting historical data on actual incidents in relation to the quantitative dimensions of the Atlantic System suggests that full-fledged rebellions accounted for crass exceptions from the routine. Paul E. Lovejoy has estimated that between the mid-fifteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, Europeans transported more than 11.3 million African captives to

¹¹⁶ Taylor, *If We Must Die*, 79-80.

¹¹⁷ Mérimée, “Tamango,” 76.

¹¹⁸ Olaudah Equiano, “The Interesting Narrative” (1789). In: Vincent Carretta (ed), *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings* (New York City, NY: Penguin, 2006), 3-5.

¹¹⁹ David Eltis et al, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD-Rom* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1999).

the Americas.¹²⁰ While Atlantic slave trade peaked in the course of the eighteenth century, it was still a booming business in the post-climatic period around the year 1820. For David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, the second half of the eighteenth century constituted the “key period” for slave rebellions at sea.¹²¹ Hugh Thomas has estimated that “[t]here was probably at least one insurrection every eight to ten journeys,” yet the historian hastens to emphasize: “There were few examples of successful slave risings.”¹²² Investigating slave revolts at sea, Eric Robert Taylor was able to identify only 493 documented shipboard slave rebellions in the entire era of the Atlantic System.¹²³ According to historical scholarship, both the successful yet ultimately fatal rebellion in “Tamango” and the unsuccessful uprising in Tamango, which concludes with a moral victory, represent fictional constructions of rather unusual events.

Ultimately, neither “Tamango,” the story, nor Tamango, the film, prioritize historicity in their respective representations of a slave insurrection. Both exploit a situation of conflict in the isolated space of a ship as backdrop to narrate a larger power struggle between two diametrically different civilizations. The nature of the conflict, the outcome of the contest, and the characteristics of the opponents could hardly be more out of sync. Prosper Mérimée and John Berry produced their accounts of revolt on the ship “Hope” in response to the ideologies that shaped their respective periods. As historical narratives, their opposing versions of the same event profoundly support the notion that the past is, inevitably, a construction of the present.

¹²⁰ Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2000), 19.

¹²¹ David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2000), 232.

¹²² Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440-1870* (New York City, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 424.

¹²³ Taylor, *If We Must Die*, 9.

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“Brothers in Flesh, Not Theology”: Protestant Schisms in late-Nineteenth Century New York City

During the latter decades of the nineteenth century, following the American Civil War, Americans experienced sweeping changes in social norms, politics, economic production, and education. Often linked to the effects of industrialization, these shifts altered American lifestyles. New practices led to divided opinions over the long-term impacts of a modernized nation and American Protestant leaders debated the merits and downfalls of post-Civil War culture. A liberalized Protestantism emerged from these theological conflicts. The religious schisms of the late-nineteenth century foreshadowed larger trends, such as fundamentalism, found in early-twentieth century Protestantism. Though thoughts varied on the ultimate solution to modern problems, the religious movements of the period shared common themes and rhetoric. These commonalities reveal much about how Protestant ministers debated ideological issues of the period, and the lasting influence of these debates.

The historiography concerning two Baptist ministers, Amzi Clarence (A.C.) Dixon and Thomas Dixon, Jr., neglects the late-nineteenth century works of both men. A.C. is currently known as a father of fundamentalism for his crucial role in the editing and publication of *The Fundamentals* (a series of influential religious pamphlets).¹ Thomas Dixon possesses a historical reputation as a racist novelist for his white supremacist “Reconstruction Trilogy” books (published from 1902 to 1907), later turned into the 1915 D.W. Griffith film *The Birth of a Nation*.² Their scholarly legacy, however, fails to explore their participation in the religious movements at the turn-of-the-century.

¹ Though mentioned in most scholarly treatments of fundamentalism, the only complete biography of A.C. Dixon was published in 1931, written by his second wife. See *A.C. Dixon, A Romance of Preaching* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1931).

² Thomas Dixon, Jr.’s fictional novels are the subjects of several historical works. See Raymond Allen Cook, *Fire From the Flint: the Amazing Careers of Thomas Dixon, Jr.* (John F. Blair, 1968); Michelle Gillespie and Randall L. Hall, eds., *Thomas Dixon, Jr. and the Birth of Modern America* (Louisiana State University Press, 2006); Sandra Gunning, *Race, Rape, and Lynching: the Red Record of American Literature, 1890-1912* (Oxford University Press, 1996); Anthony Slide, *American Racist: The Life and Films of Thomas Dixon* (University Press of Kentucky, 2004); Joel Williamson, *The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation* (Oxford University Press, 1984).

The work of brothers Thomas Dixon, Jr. and A.C. Dixon in New York City illustrate larger late-nineteenth century currents in American Protestantism in microcosm. Not only did their years in the Brooklyn ministry influence their later works, they reveal how different sects of American Protestantism thought about and discussed crucial issues such as science, denominationalism, politics, and social ills. Published works and newspaper coverage of the brothers' sermons reveal how New York American Protestants processed these themes and incorporated them into theological work.³

A.C. Dixon and Thomas Dixon, Jr. came from a well-known North Carolinian family. Born July 6, 1854, A.C. Dixon lived nine years as the only surviving child while his family moved from Shelby, North Carolina, to Little Rock, Arkansas, and back to North Carolina with their inherited slaves in an attempt to escape Civil War violence.⁴ Thomas Dixon, Jr. entered the family on January 11, 1864. Three more children, girls Delia and Addie and little boy Frank, followed him. Their father, Thomas Dixon, Sr., owned a general store after the Civil War's end, and preached at four different Baptist churches.⁵ The Dixon brothers came of age in a changing world. After the Civil War drew to a close, America rapidly industrialized. Modernization touched nearly every aspect of American life. Increased immigration and rural-to-urban migration contributed to the nation's urbanization. Widespread social unrest, both rural and urban, accompanied modernization, manifesting in labor strikes and protests. The gap between the extremely wealthy and the poor expanded, creating hostile social tensions. The entire hierarchy transformed as gender roles blurred, social status became redefined according to wealth instead of reputation, and the economy shifted to corporate capitalism. Evangelical Protestants often viewed education, linked with traditional Christian morality and spreading the word of God, as the answer to these new problems.⁶ Thomas Dixon, Sr. valued education and ensured his boys had the opportunity to obtain one.⁷ Education, however, simultaneously underwent its own alterations.

In the early-nineteenth century, religion played a large role in university curriculums. In the 1870s, this started changing; education began trending toward universities, elective courses, separation of the disciplines, and academic freedom.⁸ Schools started emphasizing science in the curricula and patronizing scientific

³ Newspapers coverage of religious activities in New York City occurred on a weekly, sometimes daily, basis in the *New York Times*, the *New York Sun*, the *New York Herald*, and multiple other papers and magazines.

⁴ Helen C.A. Dixon, 5.

⁵ Helen C.A. Dixon, 9-10.

⁶ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 14.

⁷ Helen C.A. Dixon, 8.

⁸ Marsden, 14.

development.⁹ The new university system challenged conservative Protestantism's preference for orthodox piety and theological dogmatism, combined with a classical curriculum.¹⁰ Soon, the work of Darwin and Herbert Spencer pervaded programs at universities.¹¹ New universities and graduate seminar programs, such as those at Johns Hopkins University (founded in 1876), emphasized the advancement of scientific learning.¹² American thought experienced secularization, with distinctions between "intelligent religion" and superstition during these same years.¹³ The rise of biblical criticism, combined with cooperation of men of science and liberal clergy, resulted in a Protestantism forced to share its traditional authority with science.¹⁴ Not all Protestants, however, could accept the new authority of science. Darwin's theory of evolution aroused virulent clerical hostility. Many conservative Protestant leaders felt evolution and theism were irreconcilable.¹⁵ The debates over evolution and its implications for theology shaped divisions within Protestantism for decades. The ministry that the Dixon brothers entered remained divided over the acceptance of scientific authority, the social ills of modernization, and their relationship to religion.

The rapid acceptance of evolution by the scientific community during the last decades of the nineteenth century provoked many Protestant intellectuals to re-evaluate the church's steadfast rejection of the theory. The "new theology" challenged the separation of church and science. Thomas Dixon, Jr. was one of several Protestants during the late-nineteenth century to argue for a religious endorsement of evolution. To these Protestants, nature itself represented God's will and power.¹⁶ Evolution was one of God's many instruments of creation.¹⁷ In this formulation, scientific findings actually bolster religious beliefs, and the rising popularity of science in American society ensured that any appearance of conflict between science and theology could be disastrous for the future of Protestantism.¹⁸ To these pro-evolution Protestants, science and theology were complementary ways of interpreting God's will on earth; the line between natural and

⁹ Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 19.

¹⁰ Marsden, 14.

¹¹ Hofstadter, 20-21.

¹² Ibid, 20-21.

¹³ Ibid, 30.

¹⁴ Ibid, 28-30.

¹⁵ Ibid, 25-26.

¹⁶ Jon H. Roberts, *Darwinism and the Divine in America: Protestant Intellectuals and Organic Evolution, 1859-1900* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 117-188.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid. 118-119.

supernatural proved permeable.¹⁹ Humanity's progress, its very evolution, represented divine revelation revealed throughout time.²⁰ These theological adjustments allowed science and religion to coexist, but also provoked larger questions of God's relationship to everyday life.²¹ Simultaneously, traditionalist Protestants continued refuting the legitimacy of the latest scientific theories, particularly evolution. These Protestants insisted on the infallibility of a literal interpretation of the Bible.²² The conflict over evolution's implications for Protestant theology instigated a larger intellectual debate over the church's purpose, structure, and future.

A.C. Dixon and Thomas Dixon represent two of the three distinct Protestant groups emerging from the theological debates of the 1860s and 1870s: mainstream conservatives, the liberal, new theology, and higher life theology.²³ Each maintained a distinct interpretation of modern American society. Mainstream conservatives adhered to the traditional Protestant piety and sensibilities of the post-Civil War years. Proponents of the liberal new theology, including Thomas Dixon, Jr., Washington Gladden and Daniel Coit Gilman (first President of Johns Hopkins), believed God to be imminent in modern culture.²⁴ Committed to metaphysical idealism, biblical higher criticism, a progressive view of history, and the notion that contemporary science and philosophy were normative for Christian theology, many new theologians, including Thomas Dixon, Jr., participated in the Social Gospel movement of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.²⁵ Proponents of the third group, higher life theology, included A.C. Dixon, Arthur T. Pierson, editor of the *Missionary Review of the World*, and A.J. Gordon, a Baptist minister from Boston. As evangelical dispensational premillennialists convinced of the Lord's return to earth, higher life theologians, such as A.C. Dixon, focused on urban revivalism, world missions, and the conviction that conversion should be the beginning of a life dedicated to the spread of Biblical truth.²⁶ Higher life theologians and new theologians shared more than the desire to fix the problems of the nation; both groups thought changes to the original, conservative system of Protestantism would be required to reach that goal. Both groups also shared an emphasis on evangelical work, and participated in the Social Gospel movement of the era.

¹⁹ Ibid, 138-140.

²⁰ Ibid, 158-163.

²¹ Ibid, 136.

²² Ibid, 210.

²³ Grant Wacker, "The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Age in American Protestantism, 1880-1910, *The Journal of American History* 72, no. 1 (June 1985): 45-46.

²⁴ Wacker, 46.

²⁵ Ibid, 46.

²⁶ Ibid, 46.

A.C. Dixon and Thomas Dixon, Jr.'s careers in the ministry, and especially in early-1890s Brooklyn, New York, reveal how different versions of Protestant Christianity often shared similar themes in messages to their congregations. The existence of creedal and denominational boundaries within American Protestantism failed to limit evangelical and liberal cooperation. In meetings and conferences across the nation, and even in Europe, liberals and evangelicals alike met to discuss the "perils and opportunities" of their age.²⁷ These meetings helped religious men forged friendships with like-minded men. A.C. Dixon befriended Dwight L. Moody, A.J. Gordon, and A.T. Pierson at the Christian Workers' Conference in 1885.²⁸ Others spoke from the pulpit. Behind this common cause, late-nineteenth century evangelical and liberal Protestants' rhetoric reveals what these individuals thought about the relationship of religion and society and how they proposed to solve social problems (they believed to be) exacerbated by traditionalist Protestant practices.

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, when Thomas Dixon and A.C. Dixon's ministerial popularity in New York peaked, Protestant revivals and church attendance flourished. A.C. Dixon's pulpit at the Hanson Place Church, and his Sunday afternoon meetings at the Brooklyn Opera House, drew hundreds of people each week.²⁹ Thomas Dixon, Jr. also attracted large crowds of hundreds, sometimes close to a thousand, of individuals to services at the Twenty-Third Street Baptist Church and larger services at Association Hall.³⁰ When the brothers joined other preachers, however, the crowds they attracted swelled further. Well-known Christian leaders, such as Lyman Abbott, Charles Parkhurst, and Thomas De Witt Talmage spoke alongside the Dixon brothers during large-scale revivals at Cooper Union and the Academy of Music.³¹ Often, the revival event venues reached capacity, with up to five thousand attendees and even more people turned away.³² A.C. Dixon sought a large New York venue, other than Association Hall, the Academy of Music, or Cooper Union, to use for permanent evangelical work.³³ Working together, leaders from multiple Protestant denominations attempted to convert the masses of New York City.

²⁷ Wacker, 45.

²⁸ Helen C. A. Dixon, 91.

²⁹ Ibid, 131.

³⁰ "New York City's Shame," *New York Times*, October 6, 1890.

³¹ "Revival Work Progressing: Audiences at Cooper Union and the Theatres Growing," *New York Times*, March 29, 1894.

³² "Lessons from Pulpits," *New York Times*, January 14, 1895; and "Thousands Turned Away: The Academy's Doors Closed Long Before Dr. Talmage Begins," *New York Times*, January 21, 1895.

³³ "Divine Service in Dance Hall," *New York Times*, December 29, 1900.

Both Dixon brothers supported the interdenominational cooperation found in New York City's revivals. By 1900, some Protestant leaders, A.C. Dixon among them, called for an "Interdenominational New Century Revival."³⁴ A conference met to discuss the idea of a national gospel campaign, titled the Twentieth Century Gospel Campaign. This movement failed to recognize any doctrinal difference between denominations, and expected to strengthen and unite churches of all denominations.³⁵ When A.C. Dixon took over the pulpit at D.L. Moody's church in Chicago, he entered a non-denominational position.³⁶ Though he maintained membership at a Baptist institution while preaching at Moody's church, A.C. Dixon believed that a common loyalty to the Bible broke down denominational barriers and opened the way for united church campaigns.³⁷

Thomas Dixon, Jr. shared his older brother's notion that denominational barriers affected evangelical capabilities, but rejected denominationalism as a whole by 1895. For Thomas Dixon, Jr., separate denominations of Protestant Christians hindered, rather than helped, the goals of the Church. He abhorred denominational bickering, and believed in "religious liberty, the right of every man to work God according to the dictates of his own conscience."³⁸ A "division over stupid trifles" separated the Christian world from its mission to bring all of mankind salvation; "the smaller the difference, the fiercer the conflict."³⁹ Unlike his brother, who maintained his Baptist membership throughout his life, Thomas Dixon abandoned the ideological confines of the Baptist denomination to establish his own, independent "People's Church" in 1895.⁴⁰

Though the Dixon brothers' work indicates an eschewing of denominational doctrinal differences in favor of evangelical efforts, Protestant Christianity remained divided. Thomas Dixon and A.C. Dixon, representing some of these divisions, differed largely on the acceptance of scientific authority and how to solve the problems of traditionalism. Both brothers thought traditionalism must be circumvented to achieve evangelical goals.⁴¹ The trend away from Biblical authority, spurred by the rise of Darwinism and professionalization, led some higher life theologians to establish missionary and Bible schools.⁴² At these institutions, future Christian leaders trained in

³⁴ "Plans for the Interdenominational New Century Revival," *New York Times*, December 29, 1900.

³⁵ "Plans for the Interdenominational New Century Revival," *New York Times*, December 29, 1900.

³⁶ Helen C.A. Dixon, 164-165.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 95.

³⁸ Thomas Dixon, Jr., *Living Problems in Religion and Social Science* (New York: Charles T. Dillingham, 1889), 4.

³⁹ Thomas Dixon, Jr., *The Failure of Protestantism in New York and its Causes* (New York: Strauss & Rehn Publishing Co., 1896), 54-56.

⁴⁰ "Rev. Thos. Dixon Resigns," *New York Times*, March 11, 1895.

⁴¹ Helen C.A. Dixon, 94.

⁴² *Ibid*, 95-96.

the Bible, viewing it as the authority on all matters.⁴³ A.C. Dixon agreed with fellow higher life theologians, acknowledging that members of his church faced destructive criticism of the Bible and stressing personal intimacy with the Scriptures as the soundest form of protection.⁴⁴ At Hanson Place, A.C. Dixon led his congregation through a regular course of study regarding the foundation principles of Protestantism.⁴⁵ During this instruction, he often emphasized evangelical work as the answer to the “scalpel of criticism.”⁴⁶ He used this method of instructions as a means of creating unity and better understanding of Christianity’s fundamental beliefs.⁴⁷ To A.C. Dixon, structuring the Church’s system around biblical authority provided the solution to the problems caused by traditional Protestantism.

The Dixon brothers’ solutions to issues of class and church membership differed greatly. For both Thomas Dixon and A.C. Dixon, traditional church practices alienated poorer classes of people from membership. Thomas Dixon asserted that the church’s failure to reach out to the masses would result in its decline. Pointing out that certain churches held separate Sunday schools depending on social status, Thomas Dixon linked the class divisions exacerbated by industrialization directly to the domination of the “strongest churches” by “fashion and pride and wealth, and social caste,” for the sake of the “Bourgeois Aristocracy” membership rather than the benefit of the people.⁴⁸ A.C. Dixon sought to reform certain practices that pushed poorer people away from church services. While at Hanson Place, and before at New Immanuel Baptist Church in Baltimore, A.C. Dixon successfully eliminated the pew-rent system.⁴⁹ To A.C., pew-rents were “un-Scriptural” in principle and attracted only upper classes of people, causing church progress to slow.⁵⁰ A.C. Dixon emphasized fundamental Christian education in scriptural authority while Thomas Dixon sought to form an entirely new church system, one that could overturn traditionalism.

Thomas Dixon, Jr. outlined his vision of a new Christianity in *Living Problems in Religion and Social Science* (1889). This printed collection of sermons and public lectures confronted several issues he thought required reform. Thomas Dixon called for Christianity designed for the masses, citing a failure on the part of church members to

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Helen C.A. Dixon, 126.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 132.

⁴⁶ A.C. Dixon, introduction to *The Holy Spirit in Life and Service: Addresses Delivered Before the Conference on the Ministry of the Holy Spirit, Held in Brooklyn, N.Y., October, 1894* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1895), 5.

⁴⁷ Helen C.A. Dixon, 132.

⁴⁸ Thomas Dixon, Jr. *The Failure of Protestantism in New York and Its Causes*, 19-20.

⁴⁹ Helen C.A. Dixon, 87.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 87.

actively pursue and save lost souls.⁵¹ The new church would be “liberal,” Dixon insisted, “A mean, stingy man couldn’t stay in it.”⁵² The church would also be nondenominational, and “united always, standing shoulder to shoulder with a single grand thought ever before them, and moving toward that end in a solid phalanx.”⁵³ According to Thomas Dixon, his new church could bring Protestantism into the modern period. He found every church divided into two classes, one representing traditionalism and one progress. Traditional ecclesiasticism, in his view, was the enemy of Christ and humanity. Traditionalism had “repressed, crucified, and destroyed the prophets of truth in all ages,” and had “heaped upon the Church of Christ the infamy of a history of cruelty.”⁵⁴ The traditional church also “alienated the masses of the people and emptied the churches.”⁵⁵ His new church would represent the “Christianity of Christ.”⁵⁶

The Dixon brothers’ theologies greatly differed in opinion on the subject of biblical authority and its relationship to science. As Darwin’s theory of evolution became common reading in graduate seminars, criticism of the Bible increased. Young people, especially, presented a challenge to the traditional church. Henry Ward Beecher, from his pulpit at the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, exerted tremendous influence, to the dismay of higher life theologians.⁵⁷ Beecher’s support of evolution and universalism, according to A.C. Dixon, undermined trust in the Bible as the Word of God, helping “weaken the power of the pulpit.”⁵⁸ In a sermon titled “The Power of God’s Word,” A.C. Dixon blamed Beecher’s support of evolution on contemporary scientific literature, “in preparing sermons on evolution, Mr. Beecher read Herbert Spencer more than he did Moses.”⁵⁹ Beecher, according to A.C. Dixon, was part of the “Mugwumpism in Religion” leading good Christians toward the path of heresy.⁶⁰ “Few illusions can do more harm than Beecherism,” A.C. asserted, “which holds all men to be children of God. It puts men to sleep on the bed of false security. It is the vagary of the broad and sentimental mind, which has no foundation in Scripture or experience.”⁶¹ “Reason,” A.C. argued, “is a servant, not a master... it does the bidding of ignorance, of sin... it has little

⁵¹ Thomas Dixon, Jr., *Living Problems in Religion and Social Science*, 4.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ “Mr. Dixon Replies to Criticism,” *New York Times*, January 14, 1895.

⁵⁵ “Mr. Dixon Replies to Criticism,” *New York Times*, January 14, 1895.

⁵⁶ Thomas Dixon, Jr., *The Failure of Protestantism in New York and Its Causes*, 65.

⁵⁷ Helen C.A. Dixon, 127.

⁵⁸ “Strong Criticism of Henry Ward Beecher,” *New York Herald*, June 29, 1891.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ “Mugwumpism in Religion,” *New York Herald*, May 4, 1891.

⁶¹ “Strong Criticism of Henry Ward Beecher,” *New York Herald*, June 29, 1891.

or no moral sense.”⁶² In his later work as a fundamentalist in the 1920s, A.C. Dixon maintained his anti-scientific stance, linking evolution directly to modernism.⁶³

Thomas Dixon thought his brother’s attack on Beecher to be “a narrow-minded assault” that was “deeply humiliating.”⁶⁴ The siblings’ differing viewpoints on Beecher and scientific authority became a public matter in 1891. Thomas Dixon, Jr. shared the sentiments of his older brother’s young congregation, “we believe the Bible... but in the way Mr. Beecher did, and not as you do.”⁶⁵ Thomas Dixon supported Henry Ward Beecher as the “founder” and “prophet” of “the new school, the school that before the close of this century will drive out the old regime.”⁶⁶ Thomas proclaimed he and A.C. were “Brothers in Flesh, Not Theology” in the *New York Herald*, claiming the “English language fails to express” his contemptuous attitude toward his siblings’ theology.⁶⁷ A.C. Dixon’s criticism of Beecher, according to his brother, resulted from “ignorance... so profound it passes contempt—it is a joke. Were it not ridiculous his attack would be a monstrosity without excuse.”⁶⁸ Thomas did not blame his older brother, however, placing responsibility for existing ignorance on “the system of infernalism called modern ‘orthodoxy.’”⁶⁹ The visible presence of “such a theology,” led Thomas Dixon to “hate it with an eternal hatred” and embark on a quest to do his “little part in ridding the world of such a pestilence.”⁷⁰

Thomas Dixon, Jr.’s backing of Beecher reflected his firm belief that Christianity and science were crucially linked, “science is the revealer of God in nature.”⁷¹ He viewed survival of the fittest as the “law of God.”⁷² Traditionalist ecclesiastical Christians who refused to accept facts proven by science, in Thomas Dixon’s opinion, were “the deadliest enemies of Christianity. They have systematically repressed, crucified or destroyed the personality of the noblest ministers of truth.”⁷³ Though careful to distinguish between ecclesiastical Christianity and the “Christianity of Christ,”

⁶² A.C. Dixon, *Milk and Meat: Twenty-Four Sermons* (London: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1893), 102.

⁶³ Helen C.A. Dixon, 126.

⁶⁴ Thomas Dixon, Jr., “Brothers in Flesh, Not Theology,” *New York Herald*, July 3, 1891.

⁶⁵ Helen C.A. Dixon, 127.

⁶⁶ “Mr. Dixon and Dr. Parkhurst, the Former Makes an Answer to his ‘Old Fashioned’ Clerical Critic,” *New York Times*, April 15, 1895.

⁶⁷ Thomas Dixon, Jr., “Brothers in Flesh, Not Theology,” *New York Herald*, July 3, 1891.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Thomas Dixon, Jr., “Brothers in Flesh, Not Theology,” *New York Herald*, July 3, 1891..

⁷¹ Thomas Dixon, Jr., *The Failure of Protestantism in New York and Its Causes*, 65.

⁷² Thomas Dixon, Jr. *Dixon on Ingersoll: Ten Discourses Delivered in Association Hall, New York* (New York: John B. Alden Publisher, 1892), 161.

⁷³ Thomas Dixon, Jr., *The Failure of Protestantism in New York and Its Causes*, 62.

Thomas Dixon mercilessly lampooned traditionalists for assaulting science and setting “back the progress of the world for generations at a time.”⁷⁴ Not only did traditionalists hinder the advancement of Protestantism, Thomas Dixon maintained, but “The church must be rescued from the curse of traditionalism or die.”⁷⁵ For some individuals in his audience, such as A.C. Wheeler, Thomas Dixon, Jr. represented an “energizing new apostle” who “marked the renaissance of new Christian endeavor and a new Christian socialism.”⁷⁶

Their theological differences strained relations between the brothers briefly, but soon they united in an attack on Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll.⁷⁷ While the siblings preached in New York, Ingersoll gained popularity as a lecturer. Frequently, his lectures involved agnosticism and poked fun at religion. Thomas and A.C. Dixon publicly attacked Ingersoll’s statements on religion, questioning the Colonel’s personal morals. In a series of sermons on “Ingersollism,” A.C. accused Ingersoll of motives for personal gain in his former support of the repeal of the Comstock Law.⁷⁸ By representing the publishers, A.C. Dixon asserted, Ingersoll had been “paid to pollute the minds of the young of this generation.”⁷⁹ A.C. Dixon’s accusations led Ingersoll to file a libel suit against the minister.⁸⁰ While the suit awaited trial, A.C. continued his sermons on agnosticism, heard by crowds numbering up to two thousand.⁸¹ During these sermons, A.C. labeled Ingersoll, and infidels who believed his lectures, “the enemy of the home, the Church, and the State.”⁸² Simultaneously, Thomas Dixon, Jr. published a series of sermons titled *Dixon on Ingersoll* (1892). Thomas Dixon systematically refuted “Colonel Ingersoll’s ignorance,” blaming Ingersoll’s criticisms on a lack of focus on modern Christianity.⁸³ Differing theologies failed to prevent the brothers from uniting to defend the Bible and evangelical Christianity.

Threats to Christianity came from all sides, including internally. Disputes over the composition of sermons troubled Thomas Dixon, Jr. deeply. When Thomas Dixon, Jr.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 65.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Nym Crinkle [pseudonym of A.C. Wheeler], “Biographical and Critical Sketch,” in Thomas Dixon, *Dixon on Ingersoll: Ten Discourses Delivered in Association Hall*, New York, (New York: J.B. Alden, 1892), 12.

⁷⁷ Thomas Dixon, Jr. wrote his brother after the publication of his letter to apologize for the “harshness and unbrotherlyness” of his words. This letter is reprinted in Cook, *Fire From the Flint*, 82.

⁷⁸ Raymond Allen Cook, *Fire From the Flint*, 83-84.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 84.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ “Dixon Attacks Ingersoll: Not Afraid of the Colonel’s Suit for Libel,” *New York Times*, April 23, 1894.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Thomas Dixon, Jr. *Dixon on Ingersoll: Ten Discourses Delivered in Association Hall*, New York (New York: John B. Alden Publisher, 1892), 111.

left the Twenty-Third Street Baptist Church in 1895 in pursuit of his own independent church, he maintained part of the reason he left was to have a free pulpit.⁸⁴ From this pulpit, Dixon wanted to speak on issues of “supreme importance,” such as the “non-essentiality” of “ceremonies, rituals, places, paper creeds and Church officialism,” emphasizing instead the “freedom of the individual conscience and the individual Church.”⁸⁵ He also sought to “restate in the language of modern life... the Gospel of Jesus Christ” and to present “old faiths in new lights... to rebuild the crumbling faith of thousands who have left the church.”⁸⁶ Thomas Dixon also linked the secular and the spiritual, proclaiming “the sacredness of the secular... that education, art, literature, science, and society, political and economic, are holy ground.”⁸⁷ God was tied not only to secular society, but to politics as well. According to Thomas Dixon, “if society is to be saved from anarchy,” the state needed to act as “the outline of the Kingdom of God, being the only organ through which the people can act as one man in the pursuit of righteousness.”⁸⁸ “Politics,” he stated, “is religion in action... political action is a sacrament... political economy must be humanized until men know that production is communion with God, and distribution a human fellowship.”⁸⁹ In many instances, Thomas Dixon’s pulpit became a political platform. Not everyone agreed that churchmen should play such a large role in political discussions.

“Old-fashioned” clergyman’s standards believed politics desecrated the pulpit.⁹⁰ Traditionalists found the new pulpit, occupied by men like the Dixon brothers, to be violent, vulgar, and overly emotional.⁹¹ As ministers, both Thomas and A.C. Dixon discussed current events and social ills, despite their differing ideologies. In this practice, the brothers deviated from mainstream Protestant conservatives. Appetites of the flesh, especially alcohol and sex, remained hot topics of debate. In their sermons on moral issues and politics, the new theologians and higher life theologians were difficult to distinguish as they favored a kind of practical morality.⁹² The most visible instance of this overlap is temperance. A.C. and Thomas Dixon both thought the churches should

⁸⁴ “Rev. Thos. Dixon Resigns,” *New York Times*, March 11, 1895.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ “Mr. Dixon and Dr. Parkhurst, the Former Makes an Answer to his ‘Old Fashioned’ Clerical Critic,” *New York Times*, April 15, 1895.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Marsden, 26.

play a part in the “battle for a sober nation.”⁹³ Thomas Dixon also attacked alcohol as a problem that touched the cities “financially, socially, politically, and morally.”⁹⁴ A.C. Dixon had long been a crusader for the ban of alcohol, forming a Prohibition Association in Boston in 1886.⁹⁵ Later, A.C. invited Francis Murphy of the Gospel Temperance cause to conduct a “Blue Ribbon Campaign” at his Brooklyn Church, where people pledged abstinence from alcohol.⁹⁶ Often, however, the moral issues of temperance and gambling overlapped with larger events in New York politics.

A.C. Dixon carried the temperance cause into local politics. After realizing the Excise Law was not enforced in Brooklyn, A.C. Dixon sought larger repercussions against those who ignored the Sabbath.⁹⁷ In early 1894, A.C. Dixon called for the impeachment of Brooklyn’s Mayor Schieren, citing a violation of the mayor’s oath to enforce laws.⁹⁸ According to A.C. Dixon, Mayor Schieren catered to German voters by allowing saloons to stay open on Sunday in spite of legislation.⁹⁹ Like others in his congregation, A.C. Dixon feared the corruption of the city government by owners of saloons and distilleries. He accused the police force of having an arrangement with saloonkeepers, and demanded the enforcement of the Excise Law.¹⁰⁰ To solve this issue, A.C. helped organize the Law Enforcement League of Brooklyn.¹⁰¹ The League formed committees in charge of enforcing a variety of laws, including “tenements and lodging houses,” “finance,” “excise,” and “gambling and legislation affecting the gambling interests.”¹⁰² “Men of influence may be men of power,” A.C. Dixon sought to use his influence in the pulpit to achieve his temperance goals.¹⁰³

Like his brother, Thomas Dixon, Jr. wanted to change things in the political realm. He consistently encouraged his congregation to vote in order to achieve reform. In his weekly sermons, Thomas Dixon often reviewed current events of the previous week. He sought to form an organization called the “Civil Union,” which he hoped would have the power to transform New York City into a place with “cleaner politics and cleaner social

⁹³ Helen C.A. Dixon, 88.

⁹⁴ “Attacks Upon the Saloons,” *New York Times*, May 15, 1893.

⁹⁵ Helen C.A. Dixon, 92.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 131.

⁹⁷ “Would Like to be a New Yorker: Rev. A.C. Dixon Wants to See the Excise Law Enforced in Brooklyn,” *New York Times*, October 29, 1894.

⁹⁸ “Wants Schieren Impeached: Rev. A.C. Dixon would Punish the Mayor of Brooklyn,” *New York Times*, May 28, 1894.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁰ “Dr. Dixon Again Attacks,” *New York Times*, June 25, 1894.

¹⁰¹ “Enforcers of Law in Brooklyn,” *New York Times*, December 4, 1894.

¹⁰² *Ibid*.

¹⁰³ A.C. Dixon, *Heaven on Earth*, Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1897.

conditions.”¹⁰⁴ While A.C. Dixon attacked policemen and the mayor for failing to enforce the Excise Law, Thomas Dixon accused Excise Commissioner Joseph Koch of being the “biggest scoundrel of all the board.”¹⁰⁵ Though his statement led to a libel lawsuit, Thomas Dixon received widespread support from the New York Baptist Ministers’ Conference and eventually won the lawsuit.¹⁰⁶ From 1892 to 1897, Thomas Dixon repeatedly called for a reformed government, attacking the Tammany Machine and its various patrons, including commissioners and judges.¹⁰⁷ His solution to overturn the power of Tammany was to encourage his congregation to vote against Tammany-backed candidates such as Seth Low.¹⁰⁸ “For the filth in the streets of New York Tammany is not responsible,” he argued, “the voters of New York are responsible.”¹⁰⁹

After years of fighting to change life in New York City, the brothers eventually left. Thomas Dixon, Jr. left the ministry in 1899 to become a Chautauqua circuit lecturer, and later wrote a series of successful historical novels. These novels, his “Reconstruction Trilogy,” became the basis for D.W. Griffith’s 1915 film *The Birth of the Nation*. Thomas Dixon’s reliance on a new theologians’ view of scientific authority and God’s will continued throughout his life as an author, lecturer, and producer. The racist ideas of his post-1900 novels reflect this preference. Meanwhile, A.C. Dixon persisted in his evangelical work in other cities but became increasingly opposed to evolutionary science. After accepting and leaving pastorates in Boston and Chicago, A.C. Dixon spent time in a London, and served as a missionary in China.¹¹⁰ His most well-known accomplishment, however, came in the form of a series of pamphlets titled *The Fundamentals*, which became instrumental in the fundamentalist movement of the 1920s.

The rise of the fundamentalist movement reveals further the lasting effects of debates over the relationship of religion and science. Funded by Lyman Stuart, *The Fundamentals* were published in eleven installments from 1910 to 1915.¹¹¹ In the early decades of the twentieth century, evangelicals who rejected scientific authority banded

¹⁰⁴ “Preacher Dixon Defendant,” *New York Times*, June 3, 1892.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ “In and About the City: the Reverend Mr. Dixon Sustained,” *New York Times*, June 7, 1892.

¹⁰⁷ “Preacher Dixon Rampant: Speaks his Mind about Koch, Grant, Grady, and Higgins,” *New York Times*, June 27, 1892.

¹⁰⁸ “The Woes of Tammany: The Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr. Says that Now is the Opportunity for Republicans,” *New York Times*, September 20, 1897.

¹⁰⁹ “Christians in Politics: Bad Government the Result of the Negligence of Good People,” *New York Herald*, October 19, 1891.

¹¹⁰ Helen C.A. Dixon, 166.

¹¹¹ Ernest R. Sandeen, “‘The Fundamentals’: The Last Flowering of the Millenarian-Conservative Alliance,” *Journal of Presbyterian History* 47, no. 1 (March 1969): 55-56.

together with some conservative Protestants to produce this series of pamphlets.¹¹² A.C. Dixon bore the responsibility of selecting the included authors and material in each installment.¹¹³ Most contributors came from conservative, Calvinist denominations or higher life evangelical sects.¹¹⁴ The essays within tended to argue for evangelical work and devotion and the defense of biblical inerrancy.¹¹⁵ Increasing “modernist” attacks on the Bible throughout the late 1890s and early 1900s eventually led to an evangelical backlash against liberal theology.

By the 1920s, during the “Great Reversal,” when the fundamentalist movement reached its peak, it no longer tolerated new theologians, newly branded as “modernists.”¹¹⁶ Throughout the late 1890s and early 1900s, higher life theologians abandoned universities and certain seminaries that supported the new theology.¹¹⁷ Instead, many attended denominational schools or independent Bible institutes.¹¹⁸ The reform impulse continued, however, as fundamentalists fought to expel those who did not believe in the fundamentals of traditionalist faith while crusading to stop the teaching of evolution in public schools.¹¹⁹ This “war against rationalism” represents an outgrowth of the same Protestant conflicts regarding scientific authority Thomas Dixon, Jr. and A.C. Dixon fought in 1890s New York City.¹²⁰

Protestant responses to social issues of the late-nineteenth century illustrate the reciprocal relationship between intellectual developments, religion, and American society. A.C. Dixon and Thomas Dixon, Jr. performed evangelical work together in the same city with similar goals, and linked problems in the church to traditionalist practice, attacking it in a militant and polemical style. Both brothers participated in larger intellectual currents and debates within Protestant American culture of the period. Denominationalism, cooperation, and interpretations of the Bible became issues of major import. The themes and arguments made by these two rural-to-urban pastors reflect the intertwined nature of politics, society, and religion at the turn of the century, and how intellectual and scientific developments affected American Protestantism in the cities.

¹¹² Sandeen, 56.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 66-67.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹¹⁶ Marsden, 84 and Wacker, 50.

¹¹⁷ Wacker, 50.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Marsden, 164.

¹²⁰ Quote from Marsden, 166.

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Review: Golway, Terry. *Machine Made: Tammany Hall and The Creation of Modern American Politics* (New York: Liveright(W.W. Norton), 2014)

Terry Golway's new book on Tammany Hall sheds fresh light on a critical American political organization. More formally called the Society of St. Tammany, the Hall gripped New York politics for a large swath of the nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. By providing jobs to new urban workers, facilitating voter turnout, and lobbying elected officials, the organization gained power. From its founding in 1789, the group's support of labor and immigrants made it the machine of the local, state, and national Democratic Party. In a time of political graft and patronage, Tammany was the model. It nominated candidates, funded campaigns, won elections, and gained unprecedented suasion. The leadership of infamous William "Boss" Tweed cultivated its early success. Later, others, such as "Honest" John Kelly and Richard Croker, further expanded Tammany's reach. It was not always so smooth. Myriad anti-Tammany coalitions attempted to wrest influence from the Democrat machine. Not until a young Franklin Delano Roosevelt transformed New York State politics did Tammany truly lose out. That withstanding, its position as the cultural and political pulse of the Democratic Party across such defining events as the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the later Progressive Era, still make Tammany a critical feature of American culture. Terry Golway's *Machine Made* is the first singular look at the organization in twenty years.

Studies on the history of urban politics and machines are still very popular. James J. Connolly's *An Elusive Unity: Urban Democracy and Machine Politics in Industrializing America* (2010) and Jessica Trounstein's *Political Monopolies in American Cities: The Rise and Fall of Bosses and Reformers* (2008) are two recent, and notable, examples. These types of studies are never specifically focused on Tammany, though. Biographies of notable bosses and organization men could possibly hit closer, yet do not grasp the larger issues. The many monographs and articles on Boss Tweed, and the sparing attention given to others like "Big" Tim Sullivan and George Washington Plunkitt, do not always tell Tammany's full story. Life and death can restrict biography, bracketing studies to set dates. Tammany simply transcended the lives of these men. For many New Yorkers, Tammany Hall was the lifeblood of their survival, as well as their

political representation. Whether Tweed, Sullivan, or others, Tammany's supporters revered the broader organization for guaranteeing jobs, food, and housing. To them, the political institution gained support through social welfare and democratic pluralism. In order to gauge this broader impact, the organization, not simply its leaders, deserves attention.

For decades, only a handful of books reached so far as to include Tammany Hall in the title. To the point, Oliver E. Allen, author of *The Tiger, the Rise and Fall of Tammany*, alleged his 1993 book was the first complete history of the organization. No matter the veracity of the claim, the fields surrounding Tammany Hall's historiography are regrettably under grown. Allen's text was the first on the Hall since 1963, and decades after the last. One reason Tammany has eluded modern attention parallels much of its historical reputation: practicality. In many ways, Tammany Hall moved with the tides, eluding explanation. Always beholden to its Irish Catholic immigrants, though, the machine understood the nature of American political culture. Golway's book is, in numerous ways, a response to all of this. The book attempts to find the pulse of Tammany Hall, outside of scandal and corruption. Through Tammany, Golway saw a transitioning American democracy, both reflective and antagonistic to the machine's shifting political aims. Indeed, Golway contended that Tammany stood both as paragons and as devils within a swiftly transforming polity, for the most part keeping their heads above the horizon line.

Machine Made effectively placed its subject within a larger field of American culture. Juggling bosses, mayors, governors, and presidents, Golway deftly holds the narrative line. Beginning with the perception that Tammany Hall has the "unenviable place in American memory" in being "a symbol of all that was wrong with urban government," Golway worked to reverse, or at least balance, the perceived story (xviii). Rather than symbolize just graft, manipulation, and corruption, he argued that the machine also presaged Progressive politics. It was Tammany, for instance, that filtered forward immigrant led reassessments of settled American values. It was also the machine that reached for a pluralistic understanding of politics. Sometimes stuck between the traditional Democrat-Republican bi-poles, Golway explained how the organization held to specific principles. Embracing "transactional politics," Tammany always held that voters could discern their own interests (132). It was not an ethic of individualism, however. Whether Tammany understood it or not, Golway shrewdly found that the organization challenged fundamental parts of Gilded Age creeds. Critically, "they subverted the Gilded Age consensus that government ought to play little or no role in the marketplace" (137). These ideas, more importantly, were not necessarily American made.

The enduring value of Golway's approach was understanding that much of Tammany's inspiration and influence was extra-American. Whether this "transactional republicanism" reached back to European norms of political conduct or not, Golway saw it as precisely that (155). Guided by Irish Catholicism, infused with European values, Tammany reinterpreted Continental culture and politics onto an American landscape.

Golway's study of Tammany Hall has added an important volume to the history of American political culture. Broadly researched, the text collated transatlantic sources to match its transatlantic theses. Clearly looking to revise Tammany's position among the histories, the text still allows places for growth. For instance, freely quoting from predictable New York newspapers, Golway fails to utilize the best cases. In chapters on Tammany and the Gilded Age and Reconstruction, the text cites the *New York Sun*, the most popular paper of the day, only a handful of times. Charles A. Dana, owner/editor, made the paper the Democratic daily of New York City after 1868. This was remarkable, in part, because he was a dedicated Whig and Republican until that point. The paper was the widest circulated across Manhattan (and arguably the country) for decades after. Critically, however, Dana's relationship with Tammany reflected the vacillation of opinion and fluctuation in support characteristic of Democrats at the time. Golway highlighted how Tammany both fractured and unified the party throughout its history, but left Dana, a valuable weapon, out of his holster. No matter the quip, however, *Machine Made* deserves attention from anyone interested in the interconnections between local, national, and transnational political culture.

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Review: Fisher, Linford. *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

In *The Indian Great Awakening*, Linford Fisher constructs an important analysis of the Native American's interactions and connections with Christianity in eighteenth-century southern New England. Fisher aims to situate the Native Americans' religious encounters and exchanges within the "on-the-ground realities" of the Natives' lives, as well as to understand their "religious engagement" within the context of both local interactions and imperial power.¹²¹ Through examining Native American and Euro-American religious engagements across a broad chronological scope, covering 1678 to 1820, Fisher attempts to highlight various generational trends and individual actions. Fisher argues that the Native Americans' engagement with Christianity in southern New England was "a contested, multigenerational process" that centered upon education, and was framed by fears of losing tribal lands and "a slowly eroding sense of cultural autonomy."¹²²

Fisher grounds his study in a diverse array of primary sources, in an effort to restore the native perspective in the historical literature about religious interactions in colonial New England. Through examining land and church records, writings from Native American clergymen, and archaeological evidence, Fisher goes beyond merely using European and American missionary accounts that approach Native religious practices from a decidedly Western perspective. In attempting to understand Native engagement with Christianity from a Native American perspective, Fisher illuminates numerous social and cultural issues that influenced their interactions with European colonists and Christianity during the long eighteenth century.

In the first two chapters, Fisher sets up the historical background of the religious and cultural interactions between the Natives and colonists in late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth century New England. In the first chapter, Fisher draws attention to previous efforts by Euro-American missionaries to establish Christianity among the Natives, and

¹²¹ Linford Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 8.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 12.

argues that the early decades of the eighteenth century saw a revived evangelistic effort that would refashion Native and Anglo-American interactions. The desire to evangelize to the Native communities, along with Native pursuits of education from Anglo-American ministers, forms the basis of Fisher's second chapter. Fisher demonstrates that religious engagement and change occurred within a multilayered sociocultural environment that helped influence the decisions Native people made, and issues like education constituted part of a wider religious and cultural engagement.

The Great Awakening represents an important trend for examining the southern New England Natives' participation in Christianity. In chapter three, Fisher contends that Native participation in Christian revivals represents a continuation of past religious engagement, which breaks from the notion of sudden conversion that overshadows the importance of cultural adaptation and survival in the region's Native communities. Consequently, the "Indian Great Awakening" emerged from thirty years Anglo-American evangelizing, and increasing efforts by Natives to acquire "education, literacy, and acceptance" into colonial society.¹²³ Fisher's focused analysis of each community in southern New England, such as the Mohegan and Narragansett, adds important detail to his discussion, and illustrates the nuanced ways the Great Awakening's revivals affected subsets of the region's Native communities. During the Great Awakening, the religious interactions between Native communities and Christian ministers introduced new concepts and practices, such as lively singing and individual expression in worship, which became popular with Christian Natives.

Native "affiliation" with white colonial churches provides an important perspective concerning the nature of religious engagement in eighteenth-century New England. For Fisher, affiliation offers a more accurate representation of how Natives understood their relationship with colonists and churches than religious conversion. The concept of affiliation more effectively accounts for Natives drawn to Christian churches because of various practices they found appealing, and were able to drop these practices and their affiliation without conversion or apostasy occurring. Fisher bolsters his idea of Native affiliation by demonstrating the short term nature of Native involvement with Anglo-American Christian churches, which spiked in 1741 and 1742 during the Great Awakening—only to drop significantly in 1743 with sporadic affiliations thereafter. Furthermore, Native affiliations with Christian churches were not done solely for a practical purpose, but were interwoven with personal and traditional elements.

¹²³ Ibid., 67.

Issues of autonomy and separation play an important role in Fisher's analysis of Native American Christians, and their relationships with their Anglo-American neighbors. In chapter five, Fisher demonstrates how Christian Natives drew upon the ideas from the English Separate movement, promoted by New Light revivalists during the Great Awakening, and began to form their own separate churches and congregations. Separatism provided a means for Christian Natives to conceptualize their place within the colonial world, strengthen links between their communities, and develop their own religious practices. Yet, the idea of separatism did provide a way for Native communities to reject attempts by Anglo-Americans to reform and westernize them through education.

Education and literacy within Native communities, as well as migration, became increasingly important in the decades following the Great Awakening. Beginning in the 1750s, Native communities increasingly struggled to take control of and define education, and many sought to establish Native schools within their communities as a method to encourage literacy and protect their physical, cultural, and religious autonomy. Fisher illustrates how the problems resulting from colonialism, such as land dispossession, spurred the region's Christian Natives to orchestrate several westward migrations in an attempt to establish new revitalized communities. Yet, not all Natives participated in the migrations. The remaining Natives continued a practice of selective engagement that gave their communities life and cultural sovereignty, and enabled them to continue adapting to white encroachment.

While Fisher's analysis provides an insightful exploration of how Native Americans engaged with Christianity as a means of physical and cultural preservation in eighteenth-century New England, there are several issues worth examining. Fisher's study does not place southern New England into a broader comparison with its neighboring regions and their respective Native American tribes—such as the Abenaki in northern New England and the Iroquois in New York. Through a greater examination of Native American tribes in different regions of British North America, the similarities and differences in how various native peoples interacted and engaged with Christianity and European culture could be examined more effectively. The absence of a comparison with neighboring regions and tribes also extends to neighboring European colonial empires within the Atlantic world, such as Catholic New France. Including some discussion on Jesuit missionaries, who emphasized the importance of education, could have strengthened Fisher's analysis of Native engagement with Christianity and education.

Despite these issues, Fisher's *The Indian Great Awakening* represents an important step in developing a nuanced understanding of Native Americans' relationships with Christianity during the long eighteenth century. Fisher's discussion provides an

important look at how various religious and social developments influenced Christian Natives, and how they used Christianity for their own purposes. The concepts of religious engagement, affiliation, and separatism are important in demonstrating how Natives actively participated in Christianity. Overall, Fisher's work is a valuable introduction concerning Native Americans' encounters with Christianity in New England, as well as an important addition to the growing scholarly literature examining Christianity's influence on marginalized ethnic groups in the British Atlantic world.

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Review: Cristina Mazzeo. *Gremios mercantiles en las guerras de Independencia. Perú y México en la transición de la Colonia a la República, 1740 – 1840*. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2012, pp. 330.

The purpose of this socio, political, and economic study is to compare the development of the Consulates of México and Perú, and the prompt disappearance of the former after the independence wars, and the continuation of the latter for large part of the nineteenth century. To explain these dissimilar processes, the author explores the links between the peninsula and its colonies during the eighteenth century, and the impact of the Bourbon reforms, and the independence wars on such relationships.

Mazzeo explains that during the eighteenth century both consulates were in charge of collecting royal taxes, donatives, and forced loans, which were directed to finance the various needs of the crown. This fiscal role permitted the consulates to maintain a strong links with the political power. With the introduction of the Bourbon reforms, both gremial bodies faced considerable changes such as the implementation of the ‘navios de registro,’ in 1740, and the aperture of other ports, in 1778, which challenged its customary powers. Lima’s consulate also suffered from the territorial dismemberment of its jurisdiction with the creation of the Viceroyalties of Nueva Granada, in 1717, and Rio de la Plata, in 1776. The ordinance that regulated the aperture of new ports also ordered the institution of commercial bodies in the mercantile posts, which would be in charge of collecting royal duties. Both traditional consulates protested against the new conditions imposed by the Crown because they lost capacity of negotiation and investment. In New Spain, the new consulates of Veracruz and Guadalajara rivaled the old one of Mexico. The existence of these three different gremial bodies permitted the emergence of regional commercial powers that developed their own mechanisms of investment and negotiation with the political power. In the Peruvian viceroyalty, the consulate of Lima maintained its traditional supremacy despite the increasing power of Valparaiso and Buenos Aires. Other city- ports, such as Trujillo and Arequipa desisted to create their own consulates because of the financial pressures such royal grant would come with. Mazzeo explains that the different pattern of silver production in both viceroyalties also affected the development of their gremial bodies. On

one hand, because Peruvian mines suffered a considerable reduction in silver production, the consulate of Lima remained as fiscal agent of the crown, even though it continued providing some loans. On the other hand, the increment of silver production in New Spain accentuated the financial exigencies of the Crown, which motivated the consulates of this viceroyalty to play the role of financiers. Therefore, the Bourbon reform brought a reconfiguration in the colonial pact between the crown and the traditional consulates.

The period between 1786 and 1820 brought more changes to the relationship between the crown and the American consulates. The wars that involved many of the European powers forced Spain to rely on neutral vessels to maintain both the commerce and the revenue remittances between the metropolis and the colonies. The consulates of Mexico and Lima continued performing their role as moneylenders to the crown, in exchange of custom exemptions and grants. Yet, the latter maintained its fiscal role of collecting the taxes to pay the crown's debts. According to Mazzeo, this double role of the Consulate of Lima permitted the gremial body to keep its negotiation capacity with the royal state, while the consulate of Mexico lost ground against the Veracruz's corporation. Additionally, the viceroys in turn also played a substantial role in the new balance of power. Abascal, in Peru, supported the commercial body of Lima, while the viceroys Iturrigaray and Revillagigedo, in Mexico, did the same with the consulate of Veracruz.

Interestingly, Mazzeo demonstrates that the only unified group with a cohesive performance was the consulate of Lima. She states that because of its links to the government, the consulate of Lima was not against the royal system, but tried to support it. It only submitted to provide loans to the national government once Lima was under patriots' control. The gremial body continued in functions under the new 'Camara de Comercio' that San Martín instituted with the same function of collection loans for the government. The author also challenges traditional views of economic halt after the independence. She affirms that despite the emigration of many Spaniards, some remained in Lima and adopted Peruvian nationality. These merchants had to share the commercial activities with the increasing number of foreign traders that brought valuable goods that were in high demand during years of political instability (carbines, gunpowder, fusils, etc.).

Mazzeo argues that because the national government inherited most of the colonial administration structure, the consulate was able to subsist the political transformation and was finally definitively instituted by 1829, to exist for most of the nineteenth century. In Mexico, the existence of three different gremial bodies generated the emergence of regional patterns of investment, administration, and negotiation with the

political. Mazzeo underlines the fact that in both national governments were weak so it permitted the consolidation in Perú of a corporative group that continued functioning as a financier of the government that depended on this fiscal labor. Despite the separation between the capital and the provinces, Lima remained as the commercial and political center, which permitted the consulate to perform its fiscal activities having control of the customhouse. In Mexico, the separate paths that the consulates have developed and the influence of liberal ideas brought the extinction of these commercial institutions. The disappearance of the consulates promoted the regionalism of the country, which consequently undermined the power of the central government. The federal governments were able to administrate their own incomes, and to resist impositions from the central one. Unfortunately, in the long term, it brought greater economic exactions from the foreign moneylenders that demanded higher interests from the central government because it lacked a fiscal and financial body, as the consulate of Lima, which may secure the loans.

Product of a long investigation in several archives in Lima, Mexico, and Spain, this book offers a valuable contribution to the historiography of the independence period in Latin America. Its analysis of the comparative development of the oldest consulates in Spanish America is also innovative because it mixes economic, political, and institutional history. Easy to read, Mazzeo illustrates with supporting data the developing patterns that both institutions had after the independence war, and the consequent impact in the constitution of the new independent countries of Mexico and Perú.