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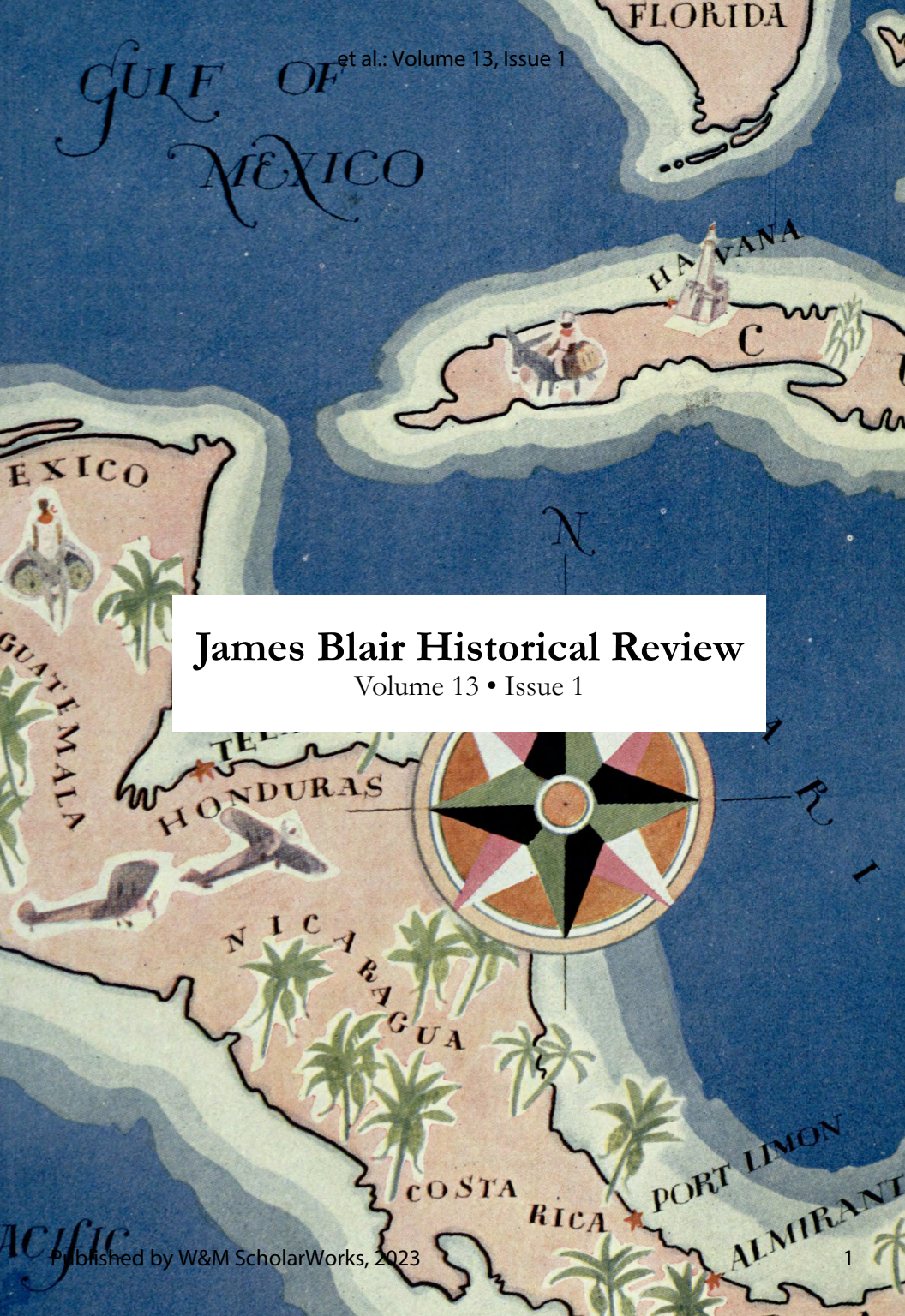

James Blair Historical Review

Volume 13 • Issue 1

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

On behalf of the Editorial Board of the *James Blair Historical Review*, I am thrilled to present the latest issue of our journal.

I have recently been listening to Dr. Greg Jackson's *History That Doesn't Suck!* podcast and am struck by his ability to make well-researched history accessible to the general public. I admire how he combines strategies of teaching history, from the microhistories that bookend each episode to analyses of social, political, and cultural history that help listeners better understand the topic of the day. History extends far beyond the pages of a textbook—we must continue to develop new and creative ways to convey it. That is exactly what this and every issue of the *James Blair Historical Review* aims to do. Each of our authors examine dynamic primary sources to create engaging arguments that appeal not only to students of history, but to the broader public as well. They are paving the way for traditionally esoteric history to be rewritten in a manner that is both accessible and compelling.

"'From the Tropics to Your Table': Americanization, United Fruit, and the Consumer Culture of Bananas, 1900-1940" by Jane Clarke discusses the ways in which the United Fruit Company slowly "Americanized" the portrayal of bananas in popular culture in order to integrate them into American diets and lives. Lindsay Moynihan analyzes the memorialization of president Jacob Arbenz based on the modern published accounts of those close to him in "Legacy Building and the Guatemalan Coup of 1954: An Analysis of the Memoirs of Maria Vilanova de Árbenz, Carlos Manuel Pellecer, and Mauricio Dubois." In "What Tangled Webs We Weave: Jerome Horsey, John Vandewall, and 16th-Century Anglo-Russian Commerce" author Justin Posner examines Englishman Jerome Horsey's legal agreements with Dutch trader John Vandewall to analyze the changing relationship of trade and commerce between Western Europe and Russia in the 1700s. Finally, Sinziana Stanciu's "Rousseau's Tableau: Self-Fashioning Under the Public Spotlight" explores how Jean-Jacques Rousseau attempted to manage his reputation in his autobiographical work *Confessions*.

Our issue of the *JBHR* would have been impossible without the hard work of all contributors. First and foremost, I congratulate our authors, who have

produced magnificent articles that have contributed to many aspects of historical scholarship. Thank you for the privilege of publishing your papers. To our peer reviewers, I extend my sincerest gratitude. Our Editorial Board deeply values the time, energy, and work you put in evaluating the many papers submitted to us this cycle. And to the Editorial Board—Jack, Logan, and Max—I have greatly enjoyed working with you to continue the success of the journal. Thank you for taking the time to read, discuss, analyze, and edit articles for the *JBHR*. I also want to take the time to recognize our faculty advisor, Professor Ayfer Karakaya-Stump. Finally, a special thanks to W&M's Harrison Ruffin Tyler Department of History as well as the College's Media Council for their financial support, which is vital to the success of the journal.

I have loved working on this issue of the *JBHR* this semester, and I am excited to continue to share scholarship from undergraduate students who have added to our larger historical narrative. We hope that this issue's new look—shoutout to Max for the redesign—symbolizes the *JBHR*'s renewed commitment to quality historical scholarship. I wish to remind you, like Dr. Jackson does, that history certainly doesn't suck. It is up to us to engage with dynamic bits and pieces of history in order to engage with a wide public audience.

And with that, I am delighted to share the *James Blair Historical Review*'s Fall 2023 edition!

All my best,
Riley Neubauer
JBHR Editor in Chief, 2023-2024

Acknowledgements

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Front Cover: Fruit Dispatch Company, "The New Banana," 1931. Published by Anne Garner, Center for the History of Medicine and Public Health, New York Academy of Medicine, 2015.

About the Authors

Jane Clarke (she/her) is a senior at Northwestern University double majoring in History and American Studies with a minor in Legal Studies. Her primary research interest is the history of twentieth-century United States interactions with the world, American empire, and national identity. She is currently writing her senior thesis on ideologies of empire in early twentieth century children's literature. She would like to thank Professor Ken Alder at Northwestern University for his guidance on this project, which was originally written for a Northwestern research seminar.

Lindsay Moynihan is a senior History major at the University of Maryland, College Park. She is a member of their Honors program, and is currently expanding on her article published in this journal to write her thesis about gender, race, and the legacy of Maria Vilanova de Árbenz in the 1954 CIA-sponsored Guatemalan coup. She is the President of UMD's History Undergraduate Association, a White House Historical Association Next-Gen Leader and a member of the National Humanities Center's National Leadership Council for 2023-2024. Her research interests include Central America in the 20th Century, Tudor Britain, and how public history and social justice intersect in contemporary museum studies.

Justin Posner is a third-year undergraduate student at the University of Chicago studying history and public policy. His areas of interest include the Middle East, the early modern era, and economic history. He has worked as a research assistant for Dr. Jane Dailey, a professor of American history at the University of Chicago, as well as for Dr. Emily Kadens, a professor at the Pritzker School of Law at Northwestern University.

Sinziana Stanciu is a current senior majoring in History in the Columbia University and Trinity College Dublin Dual BA program. She studies European Intellectual History and has an interest in Eastern Europe. On campus, she is a managing editor at the *Columbia Journal of History* and a deputy editor at the *Columbia Daily Spectator*. This year, she is writing a thesis on the topic of intellectual history in late nineteenth century of Romania pertaining to nationalism and the domestic sphere.

Jane Clarke

"From the Tropics to Your Table"

Americanization, United Fruit, and the Consumer Culture of Bananas, 1900-1940

At the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition in 1876, Frederick Adams saw a banana for the first time. "To my young and impressionable mind, this was the most romantic of all the innumerable things I had seen…It was the tangible, living, and expressive symbol of the far-distant and mysterious tropics" he remembered.[1] Bananas were a very new commodity in the United States in 1876—the first shipment of bananas arrived in New Orleans only four years earlier, in 1872.[2] Banana imports boomed in the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century. Between 1910 and 1912, steamers carried almost 14 million tons of cargo to ports in Boston and New Orleans; in 1912 alone, Americans imported more than 44 million bunches of bananas.[3] To meet the growing demand for bananas, businesses like the United Fruit Company incorporated in the late nineteenth century and bought up prime banana-growing land throughout Central and South America. As bananas became increasingly ubiquitous in American life throughout the early twentieth century, and as American companies connected banana plantations to markets, bananas took on new meanings in American life.

The material and cultural and history of bananas in American life is a relatively understudied field, especially when compared to the copious amount of writing on the corporate structure of the United Fruit Company and their plantation practices throughout Latin America.[4] Scholarship on the consumer

[1] Quoted in Dan Koeppel, *Banana: The Fate of the Fruit That Changed the World*, New York: Hudson Street Press, 2008, 52.

[2] *The Story of the Banana* (Boston: United Fruit Company, 1921).

[3] *The Story of the Banana*, 52; Chester Lloyd Jones, "Bananas and Diplomacy," The North American Review, Aug 1913, https://www.proquest.com/docview/137052268.

[4] There is also a wide array of literature on the scientific and technological aspects of bananas, such as Koeppel, *The Fruit that Changed the World*, and John Soluri, *Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States*

culture of bananas tends to characterize the early twentieth century as a period when bananas lost all association with their tropical origins. Virginia Scott Jenkins, for instance, claims that "the banana lost its exotic image and disappeared from the formal dinner table as it became the most widely eaten fruit in the United States."[5] Originally dubbed "the poor man's fruit," because of their affordable price, scholars note that the banana was eventually rebranded as a nutritious and healthy snack for children and adults alike, further domesticating the fruit. Historian John Soluri links the assimilation of bananas to their proliferation in lower-and middle-class life, emphasizing "the banana's transition from an exotic novelty into a commodity of mass consumption."[6] These scholars are in consensus that, as bananas became more popular, they shed any past association with lush tropical jungles.

Conversely, other historians have looked to the period after World War II as a time when advertising campaigns about bananas began to selectively emphasize their "foreignness." Edward Bernays, an infamous advertiser hired by the United Fruit Company, is particularly credited with changing the marketing of bananas. As Peter Chapman argues in *Bananas: How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World*, it was under Bernays' guidance that United Fruit rebranded Central America as Middle America, to both "teach North Americans about their neighbors to the South" and "convey the right image of respectability and good values."[7] This culminated in the creation of the famous Chiquita Banana, whose colorful headdress and flamenco skirt conveyed images of tropics. The arc of such histories is that, although bananas lost their tropical edge in the early twentieth century, their foreign image was revived after World War II as Americans expressed a new interest in the world.

(Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005). For more on the United Fruit's role in Central America, see Steve Striffler and Mark Moberg, eds., *Banana Wars: Power, Production, and History in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003) and James W. Martin, *Banana Cowboys: the United Fruit Company and the Culture of Corporate Colonialism* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018).

[5] Virginia Scott Jenkins, *Bananas: An American History* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 15.

[6] Soluri, *Banana Cultures*, 3. Another good reference on the culture of bananas is Yi-Luan Huang, "Yes! We have no Bananas": Cultural Imaginings of the Banana in America 1800-1945," phD. diss., (University of Oregon, 2018).

[7] Larry Tye, *The Father of the Spin: Edward L. Bernays and the Birth of Public Relations* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1998), 162 and Peter Chapman, *Bananas: How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World* (Edinburgh, Canongate, 2007), 117.

While in the early twentieth century bananas were articulated as something foreign when they were harvested, they were assimilated into American culture through the process of production and consumption. Thus, bananas never fully lost their exotic association in this time period. Although it is true that they were marketed as "the poor man's fruit" and, later, as a healthy and dietetic snack, literature and videos about bananas were also ripe with images of sandy beaches and palm fronds. Pamphlets, books, and videos about bananas almost always contained scenes of jungles, and tales of thrilling adventures on banana plantations continued to appear in newspapers and magazines. At the same time, recipes on bananas focused not on their exotic mystery but on wholesome family values, and banana recipes integrated the fruit into the limited American palette. Cultural imaginings connected these ideas, as bananas went through geographic and developmental stages and were transformed through the process of consumption. Images of romance and mystery situated bananas as foreign and tropical in their land of origin, but as they were processed by fruit companies, carried in steamships on the Atlantic, and brought onto the kitchen table, they were assimilated into American culture. An examination of the material and consumer culture of bananas at this time therefore also yields an understanding of how American consumers understood their extractive relationship to Central and South America.

This paper will draw heavily on the United Fruit company as a source for information on advertising and other materials about bananas. Throughout the twentieth century, United Fruit was the largest importer of bananas, owning 63 percent of bunches imported by 1930. The only competitor that kept them from becoming a complete monopoly was the Standard Fruit Company.[8] Moreover, United Fruit was particularly energetic in advertising their bananas, going so far as to create an education department in 1929 to generate materials for school curriculums and women's magazines. Primary sources from United Fruit are rich with cultural implications, and, as I will demonstrate throughout the paper, their narratives were readily accepted and reinforced by the public.[9] Bananas were therefore socially and politically constructed by both fruit companies and

[8] Jenkins, *Bananas: An American History*, 20.

[9] This paper will not distinguish heavily between sources published at different times, as previous histories have done. Although the United Fruit company undertook various marketing campaigns, I argue that the overall messaging around bananas remained consistent between 1900 and 1940.

consumers who accepted such ideas.[10]

To parallel their assimilation into American culture, this paper is structured into three parts that follow the ripening stages of bananas. The first section features unripe bananas, as they are picked and prepared for shipment to American markets. Banana lands retained their exotic image, still foreign and unripe in American culture, although plantation technology introduced the beginnings of assimilation. Secondly, the ripening bananas transported on steamships provide a fruitful discussion about how bananas represented an economic and cultural connection to Central America. As United Fruit company boats carried bananas to the mainland and tourists to the Caribbean, Americans understood themselves connected to Latin America as consumers. Lastly, as ripe bananas arrived in markets and landed on kitchen tables, they were finally, fully, incorporated into American culture, ready to be eaten and enjoyed.

Green Bananas: Transforming the Virgin Jungle

The early twentieth-century United States consumer culture of bananas emphasized the tropical origins of the fruit. Companies provided Americans with images of "wild" jungles and positively portrayed the presence of American business in foreign banana plantations as a part of modernization. Literature produced by the United Fruit Company, for instance, almost always opened by locating readers in banana plantations in Central or South America. They presented maps that situated readers in a foreign space and established the banana as an *import* with origins off American shores. *The New Banana*, an educational recipe book produced by United Fruit, opens with a map adorned with figures of palm trees, planes, and native peoples (fig. 1). In the corner of the map sits Florida, reminding the reader of the proximity of Central America, while also underscoring its "otherness." Other United Fruit materials relied on descriptions of banana plantations to excite readers, noting the "vast plantations in the heart of luxuriant tropic vegetation."[11] Such descriptions presented a continuation of early ideas that bananas were an item of exotic luxury, and situated its readers in foreign places that would have been far different from their home

[10] Bananas also spurred important technological changes and scientific innovations. For more, see the previous footnote about literature outside of the scope of this paper's focus on the culture of bananas.

[11] *From the Tropics to Your Table: Eighty-Three Tested Banana Recipes* (New York: Fruit Dispatch Company, 1926), 3. The Fruit Dispatch company is a subsidiary of the United Fruit Company.

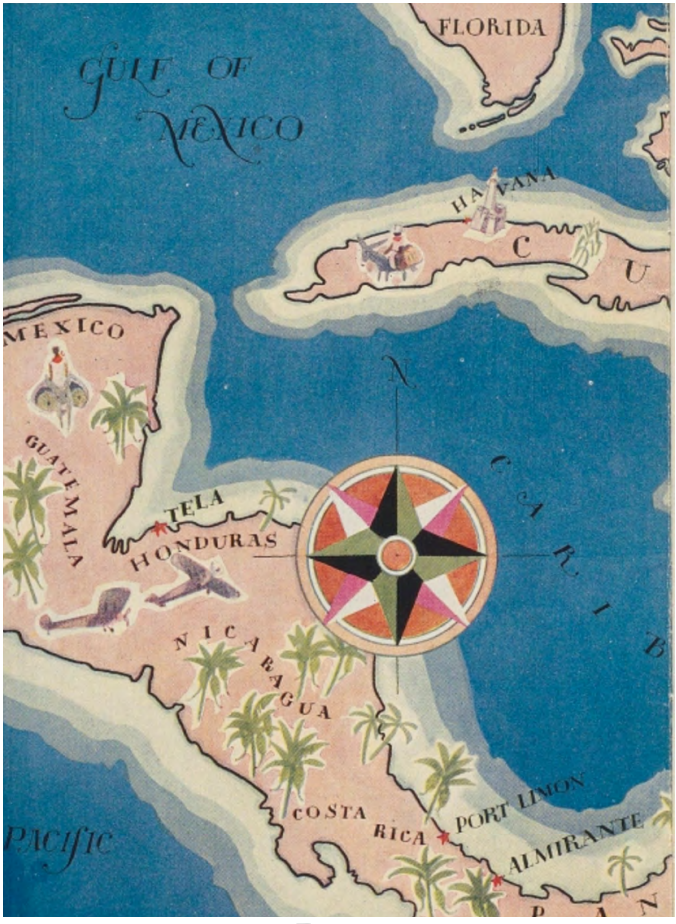

Figure 1[12]

landscapes. The visual and textual elements of the media also inculcated an image of banana plantation regions as places of intrigue and romance.

This imagery was often associated not only with the natural, lush landscapes of Central America, but also the native populations that lived there. Two women with flowing dresses sit on the cover of United Fruit's *A Short History*

[12] *The New Banana* (New York: The Fruit Dispatch Company, 1931), 1.

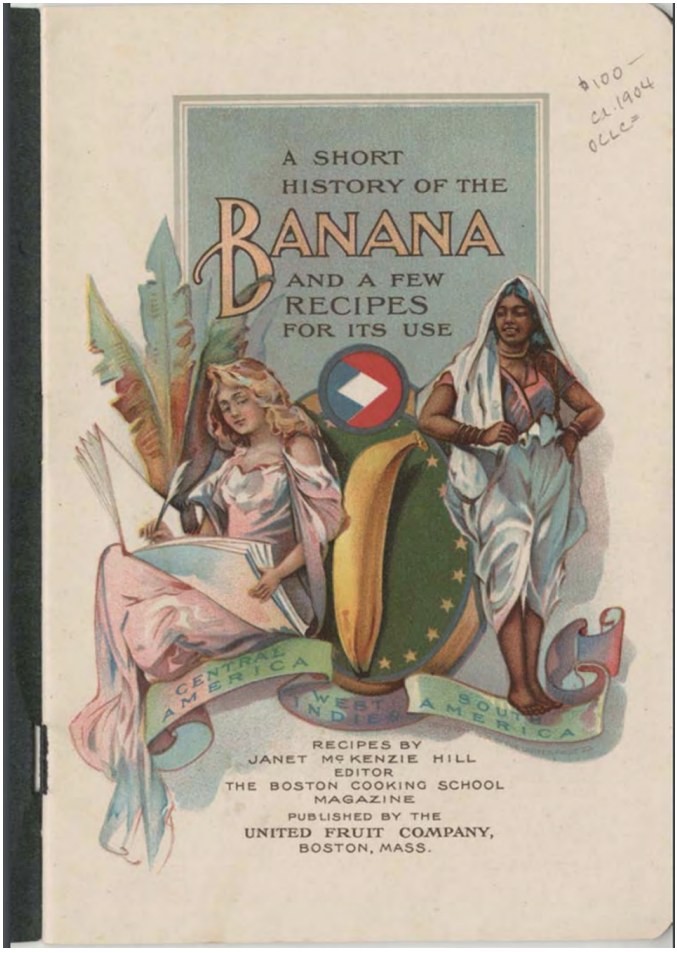

Figure 2[13]

of the Banana and a Few Recipes for Its Use, ostensibly representing Central America and South America (fig. 2). The book goes on to detail the history of bananas, claiming "It is a common sight in Jamaica to see a dozen or more women each

[13] *A Short History of the Banana and a Few Recipes For Its Use* (Boston: The United Fruit Company, 1904), 1.

with a large bunch of bananas on her head, and these they will carry for several miles without stopping."[14] Such phrases and imagery distinctly linked bananas to gendered ideas of tropical women situated outside of American culture. United Fruit advertisers touted the power of tropical imagery, claiming: "the tropical region has always been a glamorous land of adventure and mystery–just the place to go in order to escape the ennui of humdrum existence."[15] The allure of Central and South American life became a selling point for fruit companies, a continuous effort to cultivate an image of foreign-ness. Stories of tropical intrigue and mystery were set on banana plantations in Costa Rica and Honduras, and heroic adventurers journeyed in banana-rich jungles.[16] Bananas themselves were foreign because they grew in these far-off lands.

While the tropics provided an opportunity for romantic and exoticizing imagery, they also presented an unruly and unstable threat, one which would be defeated by the presence of American companies. An article in *Current Opinion* noted that bananas grow "in pestilential regions, full of venomous insects and noxious vapors. The banana country had to be developed, forests had to be cleared, swamps drained and railroads built."[17] Indeed, while much of the media about bananas begins in tropical places, they also go on to show the civilizing power of technological development. *About Bananas*, a 1935 film produced by United Fruit about the process of banana production, opens with scenes of jungles while title cards provide descriptions. As the native palm fronds breeze in the wind, the clip preemptively describes "Virgin jungle being converted into a banana plantation."[18] Successive video clips show the technology of the United Fruit Company tearing down palms in favor of neat rows of banana trees, framed within the narrative of the movie as a positive change to the natural landscape. What was once romantic and unruly is made productive by the technology of United Fruit. Visuals of modernization promoted American authority over banana supplies, rejecting native rights to the land and blending the

[14] *A Short History of the Banana*, 4.

[15] Frank A. Busico, "Selling the Tropics," *Unifruitco*, May 1928, 637. Accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

[16] For an example, see Leonard Wood Jr. "The Banana Girl," *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, Nov 1914, https://www.proquest.com/docview/135771897. As John Soluri notes, some of these "external" writers were associated with the United Fruit Company, Soluri, *Banana Cultures*, 61.

[17] "The Epic of the Banana," *Current Opinion*, December 1916, https://www.proquest.com/docview/124794712.

[18] *About Bananas* (Boston: The United Fruit Company, 1935), 0:03:35.

relationship between the foreign countries and the United States. Although the bananas may have begun as objects of foreign interest, the beginnings of Americanization were present through the technological prowess of the United Fruit plantation.

United Fruit continually portrayed its growing presence in Latin America as a force of good for the economies of the countries in which it operated. Patting themselves on the back, United Fruit mused that "Central America may indeed thank the banana trade for by far the most progressive development and constructive influence which have ever reached its shores."[19] Despite United Fruit's poor working conditions for its native laborers and contentious relationships with its host countries, this narrative of benevolence resonated beyond United Fruit's marketing materials. A 1922 newspaper article touted the "modern science" of United Fruit, and praised bananas as "fitting symbols of a conquest of the torrid wilderness by private enterprise that has done more for the territories than their governments themselves."[20] The green bananas, picked on plantations in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, maintained their tropical and exotic imagery, but only because they were eventually harvested by American technology. The process of transformation had begun.

Yellowing Bananas: Riding the Banana Boats

On massive, bright white ships named "The Great White Fleet," bananas were transported from tropical plantations to American ports in New Orleans, Boston, and New York, where they were distributed across the country and sold in grocery stores. The Great White Fleet was an impressive technological innovation, with high capacity refrigeration technology developed in 1903 to combat the heat emitted by bananas during the ripening and transportation process.[21]

The United Fruit company's ships also offered tourism services, carrying passengers to destinations in Jamaica, Honduras, and Costa Rica in an attempt

[19] *The Story of the Banana*, 19.

[20] Newton Fussle, "The Green Gold of the Tropics," *Outlook*, October 4, 1922, https://www.proquest.com/docview/136659713. By the 1930s, there was some rising criticism of the United Fruit Company's practices, with the phrase "banana republic" emerging as a critical term. However, this perspective was not particularly popular or reflective of attitudes towards United Fruit. For more see Chapman, *How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World*, 108.

[21] James W. Martin, "The United Fruit Company's Tourist Business and the Creation of the 'Golden Caribbean', 1889-1940," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 8, no. 2 (May 2016): 242, https://doi.org/10.1108/JHRM-01-2015-0004.

Figure 3[22]

to generate interest in the tropics, and therefore an interest in the products United Fruit produced. The ships—intermediary points between the bananas' origins and their destinations—straddled the idea of the "domestic" and the "foreign" as they established connections between the banana plantations and the consumers themselves. Maps detailing the Great White Fleet's shipping routes in the Atlantic were frequently produced by United Fruit. Lines connected departing ports in Jamaica, Colombia, and Guatemala, to New Orleans, Baltimore, and Boston. The map in Figure 3 is just one example of the kind of classroom material that emphasized the connective trading routes.[23] Images of transport routes, which showed the locations of banana plantations and their destinations, reminded consumers that not only were their bananas coming from distant

[22] *The Banana Its Growth and Cultivation* (New York: Fruit Dispatch Company, 1929).

[23] For another example, see *Unifruitco*, June 1928, 1, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

Figure 4[24]

[24] "The Great White Fleet," Wikimedia Commons, accessed March 12, 2023. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/41/United_Fruit_Ad_1916.jpg

lands, but that their production created a linkage to the countries of origin. At the same time, the product was moving away from its original location and into the hands of American consumers on American ships, perpetuating the narrative of assimilation that had begun with the cultivation of bananas on their plantations. Thus, although there was a connection between Latin America and the United States, it was one in which Americans had the purchasing power.

The United Fruit Company realized the benefits of establishing a connection with Latin America, and in the 1910s began offering tours of the Caribbean aboard the Great White Fleets.[25] Facilitated by United Fruit, the same ships that carried bananas, a "foreign" product, to American shores also carried Americans to "foreign" lands. The trips themselves were replete with tropical imagery, palm fronds, and wicker chairs adorning the ship's dining rooms.[26] Diners could enjoy not only canapes, salmon, and French pastries, but also the cruise's signature "banana fritters" while basking in the tropical sunlight.[27] A book advertising the trip further commented on the "alluring congeries of romance and modernity we call the Caribbean."[28] The trips were symbols of luxury—tied not only to the conditions on the cruises, but also the ports throughout Latin America and the Caribbean that they would visit. Moreover, advertising for the cruises promised "the romance of buried treasure, pirate ships, and deeds of adventure, centuries ago" (fig. 4). Historian James Martin notes this romanticized tropical image is rooted in historical images of piracy and treasure: "In consuming United Fruit's romanticized Caribbean, passengers and armchair travelers reading at home could assume the role of pirate/adventurer, thereby conflating an imagined past and the reader's present."[29] In other words, United Fruit could portray itself in a positive light and invite passengers to live a life of tropical excitement.

This carried into the work that United Fruit did to promote its capital ven-

[25] For a discussion of profitability, see *Unifruitco*, June 1928, 656, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections. The early nineteenth century also saw a general boom in tourism in the Caribbean. For more, see Catherine Cocks. "The Pleasures of Degeneration: Climate, Race, and the Origins of the Global Tourist South in the Americas." *Discourse* 29, no. 2 (2007): 215-235. muse.jhu.edu/article/266835.

[26] Martin, "Golden Caribbean," 243.

[27] "Great White Fleet, United Fruit Company Steamship Service, T.E.S. Talamanca, Dinner Menu," March 30, 1940, https://scholarsarchive.jwu.edu/shipping_lines_menus/37/.

[28] William McFee, *The Gates of the Caribbean: The Story of a Great White Fleet Caribbean Cruise* (Boston: United Fruit Company, 1922), 3.

[29] Martin, "Golden Caribbean," 254.

tures in the Caribbean and Central America. As a part of the tours, passengers would visit banana plantations. Americans witnessed "the technological sublime" that "acquainted visitors with the [United Fruit's] accomplishments" and gave credibility to the idea of the fruit company as a benevolent force.[30] Here, more directly than its rhetorical claims about the Caribbean, United Fruit was able to show passengers the transformative power of their company on tropical lands. Although the trips connected Americans to Central America, they did so through a mediated lens that both romanticized the tropics and furthered narratives of corporate modernization.

In its peak year, 1929, the Great White Fleet carried 76,000 passengers; by United Fruit's own estimates, it moved 560,000 passengers between 1911 and 1921.[31] United Fruit intentionally sought to provide tourists with premium service and a glittering view of banana lands to increase their sales. "The invisible balance sheet is the 'document' of service well rendered and of a good name acquired by honorable dealing," one United Fruit official said of the cruises.[32] As a result, a significant number of middle-and upper-class tourists were exposed to the messaging of United Fruit. One passenger reminisced that "the tremendous ramifications of the United Fruit Company can be appreciated only by one who has traveled in Central and South America."[33] Positive testimonials demonstrate how the United Fruit Company, at least partially, was successful in generating interest in the Caribbean and spreading its message of modernization.

As with the banana plantations, the Great White Fleet provided further space for an "Americanized" banana to develop. The ships represented an important middle ground—a split between foreign banana plantations and American markets. As the bananas were brought to the U.S., shipping routes established direct consumer ties with Latin America and established U.S. authority as the importer of the fruit. The boats conversely brought tourists to the banana plantations, deepening these cultural and commercial connections. Presented with a mediated view of the Caribbean, passengers aboard the Great White Fleet were exposed to "foreign" elements but in a distinctly Americanized way;

[30] Martin, "Golden Caribbean," 257.

[31] Martin, "Golden Caribbean," 245, and *The Story of the Banana*, 52.

[32] *Unifruitco*, June 1928, 695, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

[33] W. C. Foster, "Passenger Lauds Great White Fleet Cruise to Honduras and Guatemala," *Unifruitco*, June 1928, 693, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

their growing presence in cities like Havana also represented the encroaching presence of American influence in Latin America. As the banana ripened, so too did their relationship to American culture.

Ripe Bananas: Concocting the Banana Meatloaf

On their original plantations and aboard the Great White Fleet, bananas were slowly assimilated while still maintaining some tropical connections; it was their final consumption in American markets, however, which solidified their place as a wholesome, healthy, American food. In particular, ideals of white, domestic, middle class life dominated marketing about the bananas' place within the United States, using symbolic consumption as the final layer of the assimilating project. This was a particular goal of the United Fruit company, who sought to refine the banana's image as "the poor man's food" to market to a larger middle-class consumer base. In their internal publication *Unifruitco*, United Fruit marketing executives explained to employees: "We know that bananas, like numerous other products, will be accepted by the masses if they have the endorsement of the upper class. Then, in addition to the 'class' representation, we show the banana playing a part in the lives of children, sportsmen, workers, housewives, businesswomen, etc."[34] United Fruit tied bananas to the upper-class not necessarily by discussing them as a tropical item for the dining table, but as something that could be transformed to support wholesome, American, ideals of work, sport, and family. The integration of bananas into the lives of consumers completed the cycle of assimilation.

This final stage in the life cycle of the banana was gendered; although advertising targeted all members of a nuclear family, the onus fell on the housewife to buy and serve the product to her husband and children. It was a woman's domestic labor that finally turned the foreign product into something palatable and familiar. United Fruit Company publications made this clear, imploring to readers that "good housekeepers all study the value of this underappreciated product."[35] The banana was an accessible, easy-to-use-in-a-pinch ingredient. "In a child's lunch box, it satisfies the childish appetite and craving for sweets. It is an emergency ration dear to the housewife for it may be used as a fruit, an entree, a vegetable, a salad or a dessert" bragged another banana pamphlet.[36] This was an

[34] F. W. Kastner, "Our Advertising Humanizes the Banana," *Unifruitco*, April 1930, 533, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

[35] *The Story of the Banana*, 14.

[36] *From the Tropics to Your Table*, 4.

explicit campaign by marketers at United Fruit to target homemakers. "Bananas do not suffer because they are unknown. Rather they do suffer because they are *incorrectly known*," marketing executives explained, "All these facts combined point to the desirability of national women's publications. So our problem in 1930 at least, is to emphasize the healthfulness, availability and style possibilities of bananas, served in the modern manner."[37] Bananas would need to be made familiar to housewives, and framed in the contexts of middle-class life, in order to be broadly accepted by the American public. To achieve this, United Fruit published monthly articles on the benefits and qualities of bananas in women's journals like *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Woman's Home Companion*, and others to encourage consumers to purchase even more bananas.[38]

To help Americans integrate bananas into their diet, the United Fruit Company and other housekeeping magazines published a dizzying amount of banana recipes. They framed bananas squarely within American life by plopping the fruit into existing American recipes.[39] *The New Banana* featured "Bananas and Bacon"—bananas, wrapped in raw bacon, and fried until cooked—that it promised was "Guaranteed to start a conversation" (fig. 5). Another recipe encouraged housewives to make a banana salad by rolling a banana in nuts and garnishing with mayonnaise on a bed of lettuce.[40] One particularly potent example of the strange suggested concoctions is a banana meatloaf, in which a classic, all-American meatloaf is served with sliced bananas as decoration.[41] To encourage maximum banana-consumption, some recipe books featured meal plans, suggesting no less than two bananas a day. While likely strange—or even revolting—to the modern palette, the recipes also symbolized the "domestic" image that bananas took on once they were brought into the American market. No longer were they tropical or exotic items; rather, they performed the same work of any other native fruit or vegetable that sat on a typical American dinner menu. The mystique of the tropics may have been acceptable when bananas

[37] F. W. Kastner, "Why Banana Growers Association Chose Magazines," *Unifruitco*, Vol. 5, 1929-1930, 465, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

[38] For a full list of women's periodicals that United Fruit published in, see "Look for the Banana Growers Association's Ads in 1930," *Unifruitco*, Vol. 5 1929-1930, 467, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

[39] Other cookbooks, not affiliated with United Fruit, include, *Yes! 100 Ways to Enjoy Bananas* (1925) and *Yes! Home Made Banana Recipes* (1929). For more, see Huang, "Cultural Imaginings of the Banana," 23.

[40] *The New Banana.*

[41] *From the Tropics to Your Table*, 9.

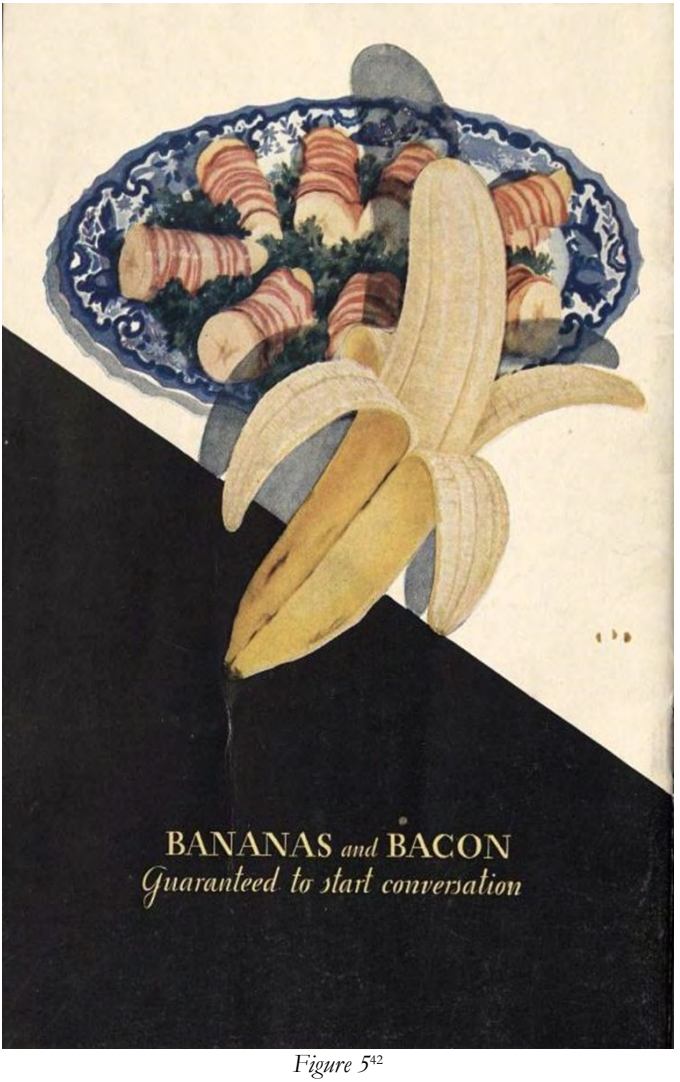

Figure 5[42]

[42] *The New Banana*, 25.

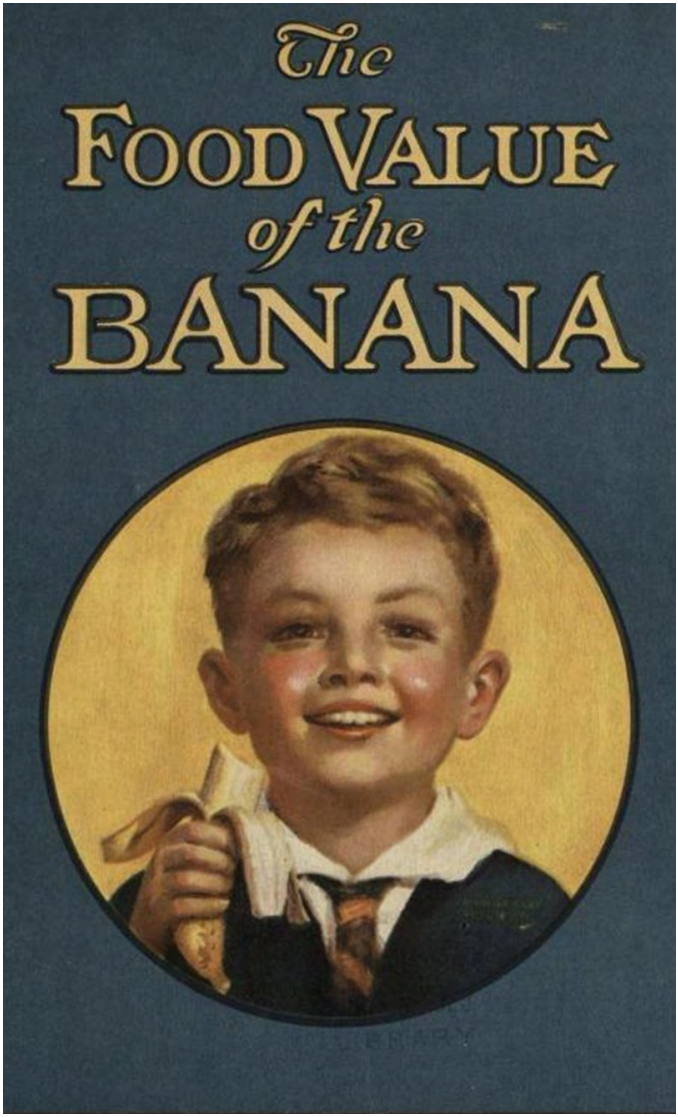

Figure 6[43]

[43] *The Food Value of the Banana* (Boston: United Fruit Company, 1928), 1.

remained on plantations, but they needed to be made familiar on the dinner table. By seeking to establish bananas into the "American" diet of mayonnaise and meat, bananas were rendered familiar and acceptable to their American audience.

Nutrition became an important part of advertising for bananas, reflective of a new health-conscious culture and of gendered and middle-class ideals of healthy children. The United Fruit Company invested heavily in research about the nutritive qualities of bananas. In 1936 they published a selection of a humble 292 articles which touted the banana's abilities. The scientific literature, selected by United Fruit, promised solutions to a wide array of maladies, from celiac disease, to constipation, to obesity.[44] These were important health issues to resolve on their own, but the nutritional value of bananas also promised a greater engagement in social and civic life. The all-American institution, the Boy Scouts, appeared in banana advertisements roasting bananas over fires and eating them on trips in the wilderness. United Fruit boasted that, at a Boys Scout Camp, "taking care of the health of this vast army of boys is a problem that has been solved systematically by the camp leaders" who provided fresh bananas regularly.[45] The United Fruit film About Bananas ended with clips of children playing basketball and running track, all powered by the "ENERGY" of bananas provided by the mothers who sliced them on top of their children's cereal.[46]

As shown on the cover of *The Food Value of the Banana*, the fruit was linked to images of white, American children, with healthy and happy smiles. The banana was not just nutritious—that nutrition enabled a high-quality middle-class life. The subliminal messages implored housewives to create this kind of life for their children, their husbands, and themselves by serving up bananas. It also placed the banana as a pillar within middle-class society, further removing it from any romantic, unruly, or foreign associations that it may have had on the banana plantation. It was in the hands of children, and under the knives of housewives, that bananas were finally made American.

These films and media had a significant impact. A copy of About Bananas, donated to the Field Museum of Natural History on the condition that the curators disseminate it for educational purposes, was estimated to have been shown

[44] *Nutritive and Therapeutic Values of the Banana: A Digest of Scientific Literature* (Boston: United Fruit Company, 1936).

[45] *Unifruitco*, November 1930, 201, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

[46] *About Bananas*, 0:14:53.

to more than 55,000 pupils in Chicago.[47] In 1929, United Fruit approximated that up to 200,000 people would view the slides they created about banana plantations and nutrition.[48] As evidenced by the news articles and studies about bananas throughout the twentieth century, the fruit generated interest across American culture; newspaper articles like "The Green Gold of the Tropics" and "Bananas—their Culture and Transportation" paralleled the narratives of United Fruit.[49] Thus, not only were consumers understanding the health benefits of bananas, they were also witnessing how their labor and consumption was essential to the assimilation of bananas into American life.[50] Although bananas may have been situated in a global taste on banana plantations, they were ripe with American culture once in the States.

Conclusion

In 1954, the United Fruit Company, with the assistance of the United States CIA, successfully coordinated a coup of Guatemalan President Jacobo Árbenz. Árbenz had attempted to nationalize a portion of the United Fruit Company's land, but his threat to banana production resulted in one the major examples of U.S. imperialism in Latin America in the twentieth century. Historians examining banana culture have pointed to the advertising campaigns of the 40s and 50s, like the "Middle America" movement and Chiquita banana, as evidence that Americans had begun to integrate Central America into their perceived sphere

[47] Letter, April 15, 1938, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

[48] Letter, September 16, 1929, accessed in the Field Museum of Natural History collections.

[49] Fussel, "The Green Gold of the Tropics," and Charles B. Hayward, "Bananas–Their Culture and Transportation," *Scientific American*, January 8, 1905. https://www.proquest.com/docview/126794005.

[50] To a certain extent, bananas also changed the tastes of American consumers. As Marcy Norton demonstrated for chocolate, bananas were not completely at the whim of Americanizing trends. Notably, some recipes, like one for "Baked Bananas, Porto Rican Fashion," (in *A Short History of the Banana*) attempted to bring Latin American applications of bananas into the American diet (although Puerto Rico is, actually, an American colony). These recipes were often inaccurate, misinterpreting bananas and plantains as equivalent substitutes, and such recipes never featured prominently in magazines. For more on the empire of taste, see Marcy Norton, "Tasting Empire: Chocolate and the European Internalization of Mesoamerican Aesthetics," *American Historical Review* (2006): 660-691.

of influence, making intervention easier to justify.[51] In this interpretation, the culture of bananas carefully cultivated by United Fruit's marketing teams enabled their political meddling in Latin America.

Yet the seeds of this thought had been planted long before the 1940s. Although the trend was accelerated and given catchy slogans after World War II, bananas already had a long and complicated history as "domestic" and "foreign" objects. Across media, both produced by United Fruit and outside of it, bananas were shown as a process, traveling from foreign banana plantations into American lunch pails in the course of a single text. Cookbooks, informational books, maps, and advertising campaigns all cultivated a narrative that bananas could be transformed through the consumption process. They also brought consumers directly into the project of United Fruit by making them the key to assimilating the product. Banana companies depicted the importance of the consumer in both assimilating foreign culture into American life and granting authority over foreign places. Once bananas were "Americanized," the corrosive presence of United Fruit in Latin America appeared natural, rather than imposed.

In a 1922 article, journalist Newton Fussle wrote that "The continuous flood of this green gold product of the tropics to the tables of the world is much more than an ambitious venture in agriculture and distribution. It has changed ancient civilizations, and has bound together North America, Central America, South America, and the West Indies in a lasting-knot."[52] Bananas had, in other words, provided a link between America and its growing globalized presence in the early twentieth century. Actors like the United Fruit Company tied the banana to a mutually beneficial relationship, inculcating the American commercial empire as a benevolent endeavor. Ordinary American consumers aided in this characterization, participating in the project of fruit companies by both demonstrating interest in bananas and assimilating them into their diets. Popular understandings of bananas throughout the early twentieth century provided a tangible guide for how the U.S. could interact with different cultures, appreciating from afar and reaping their benefits at home.

[51] Chapman, *How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World*, 199.

[52] Fussle, "Green Gold of the Tropics."

Lindsay Moynihan

Legacy Building in the Guatemalan Coup of 1954

An Analysis of the Memoirs of Maria Vilanova de Árbenz, Carlos Manuel Pellecer, and Mauricio Dubois

On September 20, 1995, Maria Cristina Vilanova de Árbenz handed the final draft of her memoir to Jorge Solares, the Secretary of the Commission of the Superior University Council for the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution of 1944.[1] The October Revolution was the uprising of several high-ranking members of the Guatemalan military, including Jacobo Árbenz, Vilanova de Árbenz's' husband, against the dictator Jorge Ubico. Ubico, who had ruled the country since 1931, had a base of support that included landowners and the United Fruit Company, an American company that opposed agrarian reform. At the end of Vilanova Árbenz's manuscript, in all capital letters, a single phrase stands out: "LA POSTERIDAD NOS HARÁ JUSTICIA."[2] In English, this translates to "Posterity will do us justice."[3] A powerful conclusion to her memoir, Vilanova de Árbenz's declarative statement underscores the chaos of a period in Guatemalan history that continues to confound historians today. The destruction of thousands of government documents by the CIA and the ongoing classification of sources has led to the disagreement of many historians as the causes of the coup, as well as its legacies. To understand the reasons why she invoked this powerful quote, and how it connects to her involvement in the events of the coup, it is essential to place the memoir in historical context.

[1] Maria Cristina Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo, el presidente Árbenz* (Guatemala: Comisión Presidencial coordinadora de la Política del Ejecutivo de Derechos Humanos, 2000), 9.

[2] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 178.

[3] All quotations originally in Spanish have been translated for this article by the author.

Jacobo Árbenz was the second democratically elected president of Guatemala, elected in 1952 with his wife, Maria Vilanova de Árbenz, at his side.[4] The two rose to national prominence through their participation in the October Revolution of 1944. According to historian Nick Cullather, the two "studied and discussed Guatemala's chronic economic and social problems, and in 1944, they joined the revolution on the side of the teachers."[5] The progressive movement in Guatemala toward land reform and new educational policies started with the teachers, and their support of the movement placed the couple firmly into social circles that supported change. Juan Jose Arévalo, who had won the first election after the overthrow of Ubico, appointed Árbenz his Minister of Defense. Jacobo Árbenz, who had been born Quetzaltenango in 1913, had served in the military since his 1935 graduation from Guatemala's Escuela Politécnica, the national military training school.[6] After his tenure as Minister of Defense for the Arévalo administration, he ran for president, winning 65 percent of the popular vote.[7]

Land reform was a major issue in Guatemala. 2 percent of owners owned 75 percent of all arable land, and more than 50 percent of farmland was held in large plantations of 1100 acres or more.[8] As such, extensive agrarian reform was at the forefront of Árbenz's priorities upon his election. His goal was to redistribute lands to peasants and their families, including uncultivated land owned by the United Fruit Company (UFCO), an American corporation that held a virtual monopoly on land usage in Guatemala.[9] In fact, in large part due to UFCO's holdings in Guatemala, 90 percent of foreign investments made by residents of the five states that comprise New England were held in Latin America and, as

[4] Stephen C. Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala.* (Cambridge: Harvard University, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, 2005), 147.

[5] Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 20.

[6] Roberto García Ferreira, "El Caso Árbenz y Las Acciones Encubiertas de La CIA: ¿Modelo de Operación Propagandística?" *Revista de Historia de América*, no. 137 (2006): 105–30.

[7] Britta H. Crandall and Russel C. Crandall: "Getting Jacobo." In *Our Hemisphere: The United States in Latin America, from 1776 to the Twenty-First Century*, 159–67. (Yale University Press, 2021)

[8] Crandall and Crandall, "Getting Jacobo," 161.

[9] Piero Gleijeses,"The Agrarian Reform of Jacobo Árbenz." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21, no. 3 (1989): 453–80.

such, the United States government had an interest in protecting such assets.[10] Starting in 1953, facing pressures from the UFCO and concerned about the spread of communism, the US funded uprisings and supplied arms to opponents of the Árbenz administration. In the same year, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) sponsored a coup that overthrew Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh, often referred to as Operation Ajax.[11] Many of U.S. policymakers' concerns stemmed from the fact that Árbenz and Vilanova de Árbenz had become friends with "reformers, labor organizations, and officers that made up the elite of Guatemala City," according to Nick Cullather.[12] In fact, as historian Jim Handy has argued, "eventually, it was the agrarian reform, the most precious fruit…of the revolution, that led to the overthrow of the Árbenz administration."[13] The CIA used anticommunism merely as a pretense, but Árbenz's land reform truly threatened American capital in the area. It was not the fear of communism that led to the overthrow of the Árbenz administration, but rather concern of financial loss from the destruction of UFCO's land monopoly that ultimately led to the planning and execution of a coup. In 1954, the CIA organized a coup led by Guatemalan exile Castillo de Armas against the Árbenz administration. Conventional wars, in the eyes of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, were much too risky, and instead the CIA embarked on a program of psychological warfare through pamphlets and radio transmissions.[14] The program was successful, and on June 27th, 1954, Jacobo Árbenz resigned.

Within the larger context of the coup, key characters emerge. First, Vilanova de Árbenz, his wife, played a major role in both his personal and political debates and, as mentioned earlier, wrote a memoir based on her experiences. These three memoirs were selected because they are the only primary accounts of the coup that mention Vilanova de Árbenz by name. Her role was, however, a contentious topic in Pellcer's and DuBois' memoirs, as they both allege she had an affair in 1954 immediately before the coup and see her as the seductress that brought his reform ideas into a collision course with the CIA. Indeed, I

[10] Crandall and Crandall, "Getting Jacobo," 90.

[11] Cullather, *Secret History*, 22.

[12] Cullather, *Secret History*, 20.

[13] Jim Handy, "'The Most Precious Fruit of the Revolution': The Guatemalan Agrarian Reform, 1952-54." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 68, no. 4 (1988): 675–705.

[14] On Eisenhower and conventional wars see: Richard H. Immerman, *The Hidden Hand: A Brief History of the CIA* (Hoboken: Wiley, 2014), 145. On psychological warfare see: Schlesinger, *Bitter Fruit*, 140.

argue that her relationship to Árbenz's political agenda has been interpreted in a uniquely gendered way. By accusing Vilanova de Árbenz of having an affair and portraying her as a seductress, they use her gender to discredit her contributions to the Árbenz administration. The second memoir analyzed in this paper is that of Carlos Manuel Pellecer, a classmate at the Escuela Politécnica who continued to be involved in Jacobo Arbenz life as a labor organizer and ambassador during his administration[15] who later reconnected with Árbenz in exile in Czechoslovakia,[16] also wrote a memoir that depicts the Árbenz years. Finally, a third memoir, written by Juan Mauricio Dubois, who attended the Escuela Politécnica with Árbenz and Pellecer will be analyzed.[17] Dubois was noted by Pellecer to be an "old friend," offers Dubois' account of the coup and Árbenz's military career.[18] This memoir will be analyzed in less detail for two reasons. First, the memoir focuses more on giving an overview of the military accomplishments of Jacobo Árbenz and other members of his administration. This meant that there was little attention given to Vilanova de Árbenz and her relationship with her husband. Secondly, it quotes directly from Pellecer's memoir when it references the affair she is alleged to have had. This repetition merited its inclusion, but due to similar claims it will not be analyzed as directly as the other two memoirs.

I argue that through the memoirs of Maria Vilanova de Árbenz, Carlos Manuel Pellecer, and Juan Mauricio Dubois, the history of the Guatemalan Coup of 1954 is reconstructed for a modern, Spanish-speaking audiences as one of undeserved tragedy for President Jacobo Árbenz, a true hero in their eyes. The accounts diverge, however, in the legacy-building of Vilanova de Árbenz. Pellecer and DuBois both take a negative stance on her involvement, recalling her role as one of poison to his agenda and personal life.

It is of the utmost importance to understand the timeline on which each author published their memoirs, as each was written over four decades after the 1954 coup. The earliest publication was in 1997, with Carlos Manuel Pellecer's memoir *Árbenz y yo* followed by the publication of Maria Vilanova de Árbenz's *Mi esposo, el presidente Árbenz* in 2000. The most recent work was Juan Mauri-

[15] Carlos Manuel Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo* (Guatemala, Guatemala: Artemis-Edinter, 1997), 137.

[16] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 130.

[17] Juan Mauricio Dubois, *Pequeña biografía Jacobo Árbenz* (Guatemala, Guatemala: Armar Editories, 2014), 6.

[18] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 114.

cio DuBois's *Pequeño Biografía: Jacobo Árbenz*, published in 2014.[19] Each of these books reflects a different perspective on the events of the Guatemalan coup and presents different legacies and ideas they wish to advance. Each of these authors may have read the work of the others, depending on when it was published, and incorporated new perspectives or taken the time to correct assertions they saw as incorrect. Building these considerations into my analysis is key to the idea of legacy building. Furthermore, since all three are written in Spanish, and no full English translations exist, they were written for a Spanish-speaking audience and with the express goal of impacting the views of those readers on the events and aftermath of the 1954 coup.

According to Pellecer and DuBois, Vilanova de Árbenz had an extramarital affair, and emphasizes her provocative and possessive nature. In a major departure from this, Vilanova de Árbenz presents a narrative of true love and devotion, never mentioning an affair and crediting her personality with her own political success on his behalf. Taken together, these accounts allow for the role of Vilanova de Árbenz to be more justly understood in the context of the legacy-building motivations of the people who were involved in the coup. It begs further research on the role that Vilanova de Árbenz played in her husband's life.

Methods and Source Credibility

Before continuing, it is important to establish how I approached using memoirs as sources and the implications of using memoirs and declassified CIA documents as the basis for this paper. I read each memoir with the specific goal of understanding Vilanova de Árbenz's involvement in her husband's political life. Yet, there is a distinct lack of secondary scholarship exclusively focusing on her, and I was unable to find a single source when researching for this paper. In the secondary sources, it was often her memoir and her interviews that gave voice to Árbenz's doomed presidency, as historians cited her frequently. As a result, I sought out other sources written after the coup. The greatest of these sources proved to be the three memoirs mentioned above, two by men associated with Árbenz and one written by her. These memoirs reveal the attitudes that the two men held towards her as well as her attitudes toward the events of her life. However, memoirs are inherently biased and not always reliable. As sources they can, however, reveal a great deal about how individuals seek to present

[19] English translations of the titles of Pellecer's, Vilanova de Árbenz', and DuBois' memoirs, respectively: *Árbenz and I*; *My husband, President Árbenz*; and *Short Biography: Jacobo Árbenz*.

their place in history; memoirs can tell us how individuals, like Vilanova de Árbenz, attempt to shape the historical legacy of important figures, such as her husband, and important events, like the 1954 coup. Indeed, the idea of legacy building, where authors may not be happy with the current historical narrative and choose to write their own account, is a prominent theme across all three sources. Legacy, for the purposes of this paper, is defined as the perception that historians and the general public have of a person and their actions, be them positive or negative. CIA documents are also not perfectly reliable sources. They often present gendered or anti-communist bias towards their subjects and the biases of their authors. This article does not seek to tell an absolute truth about the coup: this will never be possible. Rather, it seeks to understand how the memoirs constructed the legacy of Vilanova de Árbenz in such conflicting ways and the implications it has for understanding the coup in its totality.

Heroism and Honor: the Martyrization of Jacobo Árbenz

The three memoirs concur only that Árbenz should be remembered as a hero who was unjustly overthrown because of events that were outside of his control. In the preface to her memoir, Vilanova de Árbenz writes that the purpose of the memoir is to, "provide a basic historical understanding of the most controversial decade of the 20th century in the political life of our country [Guatemala] for the profound social changes that it developed."[20] Reflecting nearly fifty years after the coup and October Revolution of 1944, she feels the historical record needs to be altered to create a new understanding about the events that changed the trajectory of her life. This wider scope of transmitting knowledge about the decade itself reflects her hope to reach a wider audience with this book, placing the life of Árbenz at the center.

Pellecer also includes a preface in his book, but instead of naming it preface, chooses to title the section "Fulfilling a Promise." The section concludes by declaring "I wrap up this purpose of writing… about Jacobo Árbenz and his enigmatic personality."[21] Clearly, Pellecer's goal is to portray Árbenz as human with, perhaps, multiple aspects to his personality. In fact, his word choice here subtly suggests that Árbenz's contemporaries might not fully understand and know Árbenz because of this personality trait, adding another motivation to his writing. Nonetheless, Pellecer's memoir seeks to describe the traits that made Jacobo Árbenz a successful leader. The title of the section carries a significant

[20] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 15.

[21] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, Cumpliendo una Promesa.

emotional implication of writing as a duty that he feels he must complete—a promise to fulfill—by portraying Árbenz in a positive light.

Dubois likewise praises Árbenz celebrating his military and political careers, perhaps due to his longtime support and friendship with him. He writes, "I decided to write a short biography about Jacobo Árbenz for two reasons: the first, because I always felt a lot of appreciation for him and, the second, to tell what I know and what I lived of his career, both military and political."[22] In addition to asserting his historical authority as an individual who "lived his career" with Árbenz Dubois uses a clear tone of admiration, choosing to memorialize what he saw as the most important aspects of his life, and reveals that he holds him in high standing. The focus is less on the historical record, but rather building up Árbenz' legacy through two of the most honorable aspects of his identity, as well as emphasizing the intelligence and brilliance it took to propel him there.

In addition to prefaces that honored Árbenz and emphasized a narrative of heroism and honor, all three authors carry this theme throughout their memoirs, mythologizing Árbenz to be larger than life and the perfect leader. In the dedication of her memoir, Vilanova de Árbenz writes, "I dedicate this book to my husband Jacobo, who, I am sure, would have offered it like I did, to his beloved Guatemala."[23] Here, she underscores his love of country, despite all the pain that exile caused him. She creates a narrative of a man who had such true dedication to his country and its people, a feat not typical of ordinary men. She rewrites his story of martyrdom to one of power and heroism, rising above the circumstances of his wrongful coup to survive and endure a fate he did not ultimately deserve. Later in her book, she continues these sentiments, this time humanizing him through the traits that drew her to him:

> Jacobo was a handsome and very reserved man…from the first moment the attraction that was between us facilitated dialogue and comprehension. Árbenz always believed in me without reservations. I should state that I was one of the few people in whom he confided.[24]

Vilanova de Árbenz uses these human traits, and his willingness to confide in her, to present him as a man without flaws, who had the necessary traits to be a president and leader. She also uses this phrase to establish her own credibility further: since she was one of the few people in whom Árbenz could trust, who better to write his story than someone who was his close confidant and partner?

[22] Dubois, *Pequeña biografía*, 11.

[23] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, Dedication.

[24] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 37.

Other accounts may not have the proximity that she had, making her account one to be trusted.

Pellecer takes a more hagiographic approach to mythologizing Árbenz than Vilanova de Árbenz, which reinforces a strong narrative of heroism. Approximately one-third of the way into his memoir, he abruptly switches to a nearly three-page narration of Árbenz's early life. It is in this stretch of text that he writes, "He had a brilliant [military and political] career… I felt privileged by the Gods to have witnessed."[25] Invoking God brings a strong idea of admiration, far beyond what one would expect, to this biographical account. It lifts Árbenz above other men, placing him on a heroic pedestal where he is a leader among leaders who was undeserving of the circumstances of his coup, whose work was something that people felt privileged to be able to view in real time. He builds on such religious references by writing of Árbenz's destiny: "If Árbenz had carefully heard the severe advice of Maria… another thing would have been his destiny. But Maria no longer had any interest in saving anyone, other than herself and her children."[26] The invocation of destiny, something predetermined and inevitable, a term meant for those who were in positions of true power and influence, men who were above their peers, reflects a strong view of Árbenz as just that. The dramatic language adds to the building of a legacy of heroism and honor, suffering his destiny. He was infallible and those around him failed. Indeed, his view of Vilanova de Árbenz as not wanting to save her husband, failing him once again, reflects her role in ultimately leading him to his downfall. It was not Árbenz's fault, but hers.

In addition to his use of religious language, Pellecer also turns to Greek myth of the Minotaur to tell the story of Árbenz. According to the myth, when a bull was sent to the King of Crete to sacrifice for Poseidon, and it was not killed, Poseidon punished the King by making his wife fall in love with the bull and bear a child, half bull and half human. Named the Minotaur, it was held in a labyrinth. After one of his sons was killed by the Athenians, the King ruled that every ninth year seven Athenian men and seven Athenian women be sent to the labyrinth to be killed by Minotaur. However, when Theseus, an Athenian hero, was sent, he was able to kill the beast with the help of Adriane, a daughter of the King and his wife.[27] Pellecer uses this myth to place the events of the Guatemalan coup in context: He likened Árbenz to the Minotaur, trapped in a laby-

[25] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 125.

[26] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 265.

[27] "Minotaur." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. (Web.)

rinth of communism and fear constructed by Lenin and Stalin. However, since Vilanova de Árbenz was unable to turn into Adraine and "save Jacobo and his revolution"[28] and there was no Theseus, he ultimately suffered the consequence of exile from the country he loved through no fault of his own. Using a Greek myth turned on its head from one of success to one of tragedy, Pellecer laments the change of Árbenz's trajectory from one of democratic and agrarian success to one of exile and shame, not at all becoming of the hero that he truly was. Pellecer symbolizes Árbenz's legacy as a Greek myth, reaffirming his revered place in international memory.

Dubois takes a more subtle approach than Pellecer's religious and mythic analogies, instead referencing Árbenz's military greatness in the preface to his memoir. He writes, "His military career was brilliant…from this first moment his political career would have been brilliant if it was not for the interference of unexpected circumstances."[29] There is a clear admiration here that goes beyond that of a peer and raises him above the rest of their fellow cadets, much in the ways that Vilanova de Árbenz did. Despite the coup and Árbenz's exile, which was beyond his control, he was simply a military man and politician. He was a hero for the things he endured despite them being no fault of his own.

Woe to the Vanquished: Vilanova de Árbenz in her Own Words

Vilanova de Árbenz's memoir displays her anger, especially in the memoir's concluding sections, where an air of frustration and bitterness is conveyed. She wrote, "I hope that the extremely painful experiences like the ones that my family and I suffered nobody has to suffer; much less when you are fitting for a patriotic cause. I am in agreement with the phrase: WOE TO THE VANQUISHED!"[30] The pain that she and her family suffered, that was in her opinion politically motivated and undeserved, clearly impacted her and her view of the events. The phrase she included at the end is used frequently in literature that deals with the topic of revolution and oppression, which reflects her placement of her legacy in a wider context of injustice and vanquishing of those who dare to oppose the dominant power. The phrase, when translated to Latin, is "Vae Victus," and is used in book chapters that range in topic from WWII to resistance to Spanish colonialism in the Philippines in the nineteenth century.[31]

[28] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 267.

[29] Dubois, *Pequeña biografía*, Prefacio.

[30] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 178.

[31] Rizal José, and Harold Augenbraum. 2006. *Noli Me Tángere: Touch Me Not*. Pen-

This is part of a wider end section that includes her commentary on various topics that she felt needed correction in the Postscript, especially concentrating on her activities after Árbenz's death. The inclusion of such a section indicates further a historical record that needs to be set straight to reflect what happened from her perspective, as well as build up her public legacy to align with what she feels it ought to be.

Vilanova de Árbenz references twice the conversations that she and Árbenz had on intellectual topics to rewrite her own legacy as one of involvement and partnership. For example, she writes that:

> many ties united Jacobo and I, apart from the personal, such as the economic, political, and social theories that we also discussed about which we converged on a determining ideal: that our people not only lacked daily sustenance in low commercial capacity, but they were also directed by policy that was neither interested in exact science or political-social science.[32]

She continues this idea by asserting that, "The political conversations that he had with me were in great confidence, about all of his problems and preoccupations."[33] By doubling down on the involvement of intellectual conversation, and thus her involvement in his policy and program of agrarian reform, she writes a narrative that their marriage went beyond romantic love. According to Vilanova de Árbenz, her legacy should reflect one of true partnership in political change. To be sure, romance did indeed figure greatly into their lives, which she addresses throughout her memoir. She remembers that "from the first moment that I met Jacobo I felt attracted to him and him to me. The attraction was mutual"[34] and, "my marriage was like a fantasy"[35] This love truly was mutual: according to their daughter, Leonora, Árbenz's last words were: "I have had but two great loves in my life: Guatemala and Maria."[36] Her repeated references to the romance of their partnership is essential to the legacy that she builds for herself as one half of a true partnership, built on love and belief in the same ideals. She crafts a unique place from which she experienced the events of their life, and thus a unique perspective from which to write that underscores the role of love in their marriage.

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guin Classics. New York: Penguin Group. 57.

[32] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 39.

[33] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 67.

[34] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 37.

[35] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 47.

[36] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 167.

Her unity with Árbenz in their political lives is, in addition to their love for each other, a significant theme in her memoir. She references policy several times and employs language that unites the two in their advocacy. For instance, Vilanova de Árbenz notes, "My activities and my sincere interest in the ideals of the October Revolution, combined with the total confidence with which my husband gave me, were the causes of small intrigues."[37] She continues by writing, "there always existed between Jacobo and I quite a lot of confidence."[38] Through the above discussions, she cements the idea that there were high levels of trust and communication and that she played a uniquely intimate role Árbenz's personal and political life. This status was so important, in fact, that the public noticed their partnership and unity, expanding the influence that she had and underscoring why she felt shared beliefs were of such importance to her legacy. Her use of language that presented them as equals, united in their efforts appears consistently throughout the memoir. She insists that "my husband and I entered this [the assassination of Francisco Arana, an influential member of the October Revolution and its military] despite secret and private conversations."[39] together, and the credit she gave her own confidence with allowing her to "have informal dialogues with leaders and with prominent men and women who sympathized with our ideals,"[40] underscores her close unity with his agenda. She also reveals that the decision to run for president was a shared one, writing, "Jacobo and I agreed that we would accept the candidacy for president,"[41] and, in detailing her attendance at all the official events that her husband attended Vilanova de Árbenz further paints a picture of partnership and supportHer statements indicate that she saw herself as a significant player in Árbenz' administration, unified with her husband on personal and political matters; she builds her legacy around holding political power jointly with her husband, even if he was in the position to make official decisions. Her involvement in the coup without explicitly stating such closeness allows her to reveal her intimate involvement in his decision-making, and, by extension, implies any accurate historical narrative of the era needed to include her role.

Vilanova de Árbenz's account of her relation to policymaking in the Árbenz administration is, at least in part, confirmed by CIA sources. The CIA took

[37] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 67.
[38] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 147.
[39] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 70.
[40] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 69.
[41] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 85.

note of Vilanova de Árbenz's involvement and collected various documentation linking the couple to Communism. One of these documents is a letter of support that Vilanova de Árbenz wrote for a celebration of International Women's Day in Guatemala. Her impassioned style of writing led to a poignant demonstration of the political power she possessed:

> To those admirable women who throughout the world are answering our call during our country's difficult hours; to the woman of Guatemala who has already given countless examples of her valor and self-sacrifice, her willingness to give her life if necessary on the altar of her democratic faith, to them and to you, women worthy of praise, I send my warm greetings and the homage due to you, now and always.[42]

Her clear, eloquent call to action reflected an inherent power that she had as a true partner, using her gender to galvanize support from a larger audience. There is a large investment here in pushing ideological values that align with the ideals of the revolution as well as her place in the center of their realization.

The role of secretaries in Vilanova de Arbenz's story, especially in relation to the CIA's claim that she was associated with communism, contradicts the narrative Vilanova de Árbenz presents in her memoir. According to the CIA, two of Vilanova de Árbenz's secretaries, Matilde Elena Lopez and Virginia Bravo Letelier, expressed some admiration for leading Communist figures. In 1956, CIA intelligence claimed that Lopez had collected a copy of Joseph Stalin's A Biographical Sketch, published in Moscow, and gave the book to Vilanova de Árbenz with the inscription, "To Maria Cristina: The lofty example of the great should inspire us with optimism."[43] Her citation as the secretary of Vilanova de Árbenz, along with this inscription, clearly indicated to the CIA that Vilanova de Árbenz was a communist, an allegation she thoroughly denied in her memoir. Countering this accusation, she writes, "In this aspect I deny, emphatically, that the Chilean Virginia Bravo Letelier and the Salvadoran Matilde Elena Lopez functioned as my secretaries. I should deny this seeing as there exist North American history books that affirm this falsely."[44] Her emphasis on denying this, and especially highlighting that these misconceptions were entirely based on his-

[42] CIA, "Guatemala's First Lady Sends Greetings to Communist-Front 'International Women's Day Celebration."

[43] CIA, "Documents Obtained in a Brief, Preliminary Sampling of the Documentary Evidence of Communist Infiltration in Guatemala," March 30, 1956, CIA-RDP78-00915R00040009003-5. CREST.

[44] Vilanova de Árbenz, *Mi esposo*, 107.

tory written in North American history books reflects an ongoing commitment to correct the history of the coup by providing her own version of events. Her legacy, in Vilanova de Árbenz's view, should account for her version of events, particularly when it came to elements that, according to her, North American historians opportunistically misrepresented based on their anticommunist and misogynistic biases.

Árbenz's Poison: The Accounts of Pellecer and Dubois

Pellecer uses a unique style in his memoir, one that takes a major departure from the narrative style that Vilanova de Árbenz employed. He uses specificity almost to a fault, citing exact times of day, dates, quoted dialogue, street names, and even street numbers as needed to supplement his account. Pellecer's bizarre commitment to recounting granular details may even undermine the credibility as it is unlikely that he was able to recall all these events in perfect detail, particularly since he does not once refer to a journal, calendar, or anything else that could account for such a detailed memory of the past. His use of allusions to culture, such as the Greek myth of the Minotaur, romanticizes and mythologizes Árbenz's life, as well as underscores his admiration for Árbenz and dislike for Vilanova de Árbenz. In contrast, Dubois takes a more distanced perspective, choosing to focus each of his short chapters on various military and political figures, and how they played a role in Árbenz's life, as well as discuss some of the major events of the coup and their exile. His wider scope, choosing to include biographies of other Guatemalan military leaders and contemporaries of Árbenz without any citations except for the direct quotation of parts of Pellecer's memoir that allege Vilanova de Árbenz's affair creates unevenness in the credibility of his work.

Pellecer dedicates a significant amount of time to personal attacks on Vilanova de Árbenz. These attacks fall into three distinct categories: her possessiveness of Árbenz, her family wealth, and Pellecer's view of her as a political manipulator. First, his accusations of Vilanova de Árbenz as possessive create a negative, controlling image of the relationship Vilanova de Árbenz was so invested in rewriting to be one of true and equal partnership. Pellecer begins by asserting, "The same thing occurred with the provocative and possessive image of Maria."[45] and continues by writing, "Naturally, during the five years, I did not return to have a relationship with Jacobo Árbenz because he had entered

[45] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 22.

into marriage with the precious and tormented Salvadoran Maria Vilanova."[46] Pellecer clearly sees Vilanova de Árbenz negatively as an outsider and believes she has an adverse effect on Árbenz because of her involvement in his political life. Her ability to influence Árbenz's decision making often led to direct conflict. To cement this idea, he alludes to John Webster's play *The Duchess of Malfi*. In this tragedy, the Duchess falls in love with her steward, marrying below her class like Vilanova de Árbenz did, and when she leaves home to be with him, her brothers send a servant to spy on them. She and her steward have children, and when her brothers find out about this, they are imprisoned and killed, along with the steward.[47] This dark, bloody tale invokes a sort of eerie foreshadowing of the events that Pellecer later knew to have been true. The perception of her as moving aimlessly into the world of exile, without an end destination, despite her history of being powerful in Árbenz's administration, highlights key inconsistencies in Pellecer's narrative.

Her political influence, and rivalry with Pellecer, is evident in his discussion of her opposition to the program of agrarian reform that Árbenz valued so highly. He wrote that the major obstacle to the passage of such an act, and the reason that he needed to mobilize his base of labor support so widely was Vilanova de Árbenz herself. They had to "overcome the resistance that they found in his [Arbenz's] wife, Maria Vilanova de Árbenz and his brother-in-law, Antonio Vilanova."[48] However, Vilanova de Árbenz spends nearly three pages in her account outlining the reasons why agrarian reform was necessary in Guatemala, and the various strengths of Árbenz's program, even giving specific numbers of money that was exchanged and the acreage of land that was redistributed from the United Fruit Company to rural families. Rather than beginning the section on opposition by referencing the different parties by name, she instead names them as "enemies of progress," and then specifically cites each group.[49] The amount of time she spent discussing this issue within the larger context of the book, as well as the language that she used to harshly criticize them, reflects a larger commitment to the program of agrarian reform. The direct contrast of these memoirs calls into question the accuracy of both accounts but is remarkably revealing about the legacies that each hoped to shape. For

[46] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 42.

[47] "The Plot: The Duchess of Malfi." Royal Shakespeare Company. https://www.rsc.org.uk/the-duchess-of-malfi/plot.

[48] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 201.

[49] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 110.

Pellecer, the protection of his own narrative of personal influence over Árbenz, as well as the continuation of his negative view of Vilanova de Árbenz, is seen through his view of her as in direct opposition to the just, admirable goals of the heroic Árbenz. For Vilanova de Árbenz, it is the view of her role as unique and influential, as well as the idea that Árbenz played a pivotal role in one of the largest programs of agrarian reform, that proves so central to her narration of these policies. While Pellecer's account aims to uplift his narrative of personal influence and diminish the role of Vilanova de Árbenz in Árbenz's administration, Vilanova de Árbenz attempts to underscore her importance in the program of agrarian reform for which many historains believe Árbenz was overthrown. These conflicts create tension in the legacies they leave: one of Pellecer's power, and one of Vilanova de Árbenz's.

The second attack that Pellecer levels against Vilanova de Árbenz is her family wealth. He differentiates her from other wives of influential Guatemalan politicians, as she is from the "high bourgeois" and therefore had different experiences than the others, making her less qualified to participate in the political life of the revolution.[50] He continues this by asserting that Árbenz's relationship with his parents-in-law was strained because they did not see him as being their equal due to his lower socio-economic status, and he was bitter that they were as wealthy as they were.[51] However, Árbenz did not come from the working class at all: he was the son of a pharmacist from Switzerland, and although his father committed suicide, he was able to enter into the Escuela Politécnica.[52] Though Árbenz was not of the working class himself, he was often perceived as creating reform for the working and peasant class. Pellecer is clearly attempting to create a narrative of Árbenz that emphasizes his humble roots, rising through the ranks to become a hero for the lower classes and champion of agrarian reform, ultimately defeated by circumstances outside of his control. Together, these claims push back against the narrative of a perfect, romantic, loving relationship built on equal partnership that Vilanova de Árbenz spends the majority of her memoir shaping. This is a major component of his shaping of Árbenz's legacy as one of heroism and Vilanova de Árbenz's as his perfect opposite and

[50] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 67.; CIA, "Personal Political Orientation of President Árbenz/Possibility of a Left-Wing Coup," October 10, 1952, Office of the Historian, United States Department of State; California, US, "Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1959." Ancestry.

[51] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 75.

[52] Nick Cullather, *Secret History*, 20.

political poison.

The third way Pellecer creates a negative legacy of Vilanova de Árbenz is through his portrait of her as a political manipulator. The best example of this occurs in his discussion of her actions in the political social scene of Guatemala during his presidency and with those members after the coup:

> To double his influence on Jacobo, the irreplaceable Che Manuel went through Maria, the wife of the President. She, for her part, just as in the royal courts, learned to use favors. For example, when she felt slightly threatened by Jacobo's private secretary, she threatened Jose Manuel Fortuny with the idea of marrying this secretary.[53]

Vilanova de Árbenz clearly was, for her part, a major political actor if she was able to hold such a position that allowed her to help the revolutionary leader Che Manuel and arrange marriages within her social circle. For Pellecer to note this, it must have been commonplace for her to act independently in the political sphere. Though it contradicts Pellecer's own legacy making of Vilanova de Árbenz, the distinctly negative light—demonstrated by the reference to "royal courts"—in which these actions place her only support his narrative that she was everything Árbenz was not. Would Árbenz have collaborated closely with a foreign political leader? Would he have done so in a way that threatened his own country's stability? Would he have arranged a marriage for his own protection? The hero's narrative Pellecer advances answers these with a resounding *no*. For Vilanova de Árbenz, on the other hand, these were her daily activities as a political manipulator, possessor of her husband and consideration of herself as superior to those around her because of her family wealth.

In perhaps the most dramatic section of the memoir, the perfect reflection of the style that Pellecer employs of dialogue and specificity, he writes that Vilanova de Árbenz had been having an affair for a significant amount of time, and that Árbenz had found out through one of his aides just two days before he resigned the presidency of Guatemala. According to Pellecer, the news crushed Árbenz, who was devastated and yelled at Pellecer that "Everything [was] shit!" and that his world had "been demolished."[54] In Pellecer's version, Vilanova de Árbenz was uncaring and cold about Árbenz' feelings. In fact, according to Pellecer, her affair with Ennio de la Roca, a Cuban, continued well into their exile and her travel to Cuba.[55] The affair itself presents a major reason why

[53] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 120.

[54] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 268.

[55] Pellecer, *Árbenz y yo*, 277.

Pellecer disliked Vilanova de Árbenz, especially since he saw the way it negatively impacted Árbenz, who did not deserve such circumstances. The event and its dramatization systematically rewrites Vilanova de Árbenz legacy as one that placed her as the true opposition of all that Árbenz stood for in his heroism, suffering a variety of tragic events that he did not deserve. In fact, asserting that the affair took place just two days prior to Árbenz's resignation reflects Vilanova de Árbenz's involvement as a contributor to not only his resignation, but also the emotional toll that such a resignation took on him. Pellecer wants the reader to understand that rather than supporting him unconditionally, as a good wife should do, Vilanova de Árbenz answered to her own needs first and ultimately caused him a significant amount of political and emotional pain.

Vilanova de Árbenz never mentions an affair of any kind in her memoir. This lack of inclusion, as well as a lack of CIA documentation or other accounts that would independently corroborate this information, means that the truthfulness of Pellecer's discussion may never be established. However, it is important to note that the only other place an affair is mentioned is in Dubois' memoir. Rather than serving as an account that proves whether the affair did indeed happen, Dubois, in fact, spends an entire page quoting Pellecer's account, word for word, constituting an entire chapter of a book that is otherwise focused mostly on the military. This proves that Dubois read Pellecer's memoir, meaning the events he diverged from Pellecer on were direct examples of legacy building, rewriting the narrative that exists to fit his own interpretation of events. Dubois did not trust Vilanova de Árbenz as either an actor in the coup nor a witness who can bear testimony on the coup from her own perspective. Worse than this, Pellecer chooses to erase Vilanova de Árbenz's participation entirely, and reduces her to a seductress whose affair ruined her husband, otherwise destined for political greatness from a wide program of agrarian reform.

Conclusion

The history of the Guatemalan coup, Árbenz, and those involved in its execution and aftermath continues to be mired with contradictions and unanswered questions. As more documents are discovered, interviews are conducted, and CIA documents are declassified, a clearer picture of the Árbenz administration will come into view. The corroboration of such personal accounts as the memoirs examined in this paper is essential to further uncovering the essential history of US imperialism in Central America, and the remarkable people who were directly involved in such events. The distinct lack of scholarship on Vilanova de Árbenz must also be remedied, beyond the narratives and perceptions

of her explored in this paper. It is essential to tell the stories of women who were influential in their political spheres, and who witnessed and changed history themselves. With such contradictory accounts, where many mention her in passing, and by those who were old friends of Árbenz, further research on her life and experiences is necessary to tell a full, just history.

However, despite their differences, the three memoirs analyzed in this paper present the history of the Guatemalan coup of 1954—all written for a modern, Spanish-speaking audiences—as one undeserved tragedy for the heroic President Árbenz. For many historians, both Guatemalan and North American, the coup marked the beginning of nearly forty years of bloody civil war in Guatemala that devastated the indigenous population and forced hundreds of thousands to flee the country. When the coup is remembered today, it often is sympathetic to Árbenz's resistance in the face of insurmountable pressure from the United States and its economic interests. For the Spanish-speaking audiences in Guatemala, who these accounts were written for, they must live with the consequences of US imperialism and the violence it caused every day. The most recent elections, held in August 2023, confirmed Bernardo Arévalo as the next president of Guatemala. He is the son of Juan Jose Arévalo, Árbenz's predecessor, and was born when both men were in exile in Montevideo, Uruguay. He defeated former First Lady Sandra Torres, who has come in second place for the presidency in three consecutive elections. Powerful women in Guatemala continue to build on Vilanova de Árbenz's legacy, but also continue to face barriers to accessing hard power that operates in formal circles.

Pellecer and Dubois attempt to preserve the legacy of Vilanova de Árbenz as a poisonous, manipulative presence that ultimately led to Árbenz's untimely downfall and exile. Vilanova de Árbenz's memoir, in direct opposition to these assertions, advances a narrative of true love and devotion, never mentioning an affair and crediting her personality with the political success she brought to Árbenz's administration. Taken together, these accounts provide key understandings of the legacy-building motivations of the people who were involved in the coup and alter the historiographical landscape in which they were written.

Justin Posner

What Tangled Webs We Weave

Jerome Horsey, John Vandewall, and 16th-Century Anglo-Russian Commerce

Abstract

The late sixteenth-century English chancery court case *Vandewall V. Horsey* deals with debt owed by the Dutch merchant John Vandewall to the English merchant, diplomat, and writer Jerome Horsey as a result of the two mens' commercial activities in Russia. In this paper, I use testimony from the case as well as other sources to examine the unique power Horsey obtained by positioning himself at the center of Anglo-Russian relations. I argue that his status as the premier English expert on Russian cultural and political affairs allowed him to justify his mistreatment of foreign merchants in Russia, while his position as the most prominent Englishman in Moscow allowed him to turn the Russian court against his political opponents. I also examine Horsey's eventual downfall and argue that he lost influence with the Russian court as a result of the death of Ivan IV and a variety of economic factors. Ultimately, Horsey's position as unofficial ambassador between England and Russia relied on a very specific set of circumstances, and when these circumstances changed, Horsey was unable to adapt. His resulting financial ruin led to the court case at hand and gives modern observers valuable insights into how cultural exchange functions.

Introduction

Any historical moment in which two cultures interact on a large scale for the first time is bound to be fraught with misunderstanding, a fact that can lead to disagreement and even violence. However, entrepreneurs and scoundrels have always managed to take advantage of these situations and use them for their personal benefit. A poster child example of this trend arose from the legal case *Vandewall V. Horsey*, which ran from 1597 to 1600 and involved a dispute between the Dutch jeweler and merchant John Vandewall and the famous English trader, diplomat, and writer Jerome Horsey. The case is, on its face, a

dispute over debt but if we dig deeper, it tells the story of Jerome Horsey's masterful, if manipulative, strategy of playing Russian and English interests off one another to maintain a position of power in Moscow and become fabulously wealthy. Horsey used Russian paranoia about western spies and English assumptions about supposed Russian barbarism and worries about Dutch competition to make himself the lynchpin of Anglo-Russian relations. For a while, this worked. However, due to a variety of factors, including dynastic turnover in Russia and English inability to outcompete the Dutch, Horsey's system fell apart. The result was his expulsion from Russia, disfavor with Queen Elizabeth, and commercial ruin, all of which ultimately led to the case we are studying. My essay does not aim to revolutionize the study of Anglo-Russian trade, but it does provide a useful case study to help us understand the period. I will work in conversation with secondary sources on international commerce in the late sixteenth century as well as some on the life of Horsey, but the dearth of sources on Vandewall and on this case means that most of my discussion of these subjects will be based on primary sources.

Background

Vandewall and Horsey were both the primary representatives of their respective nations in Russia during the period in question. Imperative to our discussion is the question of how they arose to such dominance. John Vandewall came from an important Dutch trading family.[1] Although most of John Vandewall's witnesses praise his wealth, character, and credit, cracks appear in this story if we look a little closer. E.H. Wijnroks writes in "Jan Van de Walle and the Dutch Silk Trade with Russia, 1578-1635" that "in 1564, when he was in his mid-twenties, Jan Van de Walle had gone bankrupt in Antwerp, avoiding the town ever since."[2] Signs of Vandwall's commercial troubles also appear in the witness testimony. The London goldsmith Thomas Lynde claimed that in recent years "the compl[ainan]t (Vandewall) hath come behinde hande and fall-

[1] Deposition of Francis Berty, *Vandewall V. Horsey* (Chancery), C 24/257 no. 72, July 5, 1597, (answer to interrogatory 2); Deposition of Robert Lee, October 11, 1597, (answer to interrogatory 3). All Depositions and Interrogatories sourced from *Vandewall V. Horsey*, (Chancery), C24/257 no. 72, British National Archives.

[2] E.H. Wijnroks. "Jan Van de Walle and the Dutch Silk Trade with Russia, 1578-1635," In *Russians and Dutchmen. Proceedings of the Conference on the Relations between Russia and the Netherlands from the 16th to the 20th century, held at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, June 1989*, 47. Groningen: Institute for Northern and Eastern European Studies. 1989.

en in dett in Russia."[3] Ultimately, Vandewall's inability to pay back his debts is probably what led him to initiate his suit against Horsey. Exactly how and when Vandewall came to operate in Russia is not entirely clear. However, from witness testimony, we can state with some degree of confidence that he was working as a merchant there since at least the mid-1570s. He initially worked in Russia as an agent of the great merchant Gilles Hooftman van Eychelenberg.[4] He seems to have done very well for himself and ingratiated himself with the Russian court. He received exemptions from levies on traded goods, his own personal landing stage in the northern port of Arkhangelsk, and the unofficial position of purveyor for the royal household, all of which gave him a substantial leg up over competitors.[5]

Horsey, like Vandewall, reached great heights of wealth and influence in Russia through a path fraught with setbacks. Thomas Heyward, one of the witnesses, states that he was apprenticed to a merchant named Merrick who traded in Russia and traveled there with him as a young man.[6] Upon traveling back to England, he was arrested by representatives of the Russia company, perhaps for privately trading in violation of company rules. He paid bail to be released, and then fled back to Russia. After returning to Russia, he continued to trade there for some time, making frequent trips back and forth between Russia and England. Once he had established himself in Russia, Horsey busily set about winning favor with the court and breaking every rule in the book.

Vandewall and Horsey clearly weren't always enemies. At some point, Horsey lent money or goods to Vandewall, and this is how their dispute arose. However, things eventually got tense. In his *Travels and Adventures in Russia*, written well after the events of this case had concluded, Horsey recounts a minor incident that occurred between him and Vandewall shortly after the coronation of the new Tsar Fyodor I in 1584. Horsey writes that Vandewall, "who gave himself out to be the King of Spain's subject," was called to present gifts to the new Tsar first, but Horsey declared that he "would have his legs cut off by the knees before he would" allow this.[7] It is quite significant that Horsey took such

[3] Deposition of Thomas Lynde, August 8, 1597, (response to interrogatory 2).

[4] Wijnroks, 41.

[5] Wijnroks, 50-51.

[6] Deposition of Thomas Heyward, December 2, 1599, (response to interrogatory 22).

[7] Jerome Horsey, *Sir Jerome Horsey's Travels and Adventures in Russia and Eastern Europe* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019), 157.

pains in his later account to describe Vandewall as a Spanish subject; as we shall see later, this may have been part of Horsey's attempts to paint himself as the defender of English interests in Russia.

Specifics of the Case

It is possible to imagine several scenarios that might have led to Vandewall owing Horsey so much money. First, Horsey might have simply lent money directly to Vandewall. Horsey was at the height of his powers at this time, and would certainly have had money to spare. Another possibility is that Vandewall purchased goods for trade from Horsey on credit. Finally, and perhaps most intriguingly, Horsey might have done "favors" for Vandewall in exchange for future payment. Whatever the specifics, the debt Vandewall incurred led to acrimonious litigation, culminating in the case we are examining.

Vandewall's debt was not really in question; numerous witnesses called by Vandewall himself confirm it. What was really up for debate was what came next. In December 1585, Horsey returned to England from Russia; Vandewall was apparently also in London at this time. Shortly after his return home, Horsey met with Vandewall to discuss the debts the latter owed to the former.[8] In the ensuing months, Vandewall's brothers paid large sums of money to Horsey, although this may have been related to debts separate from the one that sparked the case.[9] Regardless of the nature of these payments, it was eventually found that they owed him around 1500 pounds.[10] During the trial, Horsey appears to have claimed that part of the agreement was that if the Vandewalls did not pay the debts they owed him, he could confiscate the goods they were trading in Russia. The

Vandewall apparently disagreed with this assessment, as they asked the aforementioned William Skoryer if he was "moved solicited importuned or procured by the said defendant Horsey to subscribe some note or writinge purtportinge such agrement or to testify or report any such agrement and by and vppon what means and pretences did the defendant soe move importune or procure & did he not offer any guiftes or reward therefore or to such ende or

[8] Deposition of Katherine Vandewall, October 19, 1597, (response to interrogatory 9).

[9] Deposition of Francis Berty, July 5, 1597, (Response to interrogatory 11); Deposition of Peter Veghleman, September 16 1597, (Response to interrogatory 11).

[10] Deposition of William Skoryer, Novemvber 28, 1597, (response to interrogatory 1).

what offer did he make."[11] (Skoryer denied that he had been bribed to testify to the agreement's existence). It is possible that the Vandewalls acknowledged the agreement and merely wanted to discredit Skoryer as a witness, but this seems unlikely.

The Vandewalls believed they had paid back their debt by giving Horsey favorable exchange when converting between rubles to English currency. According to the witness Julius Bemishe, a ruble was normally exchanged for 13 pounds and 4 pence.[12] However, Thomas Lynde writes that John Vandewall gave Horsey pounds for rubles at the rate of 19 shillings per ruble.[13] In January 1597, Vandewall and Horsey went before Sir John Fortescue, Keeper of the Great Seal of England, to debate the matter at hand.[14] After the hearing, the trial began, and both sides began producing witnesses; as we only have access to Vandewall's witnesses, we will primarily be concerned with them.

Horsey's Manipulation of the Russians

Most of the available witness testimony we have is character testimony, providing us incredible detail about Horsey's activities in Russia. I will begin by examining how he convinced the Russians that he was acting in their best interest, before transitioning to a discussion of how he convinced the English that he was an indispensable source of information on and contact with Russia and then finish by adding in the element of Dutch competition. We know from Horsey and other commentators from this period that the Russian court, especially under Ivan IV ("The Terrible") was extremely paranoid about foreign and domestic plots to enact regime change or assassinate the emperor. This is especially prevalent in Horsey's later *Travels*, written to describe to English readers his time in Russia and Eastern Europe and the cultures and peoples he encountered. In one passage, Horsey writes that "this emperor lived in great danger and fear of treasons and his making away, which he daily discovered and spent much time in the examination, torturing, execution and putting to death such noble captains and officers that were found practisers against him."[15] He also gives the example of how Ivan "was very much busied in searching out a notable treason in practice and purpose against him by Eleazar Bomelius, the [Arch]bishop of

[11] Interrogatory of Plaintiff for William Skoryer, (interrogatory 3).
[12] Deposition of Julius Bemyshe, September 2, 1597, (response to interrogatory 14)
[13] Deposition of Thomas Lynde, August 8, 1597, (response to interrogatory 14).
[14] Deposition of Leven de Haese, October 7, 1597, (response to interrogatory 16)
[15] Horsey, *Travels*, 31.

Novgorod and some others, discovered by their servants tortured upon the pytka or rack."[16] Ivan did not wait for evidence of treason to come to him; he acted swiftly and harshly to discover and root out disloyalty wherever he had even the slightest inkling it might exist.

Equipped with his special position in the Russian court and his knowledge of how paranoia influenced Russian policy, Horsey set to work carving out a private fiefdom for himself over the other foreign merchants operating in Russia. His modus operandi was to accuse other merchants of espionage to get them arrested by the Russians, a practice of which we have several examples in the depositions.[17] Horsey used the trust he had gained with the Russian court for more than private grudges; perhaps the pinnacle of his success was his appointment as a de facto Russian ambassador to England. Hayward says that he was "sent in An° 1584 or 1585 as he remembreth from the emperour to the quenes majesty as Embassador together with letters of his own comendacions."[18] The first pillar of Horsey's position at the center of the Anglo-Russian trade was set; to Ivan and his court, he was the most reliable conduit for information from the west, and was thus indispensable to their efforts to control trade with the west.

Horsey and His Fellow Englishmen

We know Horsey had an interest in maintaining a position back in England, and in order to do this while acting so heinously, Horsey used the reverse of his strategy in Russia. There was a thriving Anglo-Russian trade at this time, but very few Englishmen actually went to Russia, and almost none of them had the familiarity with Russian life and politics that Horsey had. Stereotypes abounded, and for most English people, if they knew of Russia's existence at all, it was a distant land defined by barbarous customs and strange beliefs. Horsey was able to play on peoples' assumptions about Russian standards of behavior to justify his manipulation of the system.

The clearest example of this comes from the testimony of John Finche, a young merchant who was imprisoned by Horsey and nearly tortured. Finch's long and bone-chilling account, the only deposition actually written by the wit-

[16] Horsey, *Travels*, 49.

[17] Deposition of Thomas Heyward, December 2, 1599, (response to interrogatory 22); Deposition of John Finche, July 8, 1597, (response to interrogatory 22); Deposition of Richard Coxe, September 19, 1597, (response to interrogatory 22).

[18] Deposition of Thomas Heyward, December 2, 1599, (response to interrogatory 22).

ness themself, paints Horsey as a pragmatic, bloodthirsty monster. Finche recounts an occasion on which Horsey takes a sapphire out of his pocket and shows it to Finche, declaring that it was given to him as a bribe. Horsey's friend Anthony Marshe advises him against admitting this, but Horsey replies that "I am not abell to mayntayne that state & parte I doe, but onely by taking of brybes."[19] Horsey's point is that the standards of ostentatious living he is expected to keep up in Russia, and the extreme uncertainty and unpredictability of life in the Russian court, means that he must turn to corruption if he wants to stay afloat. After this episode, Finche is imprisoned and threatened with torture for refusing to carry out Horsey's will. Once he is freed by a sympathetic friend of Horsey's named Robert Jaques, Finche is invited to a banquet by Horsey. At the banquet, Horsey tries to win Finche over, telling him that he only treated him so poorly so that when Finche returns to England he "might declare vnto the Company of Russia merchantes & otheres his aquayntaunce in England in what favour & Aucthoryty he [Horsey] was in with the Emperor & his Councell there in Russia."[20] Horsey had Finche imprisoned, in other words, so that he would act as a messenger and tell those in England that Horsey could do them great favor – or great harm.

Added to this is Horsey's *Travels and Adventures in Russia and Eastern Europe*, written to tell people back home a story, but also, I believe, to justify horsey's actions. In an age when travelogs spread like wildfire across the European continent, anyone who traveled to distant lands and had a knack for writing was sure to enrapture Western audiences. However, Horsey was almost certainly also trying to explain his behavior to people back home. Reports of how Horsey had had countless of his fellow Englishmen locked up, whipped, racked, and burned surely filtered back to England despite his best efforts. By the time the case was over and Horsey had settled down into a comfortable country lifestyle, many people had to have known what he had done. It is telling that Horsey dedicated the work to Sir Francis Walsingham, his patron, but also spymaster and secretary of state for Elizabeth I.[21] Walshingham died in 1590, and while Horsey did not finish some portions of his *Travels* until the 1620s, he began writing the book in 1589, and probably initially intended for Walsingham to actually read the work.[22]

[19] Deposition of John Finche, July 8 1597, (response to interrogatory 22).

[20] Deposition of John Finche, July 8 1597.

[21] Horsey, *Travels*, 3.

[22] Robert Croskey, "The Composition of Sir Jerome Horsey's 'Travels'," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 26, no. 3, (1978): 364.

Perhaps he even hoped Walsingham, who had the queen's ear, would tell Elizabeth about what he had read. Horsey writes for pages on end about how violent, superstitious, and barbarous the people of Russia supposedly are; an excellent example is his account of Ivan IV's siege of Reval (modern day Tallinn, Estonia). After weeks of bombarding the city without success, Ivan retreats, and, in a fit of rage over losing so many men and so much artillery, goes on a bloody rampage, sacking the town of Narva and killing men, women, and children. He then marches on the towns of Pskov and Vobsko and intends to sack them as well, but is stopped by a holy fool named Nikola Sviatoy, who predicts that if Ivan loots the towns he will be struck dead by a bolt of lightning.[23] Here we see two stereotypes of the time about Russians colliding: Ivan is a violent man who can fly into fits of violent rage at a moment's notice, leading to thousands of deaths. However, he is also superstitious, willing to change course because of the prophecies of a holy man. By describing Ivan in these terms, Horsey is telling other Englishmen that this is simply how things were in Ivan's Russia; there was no avoiding it, so there was no sense in blaming Horsey for taking part in a little cruelty and extortion of his own. We see this again when Vandewall describes Ivan's killing of his son, also named Ivan: The tsar "struck him [his son] in his fury a box on the ear and thrust at him with his piked staff, who took it so tenderly, fell into a headlong fever and died within three days after, whereat the Emperor tore his hair and beard like a madman, lamenting and mourning for the death of his son."[24] Here again we see Ivan swinging between extremes. He kills his son out of rage before falling into a pitiful state of despair when he realizes what he has done.

Horsey tries to justify himself not just by describing Russian brutality but by claiming to have acted against it, and here his *Travels* intersect directly with our depositions. Horsey boasts throughout the *Travels* of having interceded on behalf of westerners slated to be executed in Russia. Horsey claims that after a Russian attack on Sweden that resulted in the capture of several foreign mercenaries, he used his influence and money to free eighty-five Scottish and three English soldiers.[25] This was not a one-off event; in *Russia and the Dutch Republic, 1566-1725*, Kees Boterbloem mentions that Horsey claimed to have freed from bondage in Russia the ten-year-old son of Zacharias Glissenberch, a

[23] Horsey, *Travels*, 12-13.
[24] Horsey, *Travels*, 59.
[25] Horsey, *Travels*, 44.

Dutch merchant.[26] However, the depositions for *Vandewall V. Horsey* also include a deposition by a young man named Gottard Glissenberg, the boy mentioned in Boterbloem's book. In his deposition, the young Glissenberg declares "that master horsey was not the man that did procure his freedome or deliuery from bondage with the emperour of Russia but this deponentes father in law was the man that procured his freedome as farr as he knoweth & as for master horsey he sayth he was out of the country & was as he hath heard when his liberty was purchased."[27] This may well put Horsey's claims about freeing other westerners in Russia in doubt. Perhaps he was exaggerating about the role he played in getting people released, or perhaps he wasn't even involved at all. Whether or not Horsey was lying about freeing people, it is clear that he was trying to convince people back home that he was "doing the best he could" to mitigate the violence that was so commonplace in the Russian court.

The Dutch

The final portion of Horsey's strategy to maintain himself at the center of the Anglo-Russian trade was his exploiting of English fears about Dutch competition. This doesn't show up as explicitly in the depositions, but without this context, it is unlikely Horsey would've gotten away with as much as he did. In the mid-to-late sixteenth century, England and the Netherlands were vying for control of shipping lanes, and Russia was a major theater in this contest. Especially by the 1580s, England was facing a dire threat from Dutch competition.[28] Things only got worse after the death of Ivan IV, who had pursued a pro-English policy, in 1584. In 1585, the Russian government enacted laws heavily restricting the export of wax and gave John Vandewall the sole right to sell it in Europe.[29] With this backdrop, it was easy for Horsey to cast himself as the defender of English interests in Russia against the Dutch.

Horsey's Downfall

Horsey had a fairly effective system running both in Russia and in England. To the Russians, he was a valuable source of information about foreign spies and a point of entry to the English court. To the English, he was the key author-

[26] Kees Boterbloem, *Russia and the Dutch Republic, 1566-1725* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2021), 42.

[27] Deposition of Gottard van Glissenbergh, May 24, 1598, (response to interrogatories 2 and 3).

[28] Ibid, 51.

[29] Ibid, 52.

ity on Russia and a bulwark against the Dutch. As a result of all this, he had the ear of the Russian court and could effectively do as he pleased with foreigners living in Russia. However, over time, his position began to slip. The reasons for this are tied intimately to the reasons the case *Vandewall V. Horsey* arose. As mentioned earlier, Horsey returned to England in December 1585; at this time, he was still serving as an ambassador between England and Russia. However, in 1586, the first cracks began to show. While in London, Horsey was called before the queen and her counsel and "had great matters layde to his chardge," according to the deposition of Thomas Heyward.[30] We do not get any more details about these "great matters," but it seems quite likely that they were linked to Horsey's actions in Russia. Horsey then fled back to Russia to avoid punishment and remained in the favor of the Russian nobility for two years. However, in 1588, the emperor and nobility suddenly grew unhappy with Horsey. The proximate reasons are unclear, but whatever they were, Horsey was told to leave the country. Ever tenacious, he returned shortly thereafter, once again acting as an ambassador or messenger for Elizabeth. This time, the Russians made sure Horsey would not be mistaken about the welcome he would receive if he decided to pay Russia another visit. In an interesting and somewhat confusing passage, Heyward tells us that Horsey was brought to the Chancellor's office and told to wait there; then, "certen officers came in with fetters and manacles, sayinge some were too bigge, and some too litle, which amased the defendant very much, as might appeare by his countenance."[31] It is unclear why Horsey was surprised by this sight. Perhaps he thought that, as an official diplomat, he would not be arrested even if he was out of favor with the court; perhaps while he was in London he had been visited by Russian contacts who told him he was welcome to return; or perhaps he had merely convinced himself that he was so indispensable to the Russians that they would have to take him back. Whatever the case, Horsey was sent out of Russia again, this time without letters to give Queen Elizabeth on his return to England. Hayward was then requested to write a letter to Elizabeth asking her never to send Horsey back to Russia; the language of the letter is quite harsh, saying "That wheras the defendant had mightily abused himselfe towardes the Emperours maiestie The Emperour would have executed him after the vilest manner, but that for the great love that he bore vnto the Queenes maiestye, and that by the entreaty of his Brother in Law the

[30] Deposition of Thomas Heyward, December 2, 1599, (response to interrogatory 22).

[31] Ibid.

Lord Boris ffrederwitch he was content to suffer the deffendant to passe out of his realme."[32] Previously having had the ear of the Russian nobility, Horsey was now just avoiding being killed by them. Finche writes that the emperor "would have had a stake putt through his body (which had bene executed accordingly had not master Hayward (as he hath heard) laboured earnestly for him)."[33] In a couple years, Horsey's status had plummeted; what caused this?

Two primary factors led to the downfall of Horsey in Russia: first, there was the death of Ivan IV, and second, there was a general downturn in Russian trade with England in the 1580s. Horsey's main two patrons in Russia were the Tsar Ivan IV, and his closest advisor, Boris Godunov (the "Boris ffrederwitch" mentioned in the interrogatory above). Ivan in general pursued a pro-English policy, which was likely a major reason why he supported Horsey for so long. There were exceptions to this; as we saw above, Ivan chartered the port of Arkhangelsk to replace Kholmogory in order to ensure other nations could compete with England in trading with Russia. However, in general he vigorously pursued an alliance with England, attempting to woo the English lady Mary Hastings, the niece of Queen Elizabeth,[34] and possibly even making a proposal of marriage to Elizabeth herself.[35] Personality may also have played a role; Ivan liked people who were ruthless, confident, and assertive, and Horsey was one such person.

The downturn in trade was directly related to the policies of Ivan IV, but was paradoxically exacerbated by his death. The violent, erratic course Ivan pursued in his later years was not conducive to stability or prosperity. A good example of this is the sack of Novgorod in 1570, which Boterbloem writes forced Dutch merchants to seek new trading posts, because Novgorod had been such a vital hub for trade.[36] This was before the events we are discussing, but it is indicative of how Ivan's violent domestic policy took a toll on trade. Later accounts tell the same story. Boterbloem also mentions that, while traveling through western Russia in the 1580s, Giles Fletcher "noticed on his way from the border to

[32] Ibid.

[33] Deposition of John Finche, July 8 1597, (response to interrogatory 22).

[34] Darryl Palmer, *Writing Russia in the Age of Shakespeare* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 74.

[35] George Gross, "Ivan IV and Elizabeth I:The influence of the Tsar's matrimonial endeavours on the development of Russo-English relations," *RUDN Journal of Russian History* 18, no. 4 (2019): 939.

[36] Kees Boterbloem, *Russia and the Dutch Republic, 1566-1725* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2021), 43.

Moscow many ruined villages, whose population had disappeared, because it had succumbed to hunger disease, or warfare, or at least fled its ancestral home during the Livonian wars."[37] Ivan's wars were destroying the very border towns that linked Russia to the west. However, the real blow to trade in general, and especially English trade, came with the restrictive new policies implemented by Ivan's successor, Feodor I, after Ivan died in 1584. One of the mainstays of this political program was the aforementioned decision to limit the wax trade and give John Vandewall exclusive rights to sell Russian wax in Europe. This was accompanied by a general increase in Dutch trade at the expense of the English. In 1585-1586, Vandewall built a factory in Arkhangelsk, which, as mentioned earlier, replaced the English-dominated port of Kholmogory as the primary depot for Russian trade with the west. Shortly thereafter, Russian officials moved from Kholmogory to Arkhangelsk, cementing the new city's status.[38] Meanwhile, starting in 1578, the number of Dutch ships traveling to Russia each year steadily increased.[39] With fewer English and more Dutch merchants arriving to buy Russian goods, the English, and Horsey in particular, became expendable. The Dutch ascendancy would be short-lived; the profits of the Dutch Russia Company soon began to fall, and Vandewall soon went bankrupt.[40] Eventually, the English would regain their footing, convincing the Russian government to ban the Dutch from trading beyond Arkhangelsk.[41] However, the period of Dutch growth lasted just long enough that Horsey could no longer be sure of unconditional Russian support.

This, in turn, led to the case *Vandewall V. Horsey*. We can speculate that after he was sent back to England and had lost his opportunities to trade privately in Russia and extort other merchants for money, Horsey had very little stable income. He could have called in his debts from John Vandewall to help remedy this, but Vandewall, as mentioned above, was himself bankrupt at this point. Therefore, it is likely that Horsey started trying to seize Vandewall's goods in Russia, using the debt Vandewall owed him as a pretext and claiming that Vandewall had said that Horsey could seize his goods in the case of non-repayment, whether or not such an agreement did in fact exist. Vandewall, in dire financial straits of his own, could not afford to let this continue, so he filed suit against

[37] Boterbloem, 45
[38] Boterbloem, 26.
[39] Boterbloem, 43.
[40] Wijnroks, 52-53.
[41] Boterbloem, 45.

Horsey to stop him from seizing his goods. After months of litigation, Horsey won the case and Vandewall was ordered to pay him for his trouble; perhaps this was because Horsey really was legally in the right, or perhaps it was because an Englishman was always going to be favored over a Dutchman in an English court. In any case, Horsey then settled down into a comfortable life as a country gentleman, miraculously escaping any punishment for his massive abuse of power in Russia. There is little poetic justice here; Horsey was a truly awful man with no moral compass to speak of and an incredible greed that led him to have other merchants ruined, beaten, racked, exiled, and killed. He was never punished, and he got to live another 25 years in relative wealth.

Conclusion

Despite his best efforts to seem so in his writings, Jerome Horsey was not a sympathetic character. He lied to virtually everyone, because he believed that was the best way to come out on top. He wasn't entirely wrong; for the space of several years, he was easily the most powerful foreigner in Russia. He achieved this position by working his way up the ranks and convincing everyone involved that they needed him. The Russians believed they needed a reliable source of information who could point out foreign spies to them; the English considered him the major authority on Russia, and thus were willing to see past his cruelty, in part because they feared Dutch competition. However, his position was based on a specific set of conditions, and when these conditions changed, he could no longer manipulate everyone so easily. Ivan IV died, robbing Horsey of a crucial pillar of support, and the Dutch temporarily supplanted the English as the most important traders in Russia. All the while, Horsey apparently didn't realize that he was no longer seen as indispensable. The result was two hasty exits from Russia, the second in handcuffs. As Horsey tried to rebuild his wealth, he went searching for people who owed him debts, and began seizing Vandewall's goods in return for the Dutch merchant's unpaid debts. We do not know enough to say for sure who was right, but in the end, Horsey won the case. He then retired to live the life of a noble. It would be much more satisfying if we saw Horsey punished for his crimes, but the truth is that things worked out pretty well for him. Like so many others before and after him, by making himself the intermediary between unfamiliar groups, he was able to use, abuse, and exploit everyone else involved.

Sinziana Stanciu

Rousseau's Tableau

Self-Fashioning Under the Public Spotlight

In Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* the question of how he presents his identity, in other words his selfhood, arises as he recounted his life to justify the abandonment of his children.[1] The public's judgment is the instigator of *Confessions* as Rousseau attempted to fight against their scrutiny. Further, he not only acknowledged the reading public's function in establishing his celebrity but also their impact on how he perceived himself. However, Rousseau claimed to detest the public, preferring to fashion himself as a social pariah. Society writ large was problematic for Rousseau because he viewed it as a breeding ground for the excess and indulgences that contributed to its failures.[2] Nonetheless, Rousseau still felt the need to write *Confessions*, showing that he was motivated by his desire to regain his position in public discourse. The question of selfhood arises from Rousseau's attempt because he curated a specific *tableau* that existed in a symbiotic relationship with his tainted image.[3] He claimed to present himself in his truest form, but simultaneously attempted to influence the public's perception, complicating the mode of self-fashioning.

The motivation behind Rousseau's *Confessions* is directly addressed in his work when he aimed to reconcile his own perception of Rousseau's self with the reading public's. This distance between how Rousseau thought of himself

[1] Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) is one of the foremost thinkers of the enlightenment period having written numerous works including *Confessions*, an autobiographical work depicting his life and identity.

[2] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Rousseau's Notes to Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men," *Basic Political Writings*, ed. Donald A. Cress, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2012), 103.

[3] *Tableau* is used to draw attention to the strategic and thoughtful composition by Rousseau in his attempt at creating an image for both personal and public viewing.

and how the public conceptualized him was enhanced by the cultivation of his identity as a celebrity.[4] Rousseau public image had escaped his grasp and it became a name that people felt they knew on a personal level, their *ami*, but did not fully understand.[5] Rousseau wrote *Confessions* for two seemingly opposed ends: to turn inward and to fashion a self for public consumption. Although it was never published in his lifetime and he only read small excerpts publicly, he made his intentions clear in the work itself. Rousseau's autobiographical approach to reconciling the public self and his own self-perception showcased a threefold process to engaging with his inward turn.

First, Rousseau had his own conception of his self as opposed to others' perception of him. Rousseau needed to advocate for himself, as he tried to confront Voltaire's accusations regarding the abandonment of his children. However, to justify his actions, he needed to define himself. His attempt at distilling his self culminated in *Confessions*, which promised an accurate *tableau* of his own perception of the self. In this work he attempted to influence the readership in his favor, juxtaposing his first claim to success with the acknowledgement of his decision to send his children to an orphanage. His aspiration to rectify public wrongs was also pursued in another autobiographical work: *Rousseau, Judge of Jean Jacques*. Here, Rousseau confronted common critiques forwarded by "The Frenchman" and used the third person to defend himself.[6] For Rousseau, these works were an opportunity to turn inward and understand his inner self. His *œuvre* was an extension of his self, and he wrote *Confessions* in an effort to mitigate the influence of his rivals in misrepresenting who Rousseau was to the public.

Second, Rousseau established how his image was perceived and had appeared in the public by referencing expectations that others have of him when crafting *Confessions*. This self was one that Rousseau hoped to alter, as it took on a life of its own and was no longer exclusively an extension of his work. By identifying a public self and placing it in conversation with his internal self, it was possible for Rousseau to establish mechanisms that resolved their differences. To understand the public that had created an image of Rousseau, it is necessary to grasp the scale of his readership, his interaction with other public figures, and

[4] Antoine Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity: 1750-1850*, trans. Lynn Jeffress (Malden, Massachusetts: Polity, 2017), 109.

[5] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 112.

[6] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, ed. Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly, vol. 1 (Hanover: Published for Dartmouth College by University Press of New England, 1990), 8.

how people conceived of Rousseau on a more personal level. By contextualizing the reading public Rousseau's choices by self-fashioning in specific ways are clearer. Rousseau alluded to how he was perceived throughout *Confessions* but explaining how his name truly lived in the public consciousness showcases the reach of his work and legacy.

Third, Rousseau hoped to self-fashion an image that reconciled his internal self and the public self, but this relationship between the two was complex. On the one hand, Rousseau insisted that he was presenting an authentic image of himself. On the other hand, he felt that he needed the public's approval. Therefore, the Rousseau that is presented in *Confessions* is neither his internal self nor the public's idea of him, rather it is the manifestation of their symbiotic relationship. In this work, Rousseau illustrated how the public impacted his sense of self. He aimed to cultivate a figure that was simultaneously true to his self-perception and accepted by the public, showing an intertwined self that was strategically curated and true to the celebrity he had become. Additionally, the need for control over his image is seen in his dissatisfaction with the portrait by Allan Ramsay. Rousseau sought out an image that reflected his internal sense of self. In his opinion, this was not reflective of the self, but the popularity of the image exhibits how Rousseau hoped to regain control and deal with divergent *tableaus* that existed independent of his written work.[7] Further, his treatment of gender also exemplified how he hoped to frame himself in strategically appealing ways.

Historiographical Discussion

Rousseau and his *œuvre* have been a unique topic of inquiry because of his immense legacy both politically and socially, resulting in an extensive study of his autobiographical work. Specifically, the historiographical discussion around Rousseau has attempted to understand his role in the Enlightenment and the French Revolution.[8] Considering the extensive use of the *Social Contract* by revolutionaries as a framework for France, this work has attempted to trace the impact that enlightenment ideas had in the French Revolution. Robert Darnton has attempted to take a more empirical approach in examining which works were rightfully deemed historically significant and how censored books, includ-

[7] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 155.

[8] Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), xviii. There has been extensive debate over how revolutionaries interpreted and applied *Social Contract* as well.

ing Rousseau's, had a larger impact than previously noted.[9] By examining the records of books being produced and their dissemination, scale and networks he clarified how historians addressed the Enlightenment's contribution to the Revolution.[10] Darnton's approach also intersects with Roger Chartier's which draws on cultural history to address questions of conditions rather than origins of the revolution.[11] Hence, Chartier's discussion of works is rooted in comprehending their impact and context.[12] Chartier's work is, in part, indebted to the distinction that Jürgen Habermas, a critical theorist and philosopher, was able to achieve in his creation of the public and private sphere, particularly because Habermas's distinction outlines the areas where culture was formed and negotiated.[13]

Habermas identified the public sphere as a space for the bourgeoisie which attended *salons* and met at coffee-houses.[14] This was both a class and gendered division of political criticism as bourgeois men dominated the public sphere while women on the other hand were prohibited from engaging in this political discourse and were pushed into the private sphere.[15] This creation of the public sphere facilitates the conditions for Chartier's work because it designates a space for a dialectic of culture and communication. By clarifying the mode of the public sphere development, Habermas created the space where Chartier's work can manifest itself.

Within the public sphere, Antoine Lilti projects Rousseau onto the idea of celebrity.[16] However, Rousseau complicates Habermas's public sphere because his existence as a celebrity is predicated on the public sphere, yet he consistently rails against its influence. Lilti frames Rousseau as a figure who struggled to cope with the formation of the public sphere, leading to his experience of alienation. Whereas Lilti places Rousseau in conversation with his identity as a

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[9] Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, xxi.

[10] Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, 172 and 180.

[11] Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, Bicentennial Reflections on the French Revolution (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 2.

[12] Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994), ix–xi.

[13] Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, 170–72.

[14] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 41.

[15] Habermas, 56.

[16] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 159.

celebrity, Jerrold Seigel inspects him through the lens of cultivating a self. However, Seigel interprets Rousseau's *Confessions* as contradictory to the rest of his *oeuvre* because it was geared toward pleasing the same society Rousseau claimed was corruptive.[17] Although Seigel is correct in identifying that this is an issue on the surface, Rousseau explained the importance of continuing to critique society while participating in it.[18]

Conversely, Charles Taylor is able to examine Rousseau's self-fashioning from a more charitable perspective. He recognizes that Rousseau's attempt at constructing his self was critical to maintaining the good found by turning within.[19] Taylor embraces Rousseau as he portrays himself and finds that this portrait explores nature's internal existence as a source for good.[20] This need to turn inward and find the source of goodness that is stifled by society illuminates what Rousseau is hoping to accomplish in his *Confessions*.[21] By looking inward, and backward to his origins, Rousseau sought to reengage his natural goodness and his conscience; however, he was prompted to do this through public scrutiny.[22] This intersection between his conscience and the public's role illustrates the difficulty Rousseau had in attempting to portray a *tableau* that was true to his inner self and did not succumb to the stifling of society.

In this paper, I bring together these streams of historiographical discourse surrounding the self and Rousseau's portrayal to demonstrate that *Confessions* is his attempt to reconcile the external idea of his identity with his internal beliefs about existence. *Confessions* is an exercise in looking inward, but it is not completely innocent of the final result and the scrutiny he would face in its aftermath. The public prompted him to turn inward and it waited for the final result, ready to scrutinize the *tableau* that Rousseau the celebrity puts on display.

Self I: Rousseau Looking Inward and His Self-Perception

Confessions was written by Rousseau toward the end of his life as he aimed to convey his true self to the public, especially in response to the efforts made by Voltaire to condemn Rousseau. In a letter to Jean le Rond d'Alembert, Voltaire

[17] Jerrold E. Seigel, *The Idea of the Self Thought and Experience in Western Europe Since the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 236.

[18] Rousseau, *Basic Political Writings*, 105.

[19] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Tenth Printing, 2001. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989), 421.

[20] Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 433–35.

[21] Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 435.

[22] Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 420.

denounced Rousseau as a means of revenge, scrutinizing him for abandoning his children: "An excess of pride and envy has undone Jean-Jacques, my illustrious philosopher. This monster daring to speak about education! He who could not be bothered to raise any of his sons… Rest assured that anyone who abandons the philosophes will come to a bad end."[23] Voltaire's letter showed the vindictive intention behind his admonition of Rousseau. He was not concerned about the abandonment of children, rather he wanted to ensure that Rousseau paid the price for disagreeing with his peers. Rousseau was no longer just a philosopher; he was a target that seemed hypocritical because he wrote *Emile* and did not attempt to apply it in his own life. In response, Rousseau addressed Voltaire's admonition in book eight of *Confessions*. Placed after he wrote extensively about his childhood and his path to success, Rousseau recounts his breakthrough while depicting the essay competition from the Academy of Dijon. Ultimately, this push toward curating a sense of self via *Confessions* leads to Rousseau developing a clear answer to Voltaire: the internal true self is distinct from the external one, and as they coexist, only one can be guilty of abandoning his children.

Rousseau's public pursuit of fame had become integral to his identity, as he chased it from his arrival in Paris and sought success through his musical works.[24] However, he only found recognition for his literary works ten years later.[25] In a letter to the Academy of Dijon, Rousseau is extremely grateful for the award, "You honor me with a prize which I compete for rather than aspire to. I prefer the glory of your esteem."[26] The emphasis on glory and esteem they bestowed on Rousseau was particularly important because it gave him the opportunity to pursue his thoughts more confidently. However, when he turned inward and wrote about the competition, he expressed regret and emphasized that Diderot's encouragement that he participate was the beginning of his demise.[27] His rationale is explained through his reaction when he found out that

[23] Roselyne de Ayala, Jean-Pierre Guéno, and John Goodman, eds., *Belles Lettres: Manuscripts by the Masters of French Literature* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001), 50.

[24] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 134.

[25] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 139.

[26] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Correspondance Complète de Jean Jacques Rousseau: Édition Critique*, ed. R. A. Leigh, vol. 30, Publications de l'Institut et Musée Voltaire (Oxford, UK: Voltaire Foundation, 1977), 405; "*Voux m'honorés d'un prix auquel j'avois concouru plutôt qu'aspiré. Préférant la gloire de vôtre estim.*" Translation made with help from Pascale Crepon, Professor of French at Columbia University.

[27] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions*, trans. J.M. Cohen (Middlesex, UK: Penguin, 1953), 328.

he won the prize: "the news reawakened all the ideas that it had suggested to me, endowed them with fresh vigour."[28] The ideas that Rousseau had abandoned were suddenly valid as he gained external validation and found support for them. By looking inward, Rousseau was able to identify the moment that he had become subject to the approval of others as his downfall.

This turning point and rise to fame was accompanied by his discussion of his children, showing how he aimed to place an important part of his career adjacent to what he has been most scrutinized for.[29] By pairing his success as an author with his failure as a father, he begins to make distinctions within his interior selves. In *Confessions*, to discuss his experience, he referred to himself in the third person (albeit sparingly): "Never for a moment in his life could Jean-Jacques have been a man without feelings or compassion… I thought I was acting as a citizen and a father."[30] Rousseau looked to the person that abandoned his children through the third person, but when he was critical of his actions, he employed the first person. He refers to himself as Jean-Jacques in book nine as well, when discussing his censorship. For Rousseau, "In the storm that has engulfed me my books have served as a pretext; the attack was against myself. They cared very little about the author, but they wished to destroy Jean-Jacques." A distinction reappears, as Rousseau realized upon his inward turn that the attacks aimed to hurt him rather than his works. This led to a division in how Rousseau understood his internal self. There was no singular image of Rousseau after he had become an author, instead there was the regretful man and the author.

Before his success in the competition, Rousseau had abandoned two children already. However, he only confronts this issue in the context of his entry under public scrutiny. His defense regarding the abandonment in this period is articulated in a similar fashion to *Confessions* in the contemporaneous period. In his letter to Mme de Francueil, Rousseau used several arguments to justify his actions:

> How would domestic cares and the worry of children in my garret leave me the tranquillity of mind necessary to do a lucrative work? … To feed myself, my children, and their mother from the blood of the poor! No madame, it would be better for them to be orphans … in his republic Plato wanted all the children to be brought up in such a way that each would re-

[28] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 332.

[29] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 332.

[30] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 333.

main unknown to his father and all would be children of the state.[31]

In this letter Rousseau used multiple defenses to justify his actions from a need to sustain himself through writing to a more philosophical approach through Plato. The latter is replicated in *Confessions* showing how Rousseau had similarly hoped to defend himself from public scrutiny using not only a multiplicity of selves but also the work of other philosophers.[32] By defending his internal self, the public facing one could be guilty, but the internal self was protected from attacks.

Rousseau's approach of using the third person appears in a series of dialogues, *Rousseau, Judge of Jean-Jacques*, which he wrote while he was working on *Confessions*. This work repeated his use of the third person by switching between versions of his name which corresponds to how he references himself in book nine but is made explicit in the extensive dialogue. By approaching the discussion of 'Rousseau' in different forms (autobiography and discourses), he was able to make the authorial voice of Rousseau distinct from the singular Rousseau. He makes this division explicit at the beginning of his dialogues: "The Author of the Books and of the crimes appears to you to be the same person. I believe I am correct to see them as two. That, Sir, is the key to the enigma."[33] To comprehend the self that Rousseau had internalized, it is necessary to understand him in response to his works. Without the "Author of the Books" there would be only one Rousseau. However, once he won the Academy of Dijon's prize, the multiplicity of his selfhood became more apparent. Rousseau ultimately addressed Voltaire's judgment through an elegant solution: the self that was publicly famous was not the same as his own internal self. In *Confessions*, Rousseau's author-self wrote about the internal self, thereby establishing a narrative that could stand in response to the public's scrutiny.

James Swenson interprets Rousseau's ability to navigate the self in a consistent manner across his works, beyond just the *Confessions* and the *Dialogues*, as reflective of the unity of the natural self.[34] The unity of the works can be

[31] Jean-Jacques Rousseau et al., *The Confessions and, Correspondence, Including the Letters to Malesherbes*, electronic resource, vol. 5, The Collected Writings of Rousseau (Hanover and London: Published by University Press of New England [for] Dartmouth College, 1995), 551–52.

[32] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 333.

[33] Rousseau, *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, 1:13.

[34] James Swenson, *On Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Considered as One of the First Authors of the Revolution* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2000), 116.

attributed to the author himself, as he attempts to create a consistent presentation of his image; however, the fallacy of inconsistency arises because he is only, according to Swenson, partially read.[35] Swenson sees this as a consequence of the dichotomies projected onto the author and the work: literary and political works, entertaining and truthful texts, Rousseau and his writings.[36] These divisions in how Rousseau is read complicate the broader question of identifying the self that Rousseau internalized. Rather than understanding Rousseau in isolation from his work, he can only be understood relative to it. To understand him is to view his self through the lens of his works, whether political or personal, as they all contribute to the image that is Rousseau.

Self II: Contextualizing Rousseau's Public Self

Although Rousseau understood himself in a nuanced fashion, the reading public had a divergent sense of his identity. Further, this was often out of his reach, as Rousseau relentlessly aimed to control the rhetoric surrounding the perception of his identity. From his *Social Contract* to *Emile*, Rousseau's numerous works were increasingly familiar to the French readers despite censorship. This reading public was increasing at a rapid rate, as literacy rates rose 16 percent for men and 13 percent for women from 1690 to 1790.[37] Darnton's extensive analysis of the printers in and around France during the eighteenth century showcases the degree to which Rousseau was a popular author amongst this growing population.[38] By specifically looking at the illicit works produced, Darnton sheds light on how people became familiar with his work despite previous belief that the *Social Contract* was not popular prior to 1789.[39] He found that across major and minor dealers of books, Rousseau's was one of the most commonly published works; *Œuvres* was the 23rd most common from 1769 to 1789.[40] Additionally, he was the ninth best-selling author.[41]

Looking at Darnton's specific sample illuminates the question of Rousseau's prominence as he was amongst the most requested authors at *Société Ty-*

[35] Swenson, *On Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 126.

[36] Swenson, *On Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 126–27.

[37] Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, 69.

[38] Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, xviii. Darnton's research illuminated the impact of the banned book market in France and the impact this had on the spread of philosophical ideas.

[39] Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, xviii.

[40] Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, 64.

[41] Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, 65.

pographique de Neuchâtel (STN), a Swiss printing house that kept records of their illegal book production. In this sample, Rousseau's work amassed a greater demand in larger cities after his death. From 1769 to 1778, Rousseau was most prominent in Bergamo, Beauvais and Warsaw in sales.[42] However, his works became more prominent in Versailles, Neuchâtel and Saint-Petersburg after his death, from 1778 to 1794. In this period, 37.35 percent of the printing house's publications by Rousseau were going to Versailles.[43] Although these figures are only useful for assessing Rousseau's fame relative to others and the areas he was prominent in, it provides valuable insight into his popularity. It is impossible to estimate how many people read, heard, or knew the content of Rousseau's work, but this information shows just how widespread and influential he was despite censorship and controversy.

Rousseau's works were widely read, and this was, in part, because of the controversies he had with other *philosophes*. Besides his confrontation with Voltaire, he also had a falling out with David Hume, a Scottish enlightenment philosopher. Lilti looks at the public's scrutiny of Hume's relationship with Rousseau as part of being a celebrity. Rousseau and Hume had exchanged letters and Hume had offered Rousseau support in London.[44] However, by July 1766, Hume had written a letter to Rousseau, emphasizing that "I soon felt a very sensible Uneasyness, when I found, that you had, wantonly and voluntarily, thrown away all these Advantages, and was the declared Enemy of your own Repose, Fortune, and Honour. I cannot be surprised after this, that you are my Enemy. Adieu and for ever [*sic*]."[45] The confrontation between Rousseau and Hume showed the impact that celebrity had on his ability to discern friend from enemy. Rousseau had become paranoid that Hume was part of this grand conspiracy.[46] Rather than appreciating what he had, Hume thought Rousseau was his own worst enemy. This event had consumed the Republic of Letters as people were enthralled with the treachery that Rousseau accused Hume of committing.[47] This culminated in the publication of the letters retained by Hume, both in

[42] Simon Burrows and Mark Curran, "The French Book Trade in Enlightenment Europe Database, 1769-1794," http://fbtee.uws.edu.au/main/.

[43] Burrows and Curran, "The French Book Trade."

[44] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 124.

[45] Rousseau, *Correspondance Complète de Jean Jacques Rousseau*, 30:138.

[46] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 124–25.

[47] Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994), 41.

French and English.[48]

The publication of letters relating to Rousseau was not unique to this incident, as the *London Chronicle* had also published a letter from Voltaire to Rousseau in April 1766. In this letter, Voltaire claimed that the English "will, perhaps, be curious of seeing you [Rousseau], and you will be careful to be seen. The news writers will keep an exact register of all your actions and jests…. You will be extolled as the prophet of Geneva … [you] asserted, that the English are undone because they are grown rich. You will be examined with astonishment."[49] Voltaire explained how the English would respond to Rousseau, pushing his role as an outsider into the public's mind when they read this letter in the newspaper. Even in London, Rousseau would constantly be judged by the public as distinct and worthy of more attention. Lilti draws attention to newspaper coverage of Rousseau as well, showing how his time in London was eclipsed by the persistent coverage of the theatrical shows he saw and even his lost dog.[50] The quest for acceptance would be difficult for Rousseau in *Confessions*, as people already felt they understood this man through the extensive coverage of his life and his works.

Rousseau's pervasive position in culture transcended the traditional boundaries of author and reader, as he had become more than just a writer for his readership. There was a broader literary shift in creating approachable stories that people could project themselves onto, and Rousseau was part of it, as he channeled charisma into his works and made readers feel like they knew him, cultivating a deeper relationship than just author-reader.[51] He wanted his readership to be just as enthralled as he was in writing them: "[he] even attempted to teach his readers how to read, and through reading, tried to touch their inner lives."[52] His work did touch readers, including Jacques-Louis Ménétra in his *Journal of My Life*.[53] Rousseau's widespread appeal is shown here as he emerged

[48] Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, 41.

[49] "A Letter from Mr. Voltaire to Mr. Jean Jacques Rousseau," *London Chronicle*, April 12, 1766, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Newspapers Collection.

[50] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 111.

[51] David A. Bell, *Men on Horseback: The Power of Charisma in the Age of Revolution*, First edition (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020), 25–26.

[52] Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, electronic resource (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1999), 228.

[53] Jacques-Louis Ménétra, *Journal of My Life*, ed. Daniel Roche (New York, New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), vii–ix. It is unclear how much of this autobiography is factual as opposed to fabricated. Ménétra exaggerated events. However, his in-

across classes from the aristocrat's salons to the working-class haunts.[54] According to Ménétra, he not only met Rousseau but became close to him.[55] At one point, they decide to go for a drink and were asked to leave. The proprietor noted that on a previous occasion "several marble tables had been broken because such a crowd had come to see M Rousseau play [checkers] that some people had climbed up on the tables He said to me My friend calm yourself let us go [*sic*]."[56] From this passage two key aspects of Rousseau's celebrity become clear. Firstly, people thought they had a personal connection to him. Ménétra wrote about Rousseau using the language of friendship, illustrating his deep bond with the author. Secondly, Rousseau's celebrity had a large social impact. Although Rousseau was not rich, his name held immense value and people sought his respect and association. The social currency that Rousseau's name held in the public consciousness is illustrated by Ménétra's inclusion of this event in his *Journal*, along with the crowds of people that hoped to catch a glimpse of him playing checkers.

The image of Rousseau the celebrity was informed by the reading public's preoccupation with his work and Rousseau as a friend. They wanted to place Rousseau in their lives and build a relationship with him, and he ultimately rejects this community as seen in his lack of willingness to comply with their love for his portrait by Ramsay, as discussed in the next section.[57] His impact from the scale of popularity amongst the reading public to his interactions with Hume and Voltaire in newspapers showcase the type of scrutiny Rousseau faced. His lack of control relative to the image that people held in the public consciousness manifested in his *Confessions* as he hoped to reconcile the Rousseau that people had read and heard about with how he saw himself.

Self III: Reconciling Rousseau's Inward Self and the Public's Rousseau

In this framing, Rousseau's experience becomes clear as he was not only subject to public scrutiny but also experienced a disconnect between his work and his reputation.[58] Rousseau tried to address this disconnect in *Confessions*, out-

clusion of an encounter with Rousseau still makes it valuable because it shows the social currency that Rousseau would have given to a man like Ménétra that was concerned with painting a very favorable image of himself despite sinful behavior.

[54] Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, 83–84.

[55] Ménétra, *Journal of My Life*, 182.

[56] Ménétra, *Journal of My Life*, 183.

[57] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity: 1750-1850*, 158.

[58] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity: 1750-1850*, 119.

lining his work as reflective of his truest self. Rousseau begins by claiming that "my purpose is to display to my kind a portrait in every way true to nature, and the man I shall portray will be myself. Simply myself… I may be no better but at least I am different… So let the numberless legion of my fellow men gather round me and hear my confessions."[59] Here, Rousseau exhibited the exact experience that Voltaire claimed he would feel in London: a man consistently under the scrutiny of others. Further, he not only acknowledged that the self he presented was strategically fashioned, but he also drew attention to the audience judging him. The *tableau* that Rousseau presented his readers aimed to consolidate the author and the tainted man through his inward turn.

Moreover, he used the term "portrait," establishing his position as something to be gazed upon. The self he is creating is for the public's appreciation. However, he was very conscious of his image, exemplified in his anger toward Ramsay's painting. He felt that this painting was inaccurate in reflecting Rousseau's self. When he returned from France and saw the portrait, he was shocked. Commenting in his *Dialogues* on the portrait, Rousseau was prejudiced against it: "if [the painters] don't do a better job of depicting the original's moral character than they do his physical appearance, he will surely be badly known through [the portraits]."[60] This widely proliferated image of Rousseau endangered how others had perceived him and undermined his moral character. Considering that Rousseau thought of the natural self as the center of goodness and conscience, he was truly saying that this portrait depicted a self that was misaligned with his own moral system. He goes on to frame his involvement in the portrait under the language of coercion and beyond his control.[61] This stands in stark contrast to the mission of *Confessions*, in which Rousseau understood himself through his works and claimed ownership of them. He did not hide behind anonymity, as was common for censored works, and instead used it as a mechanism of introspection.[62] By publicly acknowledging his work as his own, Rousseau looked at these pieces as an opportunity to turn inward in front of a public readership. These written extensions of his identity were under his control, but the portrait by Ramsay was not. As Lilti points out, Rousseau's response to the painting and his inability to control it was irrelevant to owners that sought to have an image

[59] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 17.
[60] Rousseau, *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, 1:90.
[61] Rousseau, *The Collected Writings of Rousseau,* 1:91.
[62] Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, 234.

of their *ami*.[63] At least in *Confessions*, Rousseau could present an accurate "portrait" of himself.

The *Dialogues* were not only a space for discussing his dissatisfaction with Ramsay's work and the public but also an opportunity to explore the goal of *Confessions*. These works served a similar function, showing the importance of Swenson's claim that his *Œuvre* should be evaluated in its totality. In the *Dialogues*, the character Rousseau claims that the pursuit of *Confessions* was in response to the image the public had forged of J.J.: "When he saw himself distorted among men to the point of being considered a monster, conscience – which made him feel more good than bad in himself – gave him the courage that perhaps he alone had and will ever have to show himself as he was."[64] Rousseau acknowledged that the distortion of the public prompted his inward turn toward his conscience, and that it further enabled him to portray an accurate image of himself. However, this inward turn was prompted by the public, showing that despite his complex relationship with his celebrity, if there would not have been a distortion of his image, he would not have had the need to examine himself as he did in *Confessions*.

Rousseau makes the inward turn in *Confessions* aware of the audience that he is hoping to placate. He revealed his intent of trying to influence them by expressing the kind of hopes and dreams that never manifested because of the gilded cage he had created for himself. In book one, he recalls his intent of returning to Geneva, "But I was so besieged by people, so little my own master, that I could not find a moment in which to please myself."[65] This desire to return to Geneva stands in opposition to his recollection of the freedom he had felt when he left, "I marched confidently out into the world's wide spaces. Soon they would be filled with my fame. Everywhere I went I should find feastings, treasures, and adventures, friends ready to help me and mistresses eager to do my pleasure."[66] Although he was only left six miles outside of Geneva, Rousseau was initially elated to explore what the world had in store, hoping to make his success through fame. However, in his later life, he would have preferred to return to Geneva. This shift shows the evolution of Rousseau as a man that had aspired to great heights, but once he arrived there, he regretted his decision. The inward turn that Rousseau was making shoed that he not only blamed his status

[63] Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, 155.
[64] Rousseau, *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, 1:188.
[65] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 34.
[66] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 53.

as a celebrity for prohibiting his happiness, but also himself. Rousseau acknowledges that he sought out his demise through fame and this observation is in line with his reflections regarding the prize from the Academy of Dijon.

Rousseau was particularly conscious of his project, as he spoke directly to the readers at times and reflected on the plausibility of his goals in *Confessions*. He consistently referenced the people that he saw as conspiring against him, beginning book twelve by reflecting on their impact:

> I seem like a man complaining for no reason. The authors of my ruin have discovered the unimaginable art of turning the public into the unsuspecting accomplice of their plot, who does not even see its results. In relating, therefore, the events that concern me, the treatment I have suffered and all that has happened to me, I am in no position to trace them to their prime mover… If there are any among my readers generous enough to try and probe these mysteries till they discover the truth, let them carefully re-read the last three books.[67]

By this stage, Rousseau not only felt defeated but was also drawing a close to part two of his *Confessions*. Although he was never able to write the intended third part, book twelve is his last appeal in this section to his readers. Fittingly, he returns to the instigator of *Confessions*: the conspirators and tormentors. Rousseau painted the conspirators as figures that exploited the public and turned them against him, planting, at the very least, a seed of doubt regarding the public's judgment. He continues by calling upon the public to do his bidding, showing how he hoped to sway them toward his perspective. This is just one tactic of many, as he also fondly thought of the success of his *Letter to d'Alembert* because it cast doubt upon the Holbach clique.[68] For Rousseau, this inward turn was successful if it gave the readers sufficient grounds to support him against his enemies. Even if he claimed to detest the public, he still sought their support because his self was intertwined with their opinion. He was Jean-Jacques the author and Rousseau the man, these two were inseparable not only in the public consciousness but also in his mind.

His appeal to readers was also targeted toward women, complicating Rousseau's own treatment of them in *Confessions* when he ultimately relies on them as an audience. Rousseau often viewed women through an instrumental lens, from his 'maman', Mme de Warens, to his long-term partner, Thérèse Le Vasseur, Rousseau did not think of women through the same lens as men. When

[67] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 544.

[68] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 465.

he recounts meeting Thérèse specifically, he realizes that "What I needed, in short, was a successor to Mamma; since I could no longer live with her I needed someone to live with her pupil, someone in whom I could find the simplicity and the docile heart which she had found in me… At first I decided to improve her mind; I was wasting my time. Her mind is as Nature made it; culture and teaching have no effect on it."[69] Rousseau saw Thérèse as a mere replacement, and he attempted to mold her into a partner that would fit his needs. His failure and subsequent denunciation of her capacity to learn not only demeaned her intellectual standing but also revealed how he thought of women.

Nonetheless, Rousseau found women to be a valuable audience in his *Confessions*. Specifically in the context of *La nouvelle Héloïse*, Rousseau explained why he was successful in a female audience: "What won me the women's favor was their belief that I had written my own story, and that I was myself the hero of my novel… Everybody was convinced that it was impossible to express feelings so vividly unless one had felt them, or to depict the raptures of love except with one's own heart as a model. In that they were right, and it is true that I wrote the novel in a state of burning ecstasy."[70] Rousseau's treatment of gender in his work is central to understanding how he portrayed himself because he is curating portions of his life to meet their expectations. Moreover, if Swenson's framework is applied by placing Rousseau in conversation with the totality of his works, he is pushing female audiences to think about where the parallels lie between his self and the character that they adored in his literature. This complicates Habermas's distinctions between the public and private spheres because Rousseau attempted to curry favor with the private sphere, which had minimal to no involvement in the public sphere. Rousseau transcended the barrier of the public and private in a different sense here, as his work permeated the distinctions in place and found an audience in both spheres. Further, although Rousseau found women to be inferior, he ultimately still had a female audience that he was aware of.

Mary Wollstonecraft viewed Rousseau's contributions to the Enlightenment as contradictory because of his position on gender.[71] Rousseau has frequently been understood as misogynistic in feminist historiography, particularly because of his tendency to paint them as lesser in works such as *Emile* where his

[69] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 311.

[70] Rousseau, *Confessions*, 506.

[71] Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*, Second edition. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 78–79.

ideal partner, Sophie, is framed through her body.[72] Nonetheless, Rousseau was able to use *Confessions* in a manner that still swayed even Wollstonecraft. Barbara Taylor points out that "It was 'impossible to read' his Confessions, [Wollstonecraft] wrote, 'without loving the man despite the weaknesses of character that he himself depicts, which never appear to have arisen from depravity of heart.'"[73] His writing about his inward turn was so effective that even Wollstonecraft, a critic of Rousseau, resonated with his struggle. Rousseau had successfully depicted a self that brought together the image that others had of his identity and his own self-perception.

Conclusion

Rousseau endeavored to alter public opinion by unveiling his internal self in his *Confessions*. Although the image of Rousseau had existed independent of his own writing, he was able to draw readers in and self-fashion a *tableau* that they would not only find compelling but also resonate with. By reconciling his internal self with the one that had manifested in the public consciousness, Rousseau hoped to justify and clear his name. His image, curated under the scrutiny of the public, was simultaneously true to his internal self-perception and geared toward their consumption. This matters because it demonstrates that Rousseau did not conform to the singular notion of the self, rather, he pushed past it to compartmentalize and form a distinct approach to his presentation. By doing this, he was able to simultaneously circumvent public scrutiny while remaining true to his self.

[72] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 82–83.

[73] Barbara Taylor, "Rousseau and Wollstonecraft: Solitary Walkers," in *Thinking with Rousseau: From Machiavelli to Schmitt*, ed. Helena Rosenblatt and Paul Schweigert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 215–16, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316226490.012.