

# The Rhodes Historical Review



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# The Rhodes Historical Review

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# The Rhodes Historical Review

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## CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| When Political Rivalry Goes Too Far<br>Bradley Bledsoe.....  | 3  |
| The Debate surrounding Female Ordination in the<br>Catholic Church: Argument in favor of the Installation of<br>Women Priests<br>Stephanie Brenzel ..... | 21 |
| Men, Women, and the Question of Food: Gender in 12 <sup>th</sup><br>Century Europe<br>Ellen Rast .....   | 35 |
| Darfur's Genocide: A Causal Analysis at the Individual,<br>State, and Global Level<br>Olivia Wells.....  | 54 |

# When Political Rivalry Goes Too Far

Bradley Bledsoe

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What causes a rivalry in politics to go beyond the political arena and result in the fleeing of a powerful figure for fear of his life? At what point does a city leader let harassment and persecution become the tools with which he runs his administration? Every southern city has struggled with this since the end of the Civil War. Memphis, Tennessee is historically one of the largest southern cities and economic centers, due to its strategic location along the mighty Mississippi River. As such an important city and one with such a large African-American population, Memphis has seen its fair share of race issues and political battles. This important city became the battleground on which a political standoff took place so intense that it ended in personal finances destroyed and citizens feeling unwelcome in their hometown.

Rivalry and competition in politics can often get out of hand, but rarely to a dangerous point of no return. The political rivalry between Democratic boss Edward Hull Crump and Republican leader Robert R. Church Jr. went through many stages, but would eventually escalate to this dangerous point. At one point both leaders may have found it beneficial to be allies, but over time Crump became jealous and fearful of the growing power and political influence of African-American Robert R. Church. Once Crump got the chance with the election of a Democratic president, Crump moved to annihilate and humiliate Church and those associated with him.

## Historical Background

During the first half of the twentieth century, a strict machine under the political mastermind Edward Hull “Boss” Crump ran Memphis. He controlled the entire city and the majority of West Tennessee, whether he was serving as an elected official or not. Crump was able to keep his grasp on the city government of Memphis through tactics of harassment and bribery, as well as through beneficial reform programs.<sup>1</sup> This progressive politician was able to sustain his power for nearly half a century through these sometimes questionable policies. Crump is remembered as one of the most powerful city bosses in American history.<sup>2</sup>

In early twentieth-century Memphis there was also a growing movement by African Americans in the city to gain power, respect, and most importantly voting rights in a city they felt was just as much theirs as it was Boss Crump’s. During Crump’s reign, African Americans also had their respective powerful leaders. Robert R. Church Jr. emerged as one of the leaders of this community.<sup>3</sup> Church was the privileged son of Robert R. Church Sr., the nation’s first African-American millionaire. Church Sr. made his money buying real estate in downtown Memphis, mostly around the legendary “home of the Blues,” Beale Street, and setting up The Solvent Bank and Trust Company. This bank, later run by his son, helped many black entrepreneurs get their businesses off the ground and running.<sup>4</sup> By doing this, the Churches became natural leaders in the black community, as well as extremely wealthy and powerful

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<sup>1</sup> Beverly G. Bond and Janann Sherman, *Memphis In Black and White* (Charleston, SC, Chicago, IL, Portsmouth, NH, San Francisco, CA: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 91.

<sup>2</sup> G. Wayne Dowdy, *Mayor Crump Don’t Like It: Machine Politics in Memphis* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1963), 111.

<sup>3</sup> Dowdy, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Bond and Sherman, 80-1.

individuals. Church Jr., unlike his father before him, decided to spend his life in politics. In 1918, Church founded the first chapter of the NAACP in Memphis and was very involved in getting African Americans registered to vote.<sup>5</sup>

Crump's machine and the Church family coexisted in the city for many years, and some think they worked together, particularly to get the city's black population registered to vote. Church Jr. and his black Republican colleagues first formed the Colored Citizens Association in 1911 to register black voters, and by the 1918 special election, Church's Lincoln League had gained monumental power in gathering blacks to vote. These black voters mostly voted for Crump because of his progressive platform. Of course, it did not hurt his cause to get elected that Crump had "control over the election commission."<sup>6</sup> Although, most African Americans in Memphis considered themselves Republicans and voted that way for presidential elections, when it came to local elections Crump continued to win thanks to the election commission, which "made sure that enfranchised blacks voted the right way."<sup>7</sup>

By registering black voters, Church was inadvertently assembling votes for Crump. Soon Church and the black Republicans were not only getting blacks to vote, but also could somewhat control who they voted for in the elections. Crump used this to his advantage by occasionally sending his representatives to meet with Church to grant certain concessions to the African-American community in order to increase his popularity.<sup>8</sup> It is often contested whether or not Church and Crump actually collaborated. In fact, some Church historians say that Church never

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<sup>5</sup> Roger Biles, *Memphis in the Great Depression* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1986), 97.

<sup>6</sup> Dowdy, 27-8.

<sup>7</sup> Biles, 96.

<sup>8</sup> Dowdy, 49-50.

did anything to help the Crump organization, and that it only appeared that way because Church wanted certain candidates elected on his own will.<sup>9</sup>

By the late 1930s, the African-American community in Memphis began to lose faith in Crump. Church and other leaders began to preach the idea of independence of the community, and encouraged the community to cast their votes whichever way they wanted. In 1938, the majority of the African Americans in the city voted against the Crump Machine for the first time. However, Crump no longer needed the support of Church and other black Republicans because of his support from President Franklin Roosevelt.<sup>10</sup> When this occurred Crump decided that he did not need the support of the black community any more and began to plot against Church. In order to draw a political line in the sand and let Church know where he stood, Crump's city administration snatched up Church's assets because of unpaid back taxes.<sup>11</sup> Church's organization continued to campaign against Crump's machine, but in 1940 Church fled to Washington, D.C. in fear of his life almost a year after his assets and real estate had been taken away.<sup>12</sup>

### **Church's Power: Source of Fear and Jealousy**

The events that occurred in 1940 were fueled by Crump's feelings toward his political enemy. It remains unknown if these feelings were of fear or jealousy, because both seem to make sense. Jealousy could easily be the factor if one understands how powerful a political figure Church was. Crump saw the influence

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<sup>9</sup> Roberta Church and Ronald Walter, *Nineteenth Century Memphis Families of Color 1850-1900* (Memphis, TN: Murdock Printing Co., Inc., 1987), 22.

<sup>10</sup> Bond and Sherman, 114.

<sup>11</sup> Dowdy, 109.

<sup>12</sup> Bond and Sherman, 115.

Church had over his respective party, and was likely very envious of his dominance. To be able to threaten Boss Crump's power in Memphis enough for him to act as he did against Church, one must have been a tremendously powerful figure in politics. Indeed, Robert Church Jr. was not only one of the most powerful African Americans in local politics, but he was a national powerhouse for the Republican Party.

In his 1952 obituary in the *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, Church was remembered as having such political clout during the Republican administrations of Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge that he would often have personal meetings with presidents and other party leaders.<sup>13</sup> He was seen as responsible for many achievements of the Republican Party for his skill in rounding up African-American votes. *Pittsburgh Courier* writer Eugene Travis stated in 1932 that, "It was upon the shoulders of the Memphis Man that the great responsibility for the assured success of the Party at the polls was placed."<sup>14</sup> This kind of accountability and trust in an African-American politician in the South was rare at this time.

Robert Church's power nationally may have been more impressive than his local power, but that local authority should not be ignored. Along with his early work that involved helping create the Lincoln League, a voting registration organization, Church was also responsible for obtaining political positions for blacks and whites alike.<sup>15</sup> *The Commercial Appeal* reported "No federal

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<sup>13</sup> Clark Porteous, "Bob Church Dies in Memphis," *The Memphis Press-Scimitar*, 18 March 1952. Robert Church Jr. Clipping File, Memphis and Shelby County Room, Memphis Public Library and Information Center, Memphis, TN.

<sup>14</sup> Eugene Travis, "Bob Church – Tennessee's 'Man of Destiny'," *The Pittsburgh Courier*, 23 April 1932. Church Family Papers, Carton 5, Folder 36, Special Collections, University of Memphis Library, Memphis, TN.

<sup>15</sup> "City Approves Sale of Negro Leader's Home," *The Memphis Press-Scimitar*, 26 January 1941. Robert Church Jr. Clipping File, Memphis and Shelby County Room, Memphis Public Library and Information Center, Memphis TN.



appointment was made in Memphis and Shelby County under a Republican administration without his endorsement.”<sup>16</sup> It seems that if a Republican president was in office, Church almost ruled the city of Memphis. Most of Church’s local power in Memphis resided in the African-American community. He had become both the “civic and political leader” for his people in Memphis. The African Americans of Memphis looked up to Church and his allies as the leaders of their race. Even though Crump ruled most of the city, Beale St. remained under Church and black Republican control.<sup>17</sup> This control had to have upset E.H. Crump, who was building his career and machine, and was well on his way to becoming the boss of the city.

The curious thing is that as strong as Church was in his hometown, he may have been even more powerful in the national ranks of the Republican Party. One of the wealthiest blacks of his time, Church used his money to campaign for Republicans all over the nation.<sup>18</sup> Church’s wealth and his “refusal to accept compensation for his work” gained him insurmountable respect in the Republican Party.<sup>19</sup> Church was recognized by national figures for his willingness to give to the party. The Chairman of the Republican National Committee wrote to President Warren G. Harding in 1921, “Robert Church over all other colored men in the party has done unselfish and efficient work for the party.”<sup>20</sup> For his name to be on the tongues of such figures shows how much Church actually meant to the party nationally.

Much of Robert Church’s local power stemmed from his friendships in the national Republican Party. He was able to use his national respect to maintain control of the local Republican Party

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<sup>16</sup> Commercial Appeal as quoted in: Travis.

<sup>17</sup> Biles, 96-7.

<sup>18</sup> Porteous, n.p.

<sup>19</sup> Biles, 97.

<sup>20</sup> Travis, n.p.

for many years. Befriending presidents and Republican National Committee members, Church worked hard to be in the good graces of members of all statures of the party. With the status he created for himself, Church was able to secure a place for both blacks and whites in the Republican Party.<sup>21</sup> This issue of both races participating in the party, however, did not go uncontested.

With his ever-growing respect and power within the party, opposition and scrutiny came as well. His rival faction in the Republican Party, the so-called Lily-Whites, constantly challenged him.<sup>22</sup> Church led the faction called the Black-and-Tans, who were for an integrated Republican Party and the majority of the time led the party in Memphis due to its high African-American population. The Lily-Whites were Republicans who were pro-segregation and against African-American involvement in the party. These two parties were in conflict nationally, but Tennessee was the battleground for one of the most intense conflicts. Church had to fight hard in order for the Black-and-Tan delegates to attend the Republican National Conventions.<sup>23</sup> During the 1928 Hoover presidential campaign, the Lily-Whites tried to destroy Church, but he maintained and worked tirelessly to gather Black votes for the Republican candidate.<sup>24</sup> The Lily-Whites accused Robert Church of unruly behavior including the “illegal ‘selling’ of political appointments,” in order to have him ousted from party leadership.<sup>25</sup> He remained committed to his beloved party, and his dedication is evident in his speech at the Republican National Committee that year, “I have no ill feelings against any man, but as

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<sup>21</sup> Biles, 98.

<sup>22</sup> Carlisle Barger ( *Washington Post* ), “Lily-Whites & Democrats Fight Church”.

*The Memphis Triangle*, 20 October 1928. Church Family Papers, Carton 5, Folder 36, Special Collections, University of Memphis Library, Memphis, TN.

<sup>23</sup> Biles, 98.

<sup>24</sup> Barger, n.p.

<sup>25</sup> Biles, 98.

long as there is a Republican Party I shall be in it. And I speak today only to be heard in my cause for every man has a right to be heard and present his side in this country.”<sup>26</sup> Church’s dominating presence in the Shelby County and national Republican Party must have infuriated Crump, who was constantly worried about maintaining his uncontested rule of Memphis under a Democratic administration.

### **The Church and Crump Relationship**

A key element of the Church vs. Crump controversy and the fleeing of Church is the question of whether they actually ever worked together. Church worked with his Lincoln League to gather black votes that intentionally or unintentionally went to the election of E.H. Crump or representatives of his organization. In his book, *Memphis in the Great Depression*, Roger Biles discusses how in the early years of Crump’s power, Church and Crump both found it beneficial to be allies. They did not want this relationship to be public, because they were by no means friends. So they had their respective right-hand men handle communication between the two organizations. George W. Lee communicated for Church and Crump’s middleman was Frank Rice.<sup>27</sup> With this arrangement, neither Church nor Crump had to deal with his political enemy directly, which must have made this political relationship bearable for the politicians. Biles states that the “arrangement suited Crump, whose distaste for the alliance can be attributed not only to his reluctant acceptance of a black man as a political peer but also to his long-simmering enmity for the Church clan.”<sup>28</sup> This unwillingness to communicate directly shows that this political alliance was not a friendly one, only a necessary one.

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<sup>26</sup> Church as quoted in: Travis, n.p.

<sup>27</sup> Biles, 102.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

Public speculation of a coalition between Church and Crump, although, did not fully come out until 1928. The two political powerhouses of Memphis began being attacked by local newspapers for forming an “unholy alliance” in order to “urge Negro voters to capture the Democratic primary and control Memphis.”<sup>29</sup> The suspicion of the budding relationship between Church and Crump also concerned many business leaders in Memphis, most notably the grocery kingpin Clarence Saunders. Saunders was quoted in newspapers as opposing the alliance, “The fight has just begun to oust the Bob Church-Ed Crump gang,” he reportedly said.<sup>30</sup> The suspicion of this unlikely partnership most likely stemmed from Church encouraging the West Tennessee Civic and Political League (the newly established successor of the Lincoln League) to secure the election of family friend and Crump machine candidate Watkins Overton in the Memphis mayoral election of 1928.<sup>31</sup>

Histories supervised by the Church Family stress that Bob Church chose to back candidates from either party based on his belief that a certain candidate was good for his people and his city.<sup>32</sup> According to his family, Church only supported Overton in 1928 because of the promises that Overton made to improve conditions for blacks in Memphis and the fact that they were longtime family friends, not because Overton was the Crump machine candidate. It seems both sides of this so-called political alliance wished to deny any form of friendship or partnership, despite strong accusations made by newspapers and business leaders in Memphis. Crump

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<sup>29</sup> “Bob Church Wins Again.” *The Pittsburgh Courier*, 11 August 1928. Church Family Papers, Carton 5, Folder 37, Special Collections, University of Memphis Library, Memphis, TN.

<sup>30</sup> “Battle to End Machine Rule ‘Just Started.’” Unknown Newspaper and Date, Church Family Papers, Carton 5, Folder 37, Special Collections, University of Memphis Library, Memphis, TN.

<sup>31</sup> Dowdy, 49-50.

<sup>32</sup> Church and Walter, 22.

later argued that the accusations of him using Church or other black leaders to gain political means were false: "...[T]here isn't a word of truth in it so far as my playing with a Republican negro boss...." This response to an article in TIME magazine, claiming that in the past Crump had "found it convenient to play ball with" Church, shows Crump's adamant denial of the relationship.<sup>33</sup>

Whether the two political bosses of Memphis actually worked together in the 1928 mayoral election or any other election cannot be fully known because there are too many differing explanations of their political relationship and no real proof of an alliance. Even if they were not working together in this instance, they were working for a common goal. These common goals would soon come to an end, and the result would make Church the archenemy of the Crump machine. Church would be forced out of Memphis. It seems that at this point Crump decided to distance himself from Church and his affiliates and, in turn, began to move to oust the likes of Church from Memphis politics.

## **Republicans Out, Democrats In**

In the long gap between the accusations of working together in 1928 to the tragic events that took place in 1940, a national turning point affected the political lives of both Crump and Church. This turning point culminated with the election of the Democrat Franklin Roosevelt in 1932. Once this political shift happened, Crump realized that all of a sudden his power in Memphis and nationally would grow substantially. Crump quickly became a strong supporter of Roosevelt, securing Tennessee votes for the future president, and they soon became close political

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<sup>33</sup> "Police Picket Line Here Makes Time Magazine." *The Memphis Press-Scimitar*. Church Family Papers, Carton 5, Folder 37, Special Collections, University of Memphis Library, Memphis, TN.

allies.<sup>34</sup> This would prove a setback for Church and a major obstacle for him retaining the influence he had.

The biggest problem for Church during this change in regime came from Crump's growing relationship and political partnership with President Roosevelt. The two politicians became close allies, because Roosevelt knew Boss Crump was key in collecting votes in Tennessee, and, under Roosevelt, Crump ran his city the way he wanted and received copious amounts of funds from the New Deal.<sup>35</sup> Through this agreement, Crump dominated Memphis because the New Deal and the money that came along with it, "was filtered through the Crump machine."<sup>36</sup> Roosevelt's progressive policies did not change the conservative administration of Memphis; in fact, it made the Crump machine stronger. Instead of conducting reform and repair of the corrupt political system in Memphis, "The New Deal tended to strengthen, not to undermine, the dominant political factions in most southern states."<sup>37</sup> With federal patronage and unlimited federal funding that he had lacked under Republican rule, Crump was able to move away from his old ways of catering to the Republican leaders of the city for federal support.

Many saw this change in power as being the catalyst for a major shift in Memphis politics, and realized that this shift would finally secure Memphis completely under the suffocating rule of Boss Crump. TIME magazine summed this up with powerful rhetoric: "Tennessee's chicken-necked Boss Ed Crump once found it convenient to play ball with Memphis' Republican negro boss. That was when there was a Republican in the White House and the negro boss had federal patronage to dispose of. Since Roosevelt,

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<sup>34</sup> Dowdy, 87 & 113.

<sup>35</sup> Biles, 82-3.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 86.

<sup>37</sup> Dewey W. Grantham, *The South in Modern America* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 125.

there has not even been a negro boss.”<sup>38</sup> This bold statement implies that once Roosevelt was in office, Church became powerless in Memphis. In other words, Church’s time had passed and there was no need for an African American or Republican leader in the completely one-sided city of Memphis under Boss Crump.

Another major setback for Church transpired when a majority of African Americans began to shift their allegiance to the Democratic Party. Many southern blacks “turned their backs on a political party they perceived as no longer responsive to their needs and embraced its competitor.”<sup>39</sup> Black laborers began to vote Democrat after they saw how President Roosevelt created so many jobs for southern blacks through the New Deal.<sup>40</sup> This desertion is often blamed on President Hoover’s lack of sympathy and help for the poor, especially African Americans, during the Great Depression combined with Roosevelt’s new policies that gave jobs and opportunities to African Americans. The black Memphians felt betrayed and abandoned by their party, which cost Robert R. Church much of his power within the black community and Memphis as a whole. With his own people turning their backs on his beloved party, Church remained faithful to the Republican Party.<sup>41</sup> This detrimental power shift caused a sizeable loss of power and influence for Church, which made him even more susceptible to Crump’s wrath that would soon strike the black Republicans in Memphis.

Adding to the change of the party in power and loss of support from his own people, the Great Depression is also seen as an event that brought Church’s power down. Many of his holdings were not considered as valuable as they were before The

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<sup>38</sup> “Police Picket Line...Time Magazine.”

<sup>39</sup> Biles, 97.

<sup>40</sup> Grantham, 127.

<sup>41</sup> Biles, 100.

Depression, which hurt Church financially and inherently affected his political power in the city.<sup>42</sup> Under any machine rule, money is the key to possessing any authority. The great wealth that Church and his father had built had been wounded, and Church had no chance of recovering under the rule of Boss Crump.<sup>43</sup> The financial issues Church had, along with the new Democratic regime in office, resulted in his power being snatched up like a rug from under his feet. These events would lead Crump to finally moving to destroy Church and his colleagues beyond the point of return in order to finally claim supreme rule in Memphis by moving out any opposition. The continuing loss of influence had left Church almost defenseless in his hometown, which allowed Crump to finally administer the final blow and remove Church and his allies from Memphis entirely.

### **Final Straw: Crump Harassment and Black Republican Exodus**

By 1940 E.H. Crump and his machine had begun to make major efforts to ostracize Robert R. Church Jr. and his allies by using various methods of harassment and bending of the law. Church had already upset the Crump organization by campaigning against Crump's candidate for the gubernatorial race of 1938, Walter Chandler.<sup>44</sup> Then in 1940, Church and his fellow Black Republicans began campaigning for the election of Wendell Wilkie for President of the United States. They were hoping to see Roosevelt ejected from office and replaced by a Republican, which angered Crump who was a strong supporter of President

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<sup>42</sup> Porteous, n.p.

<sup>43</sup> Porteous, n.p.

<sup>44</sup> Biles, 104.



Roosevelt.<sup>45</sup> This also put pressure on the Crump machine because if Wilkie was elected, they feared that Church would be able to regain the political power in Memphis that he once had under a Republican regime.<sup>46</sup> Understanding that a return of Church's power would mean the Crump organization would suffer a loss of influence, the city administration moved to annihilate Church and his colleagues both politically and economically.<sup>47</sup> It seemed as if Church's support of Wilkie was the last straw for Crump and seen as an act of rebellion under the empire that was Memphis under Boss Crump.

The first strike against the Black Republicans was the seizing of Robert R. Church's real estate properties. According to official City of Memphis records available in the Memphis Public Library archives, a vast amount of Church's holdings on Beale St. and around Memphis were procured for what the records call "back taxes."<sup>48</sup> Church was forced to pay approximately \$89,000 in back taxes. Prior to this point the Crump machine reportedly tended to give Church tax breaks and would not force him to pay property taxes because of his federal patronage. Crump needed to keep Church happy during the years of a Republican regime, but Crump soon realized he no longer needed to take care of the Republican boss and revoked the favors he once granted Church. By 1939, Church's power was dwindling and the city administration, under Boss Crump, decided it was time for Church

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<sup>45</sup> Perre Magness, "Activism Guided Robert Church Jr.," *The Commercial Appeal*, 1 November 1992; G. Wayne Dowdy, *Mayor Crump Don't Like It: Machine Politics in Memphis* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2006), 112.

<sup>46</sup> Magness, n.p.

<sup>47</sup> Annette E. Church and Roberta Church, *The Robert R. Churches of Memphis: A Father and Son Who Achieved in Spite of Race* (Ann Arbor, MI: Edward Brothers, 1974), 180.

<sup>48</sup> Dowdy, 109.

to pay those property taxes. Crump had enough of Church campaigning against his machine.<sup>49</sup>

It is unknown at this point whether or not these claims were based on accurate tax records or if this claim was created by Boss Crump's organization in order to paralyze Church financially. If indeed the claim of tax evasion was falsified by Crump's people, this would be just another example of the measures Crump went to destroy a political opponent. Church himself was not the only black Republican that was a target of the city administration as before long Crump's cohorts attacked Bob Church's confidants and colleagues.

The Crump organization struck the black Republicans with harassment of local businesses run by Church's allies. Dr. J.B. Martin, one of Church's closest allies in Memphis, was hassled at his own pharmacy by police officers. It was reported in the *Memphis Press-Scimitar* that police officers searched and "frisked" innocent customers as they entered the store.<sup>50</sup> It is even said that some of the customers hassled were kindergarten students attempting to buy ice cream cones from the pharmacy; they were reportedly searched for narcotics. Newspapers reported the disturbing antics by the police, "The officer felt the hems of the girls' dresses to make certain no narcotics were hidden there...One small boy who wore a cap waited longer than the others while the officer prodded the cap thoroughly with a pencil seeking hidden narcotics."<sup>51</sup> Martin's pharmacy, the South Memphis Drug Store, was one of the most successful black businesses in Memphis at the time, but the organization of Crump, led by Mayor Walter Chandler, sought to wipe it out.

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<sup>49</sup> Biles, 104.

<sup>50</sup> "Police Picket Line...Time Magazine" n. p.

<sup>51</sup> Bob Marks, "20 Tots Pass Narcotics Search By Police With Flying Colors." Unknown Newspaper, 1940. Church Family Papers, Carton 5, Folder 37, Special Collections, University of Memphis Library, Memphis, TN.

In a letter to Mayor Chandler, Universal Life Insurance Vice-President and local African-American leader, M.S. Stuart, pleaded for the Mayor to recall the officers from the drugstore, stressing that the drugstore meant so much to the community and the methods the organization was using was bringing down one of the city's most valuable black businesses.<sup>52</sup> This letter is an example of how some fellow leaders in the African-American community in Memphis appealed to Mayor Chandler and the city government to halt their actions. In his response to M.S. Stuart's letter, Mayor Walter Chandler replied with a letter that ignored and was almost mocking Stuart's request for the police to be recalled. Chandler guaranteed that his police forces were out to improve "the welfare of every citizen of Memphis, regardless of race, creed, or color."<sup>53</sup>

Another Church ally, Elmer Atkinson, was targeted in the same way as Dr. Martin's business.<sup>54</sup> Under the order of Crump and Mayor Chandler, Atkinson's café on Beale St. was policed and customers were humiliated. According to the *Commercial Appeal*, even the Atkinson family's priest was searched and embarrassed by the Memphis police.<sup>55</sup> These types of methods used by the city administration were ruthless and harmful to the businesses of prominent black leaders and close confidants of Robert Church Jr. There was no one in Memphis to appeal to about such harassment because there were no laws against it under the stronghold of Boss Crump. The *Chicago Defender* claimed that such actions by the Memphis police could easily be compared to the unruly police

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<sup>52</sup> M.S. Stuart, letter to Mayor Walter Chandler, 1 November 1940, Walter Chandler Papers, Box 14, Memphis and Shelby County Room, Memphis Public Library and Information Center, Memphis, TN.

<sup>53</sup> Walter Chandler, letter to M.S. Stuart, 19 November 1940, Walter Chandler Papers, Box 14, Memphis and Shelby County Room, Memphis Public Library and Information Center, Memphis, TN.

<sup>54</sup> M.S. Stuart to W. Chandler, 1 November 1940

<sup>55</sup> Church and Church, 182-3.

forces in Nazi Germany, even daring to compare Boss Crump to Adolf Hitler.<sup>56</sup> Martin and Atkinson, their businesses devastated because of the treatment by the Crump Machine, closed up shop and with no other choice, left their hometown and fled to Chicago.<sup>57</sup> Crump and his cronies successfully forced their enemies, the Black Republicans led by Robert R. Church Jr., out of the picture of Memphis politics.

## Conclusion

Competition for control of city politics can often lead to the embarrassment of the loser, but in this case the damage done was much more than someone getting his feelings hurt or losing a campaign. Robert R. Church Jr. had become one of the most influential African Americans in the country, but Crump's jealousy and fear of his power, the advent of Roosevelt's Democratic Administration, resulted in Church being banished from the city. Crump ran his machine with a dictator-like iron fist and Memphis became his city. To consolidate his power, Crump tried to stamp out all of the opposition. One of those enemies was the well-respected Robert R. Church Jr. By using his corrupt police force and his sway over the entire city, Crump was able to destroy Church. Crump's gaining of the federal support that Church once had put the ball in Crump's court and led to the downfall of one of the most powerful African-American politicians of that time. Memphis became the scene of cruel machine politics, and that machine helped to decimate the chance for African Americans to be first-class citizens in their own city.

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<sup>56</sup> "Memphis Police." *Chicago Defender*, 25 January 1941. Church Family Papers, Carton 5, Folder 37, Special Collections, University of Memphis Library, Memphis, TN.

<sup>57</sup> Magness, n.p.

The relationship between Church and Crump may never be fully known or explained. They fought for similar causes in some instances, but hunger for power overcame these similarities. Whatever their relationship in the beginning, it did not end well. Crump found himself in a situation of power that allowed him to address his feelings of envy and fear with harassment and corruption, which led to Robert R. Church Jr. (whose father helped build Memphis) to taking flight and relocating to Washington, D.C. for protection. Church remained a proud man and participated in politics elsewhere in the country, while Crump filled the void left from Church with more crooked government and despotism.

# The Debate surrounding Female Ordination in the Catholic Church: Argument in favor of the Installation of Women Priests

Stephanie Brenzel

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In the debate over the ordination of women priests, the Catholic Church uses a variety of ideological arguments to support its rejection of a female clergy. The Vatican draws on biblical texts to support its case, and it describes this evidence in its “Declaration on the Question of the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood.” This document, which was issued in 1976, states that the Catholic Church refuses to ordain women as priests because it sees it as being a direct violation of both scripture as well as tradition. Although not everyone believes in the literal truth of Christian doctrine, the Vatican claims that since Jesus chose men to be his apostles and there are passages in Paul’s letters that forbid women to preach, it is justified in its policy of the exclusion of women from leadership positions. The Church maintains that God ordained only men to be priests. The leadership also states that they see no reason to alter a 2000-year-old tradition. While the Catholic Church backs up its arguments with both textual and historical evidence, it not only misconstrues the meaning of these passages but it also overlooks the instances of female spiritual leadership in these texts and within the Church’s own history. There are many examples of strong female leaders described in Christian doctrine and this fact can be used to refute the arguments provided by the Vatican. Specifically, the Catholic Church fails to understand the true meaning of “apostleship” and the Christian

“priesthood.” Whether one adheres to Christian belief system or not, the New Testament does not reject the idea of women priests.

The Catholic Church, in recent years, has attempted to make many internal changes. With the decisions proclaimed in Vatican II during the early 1960s, the Pope called for the Church’s movement into the modern world; he wanted the Catholic community to be more welcoming. To this end, the Vatican decided to focus its attention more on what brought people from various backgrounds together rather than what made them different. In the documents from Vatican II, for example, the Church states that: “Forms of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, color, social conditions, language, or religion, must be curbed or eradicated as incompatible with God’s design.”<sup>1</sup> The continuing effects of this more inclusive policy on the part of the Church then can be seen in its attitude towards the current crisis developing within the Anglican Church. Because the Anglican clergy and lay members cannot agree on the issue of gay marriage and other liberal theological reforms, the Catholic Church has decided to allow the more conservative Anglicans to convert back to the Catholic faith. What is more, the Catholic Church has also stated that it will let married Anglican priests who return to Catholicism remain both priests and husbands; it will not require celibacy for them.<sup>2</sup> While this suggests that the Catholic Church is committed to its earlier promises since it is welcoming people of a different tradition to serve as priests, this fact also suggests that the Church is selective when determining what groups of people receive the benefits from their new embracing and accessible attitude.

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<sup>1</sup> Austin Flannery ed. *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Northport: Costello Company, 1980), 929.

<sup>2</sup> Rachel Donadio and Laurie Goodstein, “Vatican Bidding to Get Anglicans to Join Its Fold”. *The New York Times* (October 20, 2009), [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/21/world/europe/21pope.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/21/world/europe/21pope.html?_r=1).

The tradition of the celibacy of priests has been with the Catholic Church as long as the idea of the necessity of them also being male. When the subject of women's ordination came up in 1977, for instance, the Vatican, through the Pontifical Bible Commission, stipulated that there was nothing inherently wrong with the notion of woman priests but they were still not willing to change the status quo. They allowed that, "The New Testament does not settle in a clear way whether women can be ordained priests, that scriptural grounds alone are not enough to exclude the possibility of ordaining women."<sup>3</sup> They even acknowledged "that Christ's plan would not be transgressed by permitting the ordination of women."<sup>4</sup> Although Vatican II makes clear that the Church does not support the suppression of women and the leadership seems open to change as indicated by their efforts towards returning Anglicans, the Pope and other Church officials still refuse to admit women into leadership positions. They continue to put into practice sexist principles. The Catholic Church, it seems, cannot abide the admittance of women into its ministry.

The Church uses a variety of different arguments to support its continued opposition to having female priests. One of its main positions stems from the fact that Jesus chose twelve men to be his apostles and that he chose Peter out of this specific group to be the head of his church. Using this logic, women then cannot be priests because they were not originally picked by Jesus to be part of his special "clique." They were also deemed unfit because they were not of the same gender as Jesus. Although it is true that women were not part of the "Twelve" and that Jesus was male, the Church overstates these two points, for there are many precedents within Christian texts that challenge the validity of this argument.

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<sup>3</sup> Simone St. Pierre, *The Struggle to Serve: the Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1994), 7

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid* 7.



To begin with, Jesus did not exclude women from his ministry even if they were not specifically named as being part of the twelve apostles. Many women were highly esteemed by Jesus and this fact can clearly be seen in the Gospels, in particular those of Mark and John. In the Gospel of Mark, women are continually being praised for their faith; they are often times contrasted with their male counterparts who always seem to be experiencing some type of doubt.<sup>5</sup> A woman in chapter five of Mark's gospel is healed because of her faith while the apostles in chapter six are said to have not believed in Jesus. "They were completely amazed, for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened."<sup>6</sup> In these instances, women seem to be Jesus' more exemplary disciples.

This idea is further evidenced by material found in the Gospel of John. In this particular gospel, women are described not only as being his particular students but also as prophets. Mary of Bethany, for instance, is the one who anoints Jesus with perfume and prepares him for his death. In this act, she also declares Jesus' kingship since this type of anointment is in keeping with the traditions of the Old Testament.<sup>7</sup> This understanding of Jesus' identity, on Mary's part, is again contrasted to the apostles' complete lack of it.<sup>8</sup> Jesus even rebukes them for their foolishness: "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."<sup>9</sup> The importance of this woman's act is also demonstrated when Jesus

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid 32

<sup>6</sup> Matt 5:51-52. NIV.

<sup>7</sup> Mary Rose D'Angelo, "(Re)presentations of Women in the Gospels: John and Mark", in *Women & Christian Origins*, ed. Ross Shepard Kraemer and Mary Rose D'Angelo (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 136

<sup>8</sup> Simone St. Pierre, *The Struggle to Serve: the Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1994), 39

<sup>9</sup> Jn 12:7-8. NIV.

himself mimics it during the Last Supper.<sup>10</sup> Women in the gospels, therefore, are constantly being portrayed as enlightened and dedicated disciples of Jesus.

The actual function of the twelve apostles is also something debated by Catholic Church authorities regarding female ordination. There is not only evidence in the gospels about the strong faith of Jesus' female disciples but there is also no indication made in these texts that the apostles had any type of specific purpose besides helping to spread Jesus' message to other communities. According to the Catholic Church, however, the twelve apostles were the first priests and were ordained as such during the Last Supper.<sup>11</sup> Since there was no mention of Jesus' female disciples at this gathering, the Church argues that this is proof in support of an all male priesthood. Although it is clear from the gospel texts that the apostles did play a part in formation of the early church, Jesus does not state anywhere in the New Testament that apostleship equates to priesthood. In fact, one of the main themes of Jesus' ministry was that he had come to abolish the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament. The priesthood then, in terms of the tenets of Jesus' message, was for all of his followers rather than an appointed position. The research of biblical scholar Raymond Brown highlights this fact: "The term priest is not used in the New Testament for any individual Christian, although it is used to describe the priesthood of all believers and the priesthood of Christ which replaces all human priesthoods."<sup>12</sup> In short, there was no hierarchy in Jesus' ministry.

In order to further demonstrate this point, one can look at the language found in the synoptic gospels. One of the main words to describe the actions of Jesus' followers is "diakoneo" which is

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<sup>10</sup> Simone St. Pierre, *The Struggle to Serve: the Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1994), 39.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 8

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 9

the Greek word meaning to serve, care, or minister. This word is used whenever the disciples are ministering to the larger public or to Jesus himself.<sup>13</sup> Because the gospel writers do not alter their word choice when they talk about the duties of the apostles and Jesus' female disciples, it is clear that the women in these texts have a more important function than just cooking and looking after the men. In the Gospel of Mark, for instance, the author talks about how both men and women followed Jesus around Galilee and "ministered" to him:

Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger, and of Joses, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed him and *cared* for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.<sup>14</sup>

Neither Jesus nor the gospel writers make a distinction between the duties of the men and women within Jesus' circle of friends and confidants. Jesus established a sense of equality within his disciples, which is even more extraordinary when one considers the nature of Middle Eastern society in Jesus' time; women lived in a male-dominated world and Jesus, in many ways, went against the norm.

This idea of the lack of "exclusivity" associated with the twelve apostles is further demonstrated when one takes into account that there is little known about them. The Church then has little to base its claim on; it knows next to nothing about the men that it declares to be the first priests.<sup>15</sup> While the women disciples

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 40

<sup>14</sup> Mk 15:40-41. NIV.

<sup>15</sup> Simone St. Pierre, *The Struggle to Serve: the Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1994), 45

are always mentioned by name and are usually described in a language which denotes esteem, the individual apostles are rarely discussed. They are seldom talked about on an individual basis and there is not much known about their personal lives and backgrounds. In fact, when the author of Luke goes on to talk about the formation of the early church in the “Acts of the Apostles,” the only apostles that are really discussed are Peter and John. Because the apostles are somewhat forgotten after scripture claims that Jesus ascends back into heaven, there seems to be this suggestion that they were not more important than Jesus’ other disciples. They were not the only people given the task of carrying Jesus’ message to the rest of the world, which is evidenced by the information found in the Gospel of John. In one particular passage, for example, the author talks about how all of Jesus’ disciples have this duty. They were all present when the Holy Spirit came and gave this power: “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. And with that he breathed on them and said ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven.’”<sup>16</sup> Here, the women disciples are described in the New Testament in a way that implies their equal status to men.

While the Church places great importance on membership in the twelve apostles as a precedent for a male priesthood, these men have little significance in terms of the creation of core Church doctrines. That is, the twelve apostles were not the ones that produced documents defining appropriate forms of worship, theological concerns, or how to deal with the day-to-day problems of the Christian communities. Instead, the Catholic Church relies most heavily on Paul for guidance in these areas. Yet, Paul was not one of the twelve apostles. Indeed, he was one of the persecutors of these men until he experienced the divine and saw the error of his ways. After his conversion to Christianity, Paul became the one primarily responsible for carrying Jesus’ message to the gentile

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<sup>16</sup> Jn 20:21-22. NIV.

community. His letters contain extensive information about Jesus and the importance of his resurrection, and thus proved to be a significant foundation of Church doctrine. In short, the Church relies heavily on Paul even though he was not a part of the twelve apostles. Thus, the idea of excluding women from the priesthood because they were not part of this group is nonsensical.

Although the Catholic Church explains this apparent discrepancy by describing how Paul was appointed later to apostle status when God revealed himself to Paul, it neglects to see that its justification can also be used to support the cause of female ordination.<sup>17</sup> The Catholic Church, for instance, points to Paul's first letter of the Corinthians to prove its belief in his apostleship: it shows that apostles are called through their experiences. "Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen the Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord...for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord."<sup>18</sup> Paul claimed his apostleship then on the fact that he had "seen" God and was given the task of being a preacher. This criterion for apostleship, which is espoused by both Paul and the Church, can also be applied to women in the New Testament. Martha and Mary Magdalene in the Gospel of John had experiences very similar to those of Paul. Both are given the secret of Jesus' identity.<sup>19</sup> Martha affirmed the divinity of Jesus when she went to him after her brother Lazarus' death. "Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world".<sup>20</sup> Like Martha, Mary of Magdalene also witnessed the divinity of Jesus, albeit in a different way. Where Martha discovered Jesus' true nature during his lifetime, it was only

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<sup>17</sup> Simone St. Pierre, *The Struggle to Serve: the Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1994), 64

<sup>18</sup> 1 Cor 9: 1-2. NIV.

<sup>19</sup> Mary Rose D'Angelo, "(Re)presentations of Women in the Gospels: John and Mark", in *Women & Christian Origins*, ed. Ross Shepard Kraemer and Mary Rose D'Angelo (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 132

<sup>20</sup> Jn 11:27. NIV.

revealed to Mary after his death. Jesus first appeared to Mary after he rose from the dead. She was even given the task of revealing Jesus' identity to the other apostles. "Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: 'I have seen the Lord!' And she told them that he had said these things to her."<sup>21</sup> Martha and Mary then, according to both Paul and the Church's stated views on this topic, fit all of the requirements of apostleship. While the actual function and significance of apostle status is up for debate, it is clear that if Jesus wanted only apostles to be priests, women would have been included in this group. For they, like men, experienced the divine.

This idea is further evidenced by the fact that Paul refers to women in his letters as being apostles like himself.<sup>22</sup> He clearly believes then that women are capable of not only performing ministerial work but also that they are deemed worthy to do so by God. He does not think that men have a monopoly over this "profession." Although he mentions many of his female helpers in his letters, he refers to Junia and Phoebe in some detail. He considers them to be staples in the early Christian community. In Paul's letter to the Romans, for example, he talks about the apostleship of Junia and Andronicus. Although in the text, the name appears to be Junias rather than Junia, many biblical scholars state that the name "Junias" exists nowhere in antiquity.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, Paul mentions a Junia in his first letter to the Corinthians so many researchers, including Margaret MacDonald, believe that the name "Junias" was a mistranslation. Paul refers to this couple as having experienced a divine revelation even before himself. "Greet Andronicus and Junias [Junia], my relatives who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the

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<sup>21</sup> Jn 20:18. NIV.

<sup>22</sup> Margaret Y. MacDonald, "Reading Real Women through the Undisputed Letters of Paul", in *Women & Christian Origins*, ed. Ross Shepard Kraemer and Mary Rose D'Angelo (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 209

<sup>23</sup> Ibid 209

apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.”<sup>24</sup> Like Junia and Andronicus, Phoebe also receives Paul’s praise. She is described as being a “servant”<sup>25</sup> of the church and seems to be the one responsible for the Christian community in Cenchrea. He talks about her ministry and good deeds within this specific “church.” Paul therefore does not distinguish the male apostles from the female ones. To him, they are all the same before God.

While Paul has a very broad definition of who is considered an apostle in the early church, he is also the source that supplies the modern Catholic Church with most of its evidence about banning women from the priesthood. The passages found in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:12 forbid women from speaking and preaching in church. Nonetheless one has to consider the context in which they were written; Paul wrote his letters in order to address the needs of the community. Because Paul clearly esteems many women in his letters and even calls some of them apostles, it seems odd that he would place restrictions on them. Perhaps, these constraints against women arose from specific problems within the early church communities. For example, Biblical scholar Randy Peterson explains Paul’s rule in 1 Corinthians about women remaining silent in churches by saying that it dealt with their lack of education:

Women and men probably sat synagogue style, in separate sections of the Church. When women had questions about the preaching (as they often would since they were generally untrained in scriptures), they would call to their husbands. In the interest of orderly worship, Paul forbids this.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Rom 16:7. NIV

<sup>25</sup> Rom 16:2. NIV

<sup>26</sup> Simone St. Pierre, *The Struggle to Serve: the Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1994), 58.

This particular passage, which is used by the Church to keep women from being ordained, may have had more to do with maintaining order in church services rather than anything else. The feminist biblical scholar Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza adds that Paul might be addressing a specific group of women; he could be telling married women to be silent since, according to Roman law, they were supposed to be subordinate to their husbands.<sup>27</sup> These possibilities are enough to cast doubt on the idea that the prohibition of women speaking in Church was intended to bar them from the priesthood.

There are also many ways to refute the traditional explanations of Paul's other negative text about women in the Bible. In Paul's first letter to Timothy, he talks about how women must always be submissive to men, which means that a woman could not teach in church. Rather than merely being an assertion of patriarchal authority, this passage could have been, like the one in 1 Corinthians, referring to the unequal education opportunities between men and women. Scholar David Scholer links this quote from Paul with one of the more general themes of the letter. He talks about how Paul has many encounters with "false teachers" in this text and is concerned with the spread of heresy.<sup>28</sup> Paul's ban on women being teachers could indicate that he did not want them inadvertently preaching the wrong things since they were generally a less educated class. The parts in Paul's letters that refer to women in a negative light therefore have alternative interpretations to those of the Catholic Church; the leadership of this institution does not look at these passages within the context of their time, a

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<sup>27</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1985), 231.

<sup>28</sup> Simone St. Pierre, *The Struggle to Serve: the Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1994), 61.



period during which women were disadvantaged due to their lack of access to education. They do not admit that this may have been Paul's reasoning behind these strictures.

The fact that there can be these different interpretations is exemplified in many of the early church fathers' writings, which indicate that women were not always excluded from leadership positions. For example, Origen, a preeminent biblical exegete that lived in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., focused on the figure of Phoebe in one of his texts. He noted that Paul's commendation of Phoebe in his letter to the Romans suggests that women could indeed be preachers and deacons within the church. "And therefore this passage teaches two things equally and is to be interpreted, as we have said, to mean that women are to be considered ministers (haberi... feminas ministras) in the church, and that such ought to be received into the ministry."<sup>29</sup> Origen then believes that other passages should be taken from Paul, rather than just 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 2 Timothy 2:12, when considering the status of women in the early Catholic Church. That many people did so is further evidenced by the writings of Tertullian, who was an apologist for the early Church that also lived in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. Although Tertullian was an opponent to the idea of women being admitted into the church as anything other than a layperson, his texts show that women frequently did take on leadership roles, much to his chagrin. "These heretical women: how bold they are! They dare to teach, to debate, to perform exorcisms, to attempt cures—perhaps even to baptize."<sup>30</sup> Despite Tertullian's outrage, his texts show that women did, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, take on roles that resemble those of priests. The Catholic Church then, if it accepts the validity of the writings by these men, must

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<sup>29</sup> Kevin Madigan and Carolyn Osiek, trans and ed. *Ordained Women in the Early Church: A Documentary History* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2005), 14.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 174.

acknowledge that there is evidence that supports the idea of having both men and women priests. Therefore, the Vatican can neither use the textual nor tradition argument as evidence for its exclusion of women in the clergy.

The Church's opposition to female ordination is founded on many types of scriptural arguments. Although the Vatican points to many passages in the New Testament that seem to support its claims, it looks at these texts from a patriarchal perspective. The leaders of the Church reject all other types of interpretation. In doing so, the Catholic Church fails to see the many instances in these passages where women play substantial roles in early Christian ministry; it focuses solely on those sections in the Bible that command the demotion of women to less important roles. In reality, however, there is significant scriptural evidence in the New Testament that supports the cause of women's ordination, which should not be ignored. Besides its ideological objections against women priests, the Catholic Church's resistance to this particular cause can be considered irrational as well. According to statistics found on the Pew Forum, which is a public online database addressing religion in the United States, there are more women than men that consider themselves Catholic.<sup>31</sup> What is more, statistics from this site indicate that more women than men attend church regularly. The admittance of women into the priesthood thus would not only add members to an already shrinking clergy

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<sup>31</sup> The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, "A Portrait of American Catholics on the Eve of Pope Benedict's Visit to the U.S." <http://pewforum.org/docs/?DocID=294>.

but it would also give female parishioners an opportunity to develop into spiritual leadership roles, as well as providing a clergy more attuned to women's issues. In short, not only is there is much information in the New Testament that supports female leadership but expanding the Catholic clergy to include women would further realize the commitments the Church made at Vatican II.

# Men, Women, and the Question of Food: Gender in 12<sup>th</sup> Century Europe

Ellen Rast

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Little attention has been given to food as a vehicle for increasing the understanding of medieval society's various social and political structures. This disregard of something so common could be because food is considered necessary, and therefore its presence in a group of people is taken for granted rather than being singled out or appreciated as an entity for learning in itself. By examining food as an essential facet of society rather than just a necessity unworthy of extended attention, gender distinctions in twelfth-century Europe become evident. The twelfth century saw great religious, social, and political developments and provides a rich collection of sources from which to base an analysis of gender roles through food. Developments in the cultivation, consumption, and rejection of food signify the important role food played in creating distinctions within both lay and religious life.

In order to fully comprehend the significance of food in the twelfth century (and its place in gender distinctions), what qualifies as food must be understood. "Food is not food unless it forms a balanced ration, the chief element of which is a relation between carbohydrates and proteins... A society may theoretically be able to produce great amounts of carbohydrates which it has no practical

reason to produce until it finds an increased supply of proteins.”<sup>1</sup> Moving from a grain-based diet to a diet richer in protein, as happened in the Middle Ages, by this definition is the only way to actually be considered a “food-producing” society. But beyond simply providing the basic nutrients, food in the twelfth century was a product in the economic systems of the twelfth century (as evidenced by the various fairs and markets based around the buying and selling of produce),<sup>2</sup> a class indicator (grandeur of manorial feast versus the plainness of peasant fare),<sup>3</sup> and, most importantly (and most ignored), a definitive factor in establishing the gender distinctions of the time.

The study of food’s place in the secular society brings to light lay gender roles in the twelfth century. The agricultural revolution of the early Middle Ages proves that food was a large player in the population boom of the middle part of the period, and the advances of cultivation within this revolution are undeniable.<sup>4</sup> Three developments are often looked to as the key elements of the revolution: the plough, three-field rotation, and the discovery of horsepower. The evolution of a plough from a simple “scratch-plough,” described as an “enlarged digging stick,”<sup>5</sup> to the heavy plough necessary to break through the moist European soil greatly improved the planting process. With the scratch-plough, it was necessary to plough first in one direction and then cross it again to adequately break up the dirt for planting.<sup>6</sup> The heavy plough allowed for this time-consuming practice to be abandoned, halving

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<sup>1</sup> Lynn White, *Medieval Technology and Social Change*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 75.

<sup>2</sup> David Stone, *Decision-Making in Medieval Agriculture*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 207.

<sup>3</sup> William Edward Mead, *The English Medieval Feast*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1931), 129-132.

<sup>4</sup> White, *Medieval Technology*, 39.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 41.

<sup>6</sup> Stone, *Decision-Making*, 148.

the time it took to prepare land and therefore allowing for greater expanses to be cultivated.<sup>7</sup> Larger tracts in less time meant that more produce could be cultivated, thus providing a surplus that could be sold for profit.<sup>8</sup> This machine's importance in the economic developments is highlighted in William of Normandy's accounting of England in the late eleventh century, the *Domesday Book*. This compilation of resources included everything from land to animals to machinery. In the town of Stepney, "Robert Fafiton holds four hides of the king in Stibenhed [Stepney]. There is land to three ploughs and they are now there."<sup>9</sup> The plough becomes not only a great technological development, but an indicator of wealth and the ability to cultivate food. Its existence cannot be undermined in the developments of the cultivation of food.

In order to draw these weightier plows, peasants initially relied on an old standard: oxen.<sup>10</sup> These teams of two were heavy and slow, but their strength was appreciated until a better option came along. Horsepower offered a new level of strength and speed that put the heavy plow to the best possible use.<sup>11</sup> Initially, the ox yoke was incompatible with horses and they seemed to be inadequate and unable to do the job. As the yoke rested on the necks of the oxen (their strongest part), it was largely ineffective on horses, whose shoulders were far stronger than the necks of oxen. When the yoke finally developed into the harness, a model more suited for horses that rested on the shoulders rather than the neck, they proved to be the stronger and faster plough-pullers, and by the twelfth century it was evident a single horse could plough as much land as a team of oxen.<sup>12</sup> Although there is evidence of field

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<sup>7</sup> White, *Medieval Technology*, 43.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Sir Walter Besant, *Early London: Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, and Norman*. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1908), 268. \*Modern name in brackets.

<sup>10</sup> White, *Medieval Technology*, 64

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

workers using horsepower nearly 200 years before, the Bayeux Tapestry (Kent, 1077-92) provides the first visual proof of oxen being replaced with horses in farm-work, and an early twelfth-century tapestry of the Apocalypse showed “the month of April with a team of horses doing the spring ploughing with a wheeled plough.”<sup>13</sup> Through these tapestries, it becomes even more evident that the developments in agriculture throughout the Middle Ages were invaluable to cultivation techniques of the twelfth century. By the time the Apocalyptic tapestry was produced, horses were wildly popular and were replacing the heavier, slower oxen in European fields.<sup>14</sup>

As ploughs and animals advanced, so did understanding of how best to use land for agriculture. Possibly the most important agricultural development of the Middle Ages, the three-course rotation (or three-field rotation) changed the cultivation of food.<sup>15</sup> Previously, fields had simply been alternated in a two-field rotation that did not allow the soil of the fallow field to fully be re-nourished. The new three-field rotation operated on a pattern of “winter-spring-fallow,”<sup>16</sup> with an emphasis on the spring planting. This process of placing crops on a rotation that would leave one field to recover each year emphasized the spring planting, and the planting of legumes, such as beans, peas, and lentils.<sup>17</sup> The fields were not equitably divided, because wheat removes more nutrients from the soil than most crops, but the rotations proved effective nonetheless.<sup>18</sup> Legumes were used in order to nourish the soil that would otherwise have become exhausted as a result of the wheat and oats planted for cash crops, animal feed, and personal

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>15</sup> Michael M. Postan, *Essays on Medieval Agriculture and General Problems of the Medieval Economy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 17-20.

<sup>16</sup> Stone, *Decision-Making*, 136.

<sup>17</sup> White, *Medieval Technology*, 71.

<sup>18</sup> Stone, *Decision-Making*, 257.

consumption.<sup>19</sup> Planting a field of wheat, a field of legumes, and leaving one empty allowed the various fields chances to rest for season, be replenished by the legumes the next, and then be ready for planting in the spring. In this manner, land was constantly replenished rather than exhausted, and the cultivation of food was not only faster and done on a larger scale by horses drawing heavy ploughs, but was run more efficiently by men as well.

Through the three-field rotation, legumes packed with protein entered the peasant diet on a scale like nothing before. Lack of protein would have not been a problem for the upper classes of the Middle Ages, for there were no limitations on what they could eat. Great haunches of meat, game birds and platters of fish were available in the everyday meals of the elite class, while peacocks and even more sizeable roasts enhanced the gayest and most lavish festivities.<sup>20</sup> Since this was the case, there is little need to include them in a discussion of the developments of food, for very little changed in their lives except an increase in revenue.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, this short discussion on developments in consumption will continue with regards only to the developments of consumption of food in peasant life.

Before the extensive use of legumes brought about by the three-field rotation and their ability to refortify soil, the diet of the peasant class was sadly lacking in protein. In order to fulfill the status of “food,” everything consumed must offer the balanced combination of carbohydrates and proteins.<sup>22</sup> Since meat and other foods rich in protein were rare in the diets of the working class due to their expensive nature, adequate amounts of protein was hard to come by. The health of the people suffered as a result of their almost entirely cereal-based (wheat, oats, etc.) diet, which, as it

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 62.

<sup>20</sup> Stone, *Decision-Making*, 159.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 160.

<sup>22</sup> White, *Medieval Technology*, 75.



does not offer the balance between carbohydrates and protein mentioned previously could hardly be considered food.<sup>23</sup> The introduction of legumes provided the protein that was seriously lacking in the diets of the peasantry.<sup>24</sup> With the widespread implementation of the three-field rotation over the previously popular two-field rotation, the new emphasis on legumes provided a new source of protein for the working class.<sup>25</sup> Legumes enhanced the lives of the peasants, increasing health and strengthening their ability to work in the newly enlarged fields behind the more efficient horses, and so the consumption of food evolved from a barely adequate grain-based diet to an advanced diet based on proteins found in legumes.<sup>26</sup>

While the consumption of food primarily affected the peasant class, the rejection of food in lay society was a concept with distinct class divisions in the twelfth century. Religion permeated all facets of society, and practices such as fasting were common among laypeople.<sup>27</sup> The diet that evolved for the European peasant, even when enhanced with legumes, was remarkably similar to the ascetic diets of the religious world which abstained from meat, excess, and often subsisted solely on bread.<sup>28</sup> Yet this frugality in the diets of the peasantry was neither pious nor optional. The limitations on diet were due to the expense of meat, dairy, and other products, rather than an optional, self-imposed penance or purification process. It is the reality of the poor that is the greatest statement on the rejection of food among laypeople. As religion became significantly popular within the upper classes,

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 76.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> Stone, *Decision-Making*, 160.

<sup>26</sup> White, *Medieval Technology*,73.

<sup>27</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press,1987), 1-5.

<sup>28</sup> White, *Medieval Technology*,70.

fasting was adopted as an indicator of piety.<sup>29</sup> Meat and dairy products were not rare among the upper classes, coming to them relatively easily through hunting and financial ability, and by abstaining from them the elite felt they were suffering. Yet for the lower classes, there was very little by way of rich foods to abstain from. The practice of fasting among the laypeople, therefore, was rarely one undertaken by the peasant class and generally referred to upper class laypeople that had the ability to gain the foods they needed to abstain from.<sup>30</sup> As a result, upper class citizens who chose to fast often gained piety through this practice, for it proved their willingness to be uncomfortable although they had the opportunity to be the exact opposite.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, upper class citizens did not have to undertake the brutal physical labor of the peasantry, and this allowed them the convenience of abstaining. There is something wildly impractical about the idea of people who had to undertake hard labor for a living choosing not to eat. The strength provided by what food they could get was something they could not logically deny themselves.<sup>32</sup>

As a social construct, while fasting created intense class divisions, food as a whole created distinct gender divisions within the lay societies through its cultivation, consumption, and rejection. The medieval family evolved from the new manorial communities and became more established as health improved and children were able to survive slightly longer because of improved nutrition.<sup>33</sup> Distinct gender roles were then allowed to evolve, and women and men became individualized by what was perceived to

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<sup>29</sup> Daniel E. Bornsetin, ed., *A People's History of Christianity: Medieval Christianity*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 75.

<sup>30</sup> Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 3.

<sup>31</sup> Bornsetin, ed., *A People's History*, 95-98.

<sup>32</sup> David Herlihy, *Medieval Households*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 112-116.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, 117.

be their place in society. In the cultivation process, men were those who provided the food, worked the field, and interacted with the outside world.<sup>34</sup> Women were used primarily in the fields at planting and harvest times, the two busiest times of the agricultural year.<sup>35</sup> Men drove the ploughs and worked with the animals, while women bundled wheat and picked up what was dropped; they mainly spent their time in the home.

While cultivation was largely the work of men (except in poor areas where all hands were needed at all times),<sup>36</sup> women ruled in the realm of consumption. As the medieval family evolved, women's place in the kitchen became a prevalent theme in Europe. Once the goods reached the house, food became entirely the responsibility of the women. Bishop Marbodius of Rennes, writing in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, extolled the virtues of the "good" wife, saying that if she were not adequate at nourishing her family, "the good order of life would be diminished" because "who would assume the care of the house if not a woman? She cooks and keeps house, spins wool and flax, and weaves cloth."<sup>37</sup> Essentially, it was up to the woman to turn the raw products brought home by the man into the food needed by her family. While in many cases women still worked in the fields, their place as "nourisher" became cemented in this time period. Traced back to her station as the primary source of nourishment during childbirth and childbearing, the twelfth century saw a distinct trend in the embracing of ideas of motherhood.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Postan, *Essays on Medieval Agriculture*.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Bishop Marbodius of Rennes, Twelfth Century. Cited in Herlihy, *Medieval Households*, 116. \*Further publication information was not offered. Footnote available on Herlihy, 208.

<sup>38</sup> Herlihy, *Medieval Households*, 116.

The theme of nourishment and the secular developments of food, however, were not limited to the laity of the twelfth century. Religiosity was on the rise, and could not be separated from the cultivation, consumption, and rejection of food. With the widespread establishment of convents, monasteries, and abbeys across Europe<sup>39</sup> came different ideas of who could be involved in the three phases of food, and in what capacity those who were involved could be involved. Churches were exploding into existence across the continent, as evidenced by the area directly around London which was reported to have had 139 churches at the dawn of the twelfth century.<sup>40</sup> This large number is indicative of the revived religiosity prevalent across the European continent, and its importance to food is undeniable. As mentioned in Jocelin of Brakelond's twelfth-century *Chronicle of the Abbey of St. Edmund's*, monasteries were not simply centers for prayer and contemplation.<sup>41</sup> Rather, they were often the cultural centers of communities, for they drew residents to them through employment opportunities and the bustling markets held throughout the year.<sup>42</sup> Jocelin often references the farmers "employed" by these monasteries, and the various landholdings, including orchards and fields they worked on behalf of the monks.<sup>43</sup> Donated by the wealthy sons who entered the abbeys, large tracts of land were

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<sup>39</sup> Giles Constable, "Renewal and Reform in Religious Life: Concepts and Realities." *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*. Ed. Robert Benson and Giles Constable. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982. 37-68.

<sup>40</sup> Fitzstephen the Chronicler. Cited in Besant, *Early London*, 302. \*No further citation was provided as to the source of the Chronicler's work, other than to state that it refers to the twelfth century in particular.

<sup>41</sup> Jocelin of Brakelond, *The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond Monk of St. Edmundsbury: A Picture of Monastic and Social Life on the XIIth Century*, newly translated and edited by L.C. Jane, Introduction by Abbot Gasquet, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1907). Page numbers not available.

<sup>42</sup> Bornsetin, ed., *A People's History*, pg 133.

<sup>43</sup> Jocelin of Brakelond, *The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond*.

often among the monastic possessions, and it fell to the monks to ensure the proper use and cultivation of that land. Constantly, abbeys are mentioned in the *Domesday* account of England as significant landholders.<sup>44</sup> Since monks were often outnumbered by those living on their lands, and the peasants needed work, the religious men became key cultivators of food through tenant farming and renting of land for cultivation.

This practice of landowning and tenant farming undertaken by the monasteries of the twelfth century went hand in hand with the development of the markets that also flourished at monastic compounds.<sup>45</sup> While the economic implications presented by these centers through food will be discussed later, the religious implications were undeniable. Through the position of landowners, the monks also encouraged a connection to religiosity. As religiosity spread, the relics of saints held by the monasteries proved to be more than just private religious symbols for the monks.<sup>46</sup> They drew pilgrims from miles around, and these pilgrims needed to eat. The crowds of pilgrims resulted in the establishment of markets, drawing from the cultivation of monastic lands.<sup>47</sup> Monasteries themselves often produced goods such as cheese, fleece, or honey, and in a time when “nothing that could be made in the house was bought; nothing that could be made in the house was exposed for sale in the market.”<sup>48</sup> The monastic markets, therefore, offered a chance for those nearby to get what they needed, enhancing their diets if they had the funds, or improving their souls if they did not, while engaging in the religious culture of the monastery.

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<sup>44</sup> Thomas Hinde, ed. *The Domesday Book: England's Heritage, Then and Now*. (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1985.) 16-18.

<sup>45</sup> Bornsetin, ed., *A People's History*, pg 133.

<sup>46</sup> Bornsetin, ed., *A People's History*, pg 133.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 133.

<sup>48</sup> Besant, *Early London*, 200.

Nuns, as well as monks, often were great landowners. The area known as Elstow Manor in Bedfordshire, England held “land for 7 ploughs. In lordship 2 ploughs. 14 villagers have 5 ploughs. 11 smallholders and 4 slaves. 1 mill at 24s; meadow for 4 plows, 60 pigs. Value 100s.”<sup>49</sup> The manor had been brought to the abbey by the Countess Judith, and although this inventory was taken in 1086, the abbess and the nuns of St. Mary’s held Elstow until the dissolution of the monasteries.<sup>50</sup> The thriving agricultural world of the twelfth century benefitted greatly from lands such as Elstow, held and run by religious organizations but worked by the people of the town. The cultivation of food was viewed as a community effort, often centered in the religious sector. While visiting the relics and chapels of the monasteries, people were exposed to new nutrition and improved health.<sup>51</sup> In this way, the religious cultivation of food was able to strongly influence the twelfth century.

Since products, even those produced religiously, must be consumed to be considered food, it is necessary to understand the religious implications of eating food. In many cases, actual physical consumption was a strictly regulated activity that was often based on texts from much earlier time periods, and starkly resembled the lackluster diets of the peasant class. Monasteries based on works such as the sixth-century work of St. Benedict had strict rules for eating.<sup>52</sup> In Benedictine communities, there was an allowance for two meals of vegetables in order to maintain health. The rules continue, saying that “should there be any fruit or fresh legumes from the garden, they shall be added as a third portion. One pound of bread, good weight, will be enough for each

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<sup>49</sup> Hinde, ed. *The Domesday Book*, 26.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>51</sup> Besant, *Early London*. 203-205.

<sup>52</sup> St. Benedict, *The Rule of St. Benedict*, trans. Priest of Mount Melleray (London: Thomas Richardson and Son, 1895), 78.

brother.”<sup>53</sup> Meat, which was rare and expensive unless personally hunted, was reserved for the infirm.<sup>54</sup> There was the possibility of three meals a day, but the third was limited to a portion of the pound of bread generally served with the first meal. All of these restrictions were mirrored by convents established in the twelfth century, including the “double house” of Fontevrault. This community housed both men and women, and each ascribed to the Benedictine rule.<sup>55</sup> Convents also established rules regarding the consumption of food, and often went beyond the requirements of male asceticism. A new understanding of food, and Christ’s body as food, especially among women in the religious community, lifted asceticism beyond just the frugal and into the realm of complete rejection.<sup>56</sup>

While strict rules were imposed as to what, how much, and when those in the religious life could eat, fasting was a popular mode of dealing with matters religious.<sup>57</sup> Encouraged from the earliest stages of Christianity, fasting was, in the twelfth century words of Alan of Lille:

[M]edicine to soul and body. It preserves the body from disease, the soul from sin...if Adam had fasted in paradise...he would not have been exiled into damnation...If Esau had fasted...he would not have lost his birthright. If Noah had fasted...he would not have lost his modesty. Therefore, through fasting the body is purged that

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*,79.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 78-79.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>56</sup> Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 47.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 43.

it may receive the Eucharist sacramentally, and the spirit that it may receive it spiritually.<sup>58</sup>

This idea maintained that through completely abstaining from food, spirituality is achieved, and was championed by both male and female members of the religious society.<sup>59</sup> This mindset of using the fast as a way to cleanse both mind and soul for the Eucharist was not just an attempt to purify oneself, but was often viewed as a method of penitence and piety. It enhanced the Eucharist when it was taken, turning the body and blood of Christ into the sole means of nourishment for the follower.<sup>60</sup> This idea evolved from the original idea of fasting as “religious preparation; it could be purification or exorcism of evil spirits; it could express mourning...It was also meritorious work for God and neighbor. Moreover, fasting could be penitential.”<sup>61</sup> From a singularly personal choice in order to repent or purify, the practice of fasting became a religious experience focused on the connection with God rather than the personal goals of the individual.

The fast of the monasteries and convents can be directly related to the fasts of the laypeople, especially the fasts of the elite. Monasteries and their surrounding lands often produced more than enough to feed the members of the religious community to the point of gluttony, yet they chose to abstain, selling the food to others.<sup>62</sup> Thus they encouraged the consumption of foods they themselves rejected, as evidenced by Jocelin who stated that “O[ur] cellarer entertained all guests of whatever condition, at the

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<sup>58</sup> Alan of Lille, “Summa”, Chap. 34 PL 210, cols. 176-178; quoted passages at 176D-177A, 178A-C. Cited in: Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 44.

<sup>59</sup> Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 22.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 23.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 34-35.

<sup>62</sup> Bornsetin, ed., *A People's History*, pg 330-331.



expense of the monastery.”<sup>63</sup> The riches of the monasteries went to the visitors, and monks were supposed to live in relative poverty. This somehow raised them above laypeople into the realm of sainthood.

Each of these stages of food, cultivation, consumption, and rejection, is as crucial in establishing the religious gender distinctions of the twelfth century as it is for understanding the same divisions in lay society. First, the cultivation of food was not limited to a single type of monastery. As dowries were required of women upon entering the convent, large landownership was not rare.<sup>64</sup> Many had large landholdings and were in the business of cultivation as much as their religious brothers. Similarly, monasteries and convents did not differ intensely in the field of consumption for the individual religious societies, for they were universally expected to be more ascetic than the lay society and the widespread implementation of such austere diets as explained by St. Benedict proved this expectation to be a truth of the situation rather than just a myth.

Yet in the writings of Hildegard of Bingen, the distinction between males and females with regards to both the growth and consumption of food becomes apparent. Food imagery runs rampant through writings of the twelfth century, providing connections between consumption and religious experience. Drawing from the ideas of the sixth century’s St. Brigid of Ireland, namely that “it is so arranged by nature that nurses always bestow the affection of their spirit on those to whom they provide the milk of their flesh,”<sup>65</sup> two conclusions are carried through to the twelfth century. First, women are by nature the providers of nourishment; and second, through feeding others they are brought closer to

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<sup>63</sup> Jocelin of Brakelond, *The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond*.

<sup>64</sup> Bornsetin, ed., *A People’s History*, pg 330.

<sup>65</sup> Herlihy, *Medieval Households*, 120.

Christ through the sustenance they provide. These ideas were enhanced by the work of Hildegard of Bingen, a twelfth-century abbess and prolific writer who was widely consulted by everyone from the lowest peasant to the kings of the age.<sup>66</sup> Throughout her advice, there is a distinct difference between how she counsels women and how she counsels men. In her responses to male issues, she uses imagery rife with hunting and birds of prey, while women are depicted as flourishing, life-giving creatures, and mothers.<sup>67</sup> For example, she writes that human life occurs

In the same way a tree in its first growth  
brings forth tender shoots, goes on then to  
bear fruit and finally ripens that fruit to the  
fullness of utility...at the onset of wintertime,  
the sap of the tree withdraws from the leaves  
and branches as the tree begins to incline  
towards old age.<sup>68</sup>

As women grow, they give birth and raise children to the “fullness of utility” until they are ready to fall. But while they exist on the tree, they are hers to nourish. Imagery such as this leaves no doubt as to the place of women, that of nurturer and giver of life.

Her treatment of men is almost the complete opposite. In the counseling of Henry, Bishop of Liège, she tells him that “you, Henry, must be a good shepherd...and just as the eagle gazes at the sun, ponder and consider how you can call back the wanderers and exiles.”<sup>69</sup> In just a few lines, she sums up the religious place of men: they are the shepherds of the flock, and just as shepherd

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<sup>66</sup> Hildegard of Bingen, *Selected Writings*. Trans. Mark Atherton. (New York: Penguin Books, 2001), ix-lvii.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 6-10, 79, and others.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, 67.

protects, guides, and leads them to food, so must men. But it is through her imagery with regards to women that the responsibility for ensuring consumption falls almost entirely on them. While these religious works are referring to the Word rather than actual food, conclusions drawn from the consumption imagery of Hildegard is mirrored in the day-to-day life of religious figures of the twelfth century.

It is curious that among the saints of the twelfth century, the reasoning behind the sainthood of women and men are drastically different. This disparity can be seen primarily in the realm of food. Although Roman Catholicism preached almsgiving and monasteries were centers for all three phases of food, translations of that intimate contact with the cultivation, consumption, and rejection of food differed greatly between the sexes. Saints noted for their charity with regards to food, nourishment, and the feeding of the poor were almost always female.<sup>70</sup> Even if the woman herself undertook the fast or food asceticism, there is rarely an image of a medieval female saint in which she is not either nursing the Christ child or engaged in some other form of nourishment, such as charitable distribution.<sup>71</sup> A story that is actually a few centuries older is often attributed to Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, who rose to popularity in the fourteenth century.<sup>72</sup> The story goes that her husband objects to her sharing of bread with the poor. In order to defend herself, she claims that there are just flowers in her apron. A miracle changes the bread to roses, saving the woman from her husband's objections.<sup>73</sup> Still, the basic message is clear: through distribution,

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<sup>70</sup> Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 263.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, Caption Figure 8.

<sup>73</sup> Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, Figure 8 Plates Section II.

women can gain the status of piety and eventually achieve sainthood.

For male saints, however, there is a suspicious lack of charitable distribution of bread. Historical treatises on fasting were almost entirely male, from St. Augustine to the twelfth century, “alms, in Greek, is the same as the word for mercy.”<sup>74</sup> This allowed for the almost complete absence of male saints associated with food miracles, by way of distribution or otherwise. Most often, male saints were lauded for their hermeticism, their ascetic nature, and their preaching ability, such as in the stories of St. Francis of Assisi.<sup>75</sup> Although it has been previously stated that monasteries would supply travelers with food at their own expense, this is not considered charitable and is indeed often expected, as hotels did not exist.<sup>76</sup> These differences, along with the rise in lay saints and married female saints, intensify the importance of food within the religious world and any attempts made at defining gender roles.

While consumption was a practice encouraged by women (and on a lesser scale by men) for those outside the religious realm, something quite different was taking place within the convents and monasteries; the significance of fasting for women far outweighed the importance of the same practice for men. While the popular Benedictine rule advanced monasticism of the twelfth century to asceticism, it was the monasteries that had issues keeping “Adam’s sin” of gluttony under control.<sup>77</sup> Many lives of religiously minded women revolved around fasting, and their ability to abstain often led to their sainthood.<sup>78</sup> In the Middle Ages, traditionally a fast was

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<sup>74</sup> St. Augustine, “Sermon 207, Third Sermon for Lent.” Cited in Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 35.

<sup>75</sup> Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 105.

<sup>76</sup> Jocelin of Brakelond, *The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond*.

<sup>77</sup> Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 80.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 113-114.

undertaken before communion to cleanse the body to receive God as food.<sup>79</sup> However, it was the female religious communities that took fasting to another level entirely, with “fasts sometimes lengthening into years without eating, communion soaring into days of frenzy or trance.”<sup>80</sup> It was through these trances that the medieval mystic often seemed to gain her visions, and as men were necessary to confirm the validity of the visions it seems unlikely they themselves would fast to such an extent.<sup>81</sup> While fast consumed the lives of women, elevating married laywomen to the status of saint through their ability to deny themselves food, it played a lesser role in the lives of men in the twelfth century.<sup>82</sup> Few men are associated with intense fasts, and so can be considered practitioners of more of a “feminine” religion. These men include Francis of Assisi and Henry Suso. This “feminine religion” was based on fasting and visions, exuberance and overflowing with imagery.<sup>83</sup> Still, it is “deeply significant that despite the austere asceticism and Eucharistic fervor of these two [Francis and Suso] saints, metaphors other than food and practices other than fasting dominate their piety.”<sup>84</sup>

As the cultivation, consumption, and rejection of food evolved throughout the Middle Ages, its significance to history became ever more apparent. Ignored though it may be, it cannot be denied that food is an essential factor in studying the lay and religious lives of the twelfth century, for food is necessary for

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 115.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>81</sup> Hildegard, *Selections*, Introduction.

<sup>82</sup> John Tauler of the Rhineland, “Sermon 49 for the Nativity of the Virgin, in Tauler, *Die Predigten*,” p.313. Cited in: Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 109.

<sup>83</sup> Bynum *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 103-104.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, 105.

survival, inextricable from society, and “when we are hungry or thirsty we will naturally enjoy eating or drinking.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Tauler of the Rhineland, “Sermon 49”. Cited in: Bynum, *Holy Feast, Holy Fast*, 109.

# Darfur's Genocide: A Causal Analysis at the Individual, State, and Global Level

Olivia Wells

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Elie Wiesel, author of *Night* and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, provides a compelling documentary of his experiences during the Holocaust, revealing a terrifying aspect of the nature of social systems and their ability to dehumanize millions of lives in accordance with cultural prejudices. Widespread torture of this kind is a reoccurring theme across the globe even today and often times fueled by corrupt leadership enforced by officials under the influence of a social process that dehumanizes the victims of oppression by systemizing their demise and instills a sense of numbness within the perpetrators. Wiesel discusses his primary purpose for writing *Night*, saying that as a witness of the Holocaust, he has a “moral obligation to try to prevent the enemy from enjoying one last victory by allowing his crimes to be erased from human memory.”<sup>1</sup> He hopes that his words will help prevent future atrocities by reminding the world of what their neutrality cost for millions of innocent lives. But genocide marches on in Darfur to the beat of an indifferent world.

Compared to the survivors of the Holocaust, the victims of genocide in Darfur are suffering a similar fate. Discriminated against for affiliation with Christianity and various different rebel groups, Darfurians are forced to flee from their homes which are set on fire by the Janjaweed, a merciless militia established by the Sudanese government and employed by Omar al-Bashir, president of Sudan, to cleanse the country of its Christian impurities. Forced

into the desert and isolated from any sort of shelter, most of the victims are killed indirectly, however, from starvation, heat exhaustion, disease, or wild animals. Thus far every effort of the international community to resolve the genocide in Darfur has fallen flat due to a prolonged failure to address the context of the political and ethnic undercurrents responsible for fueling this abhorrent violence. The United Nations has attempted to end the genocide based on the premise that it is an isolated humanitarian and ethnic conflict, calling it “the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.”<sup>2</sup> However, the genocide ventures beyond the realm of conventional humanitarian crises given the nature of the groups in opposition. The conflict pits the Janjaweed against the rebel groups, namely the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).<sup>3</sup> Within a superficial context, the conflict appears to be a continuation of the prolonged rivalry between the Sudanese Arabs against the Christian Africans; however, such an assumption oversimplifies this sociological pandemic that has plagued the region for over thirty years.

Some of the alternative factors affecting this conflict such as intermarriage blur the ethnic distinctions between the two opposing sides. Moreover, the rebel groups have splintered into over ten different factions, making it increasingly difficult for either side to prevail.<sup>4</sup> Because of the divisions within the rebel groups, the groups themselves continually fail to facilitate change and the Janjaweed employ genocide as a means of carrying out President Omar al-Bashir’s orders to “eliminate the rebellion.”<sup>5</sup> The majority of the attacks carried out by the Janjaweed occur in villages where rebels have no armed presence, however, making it evident that the government intends to persecute the rebels’ support base so as to prevent future rebel recruitment.<sup>5</sup> Victimized and oppressed by civil war, ethnic discrimination, colonialism, famine, regional instability, ineffective authoritarian regimes, and



now genocide, the people of Darfur continue to face insurmountable devastation while aid organizations fail to make any long-term resolutions because of an oversight of the origins of this deep-seated conflict. An analysis of individual factors such as Omar al-Bashir's involvement in the conflict, state level factors like the structure of the Sudanese government resulting from colonialism, and finally external factors stemming from the efforts by the UN and AU in Sudan can be used as a means of isolating the conditions responsible for originating the genocide in Darfur.

### **Individual Level of Analysis: Omar al-Bashir**

Based on an analysis of the origins of the genocide in Darfur at the individual level, the president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, comes to the foreground as a primary candidate responsible for the cause of this conflict. By appealing to the ethnic sentiments of the people in Sudan, al-Bashir has rallied support for a campaign of violence that has taken the lives of over 200,000 civilians so far and displaced another 2.7 million.<sup>6</sup> Influenced by a racial superiority complex and driven by personal economic and political imperatives, Omar al-Bashir's role in Sudan is pivotal to understanding the origin of the conflict in Darfur.

The ethnic implications of al-Bashir's policies indicate an extreme bias in favor of the Arabic population in Sudan. Omar al-Bashir utilizes the hatred between the north and the south that has been festering in Sudan for the past fifty years to motivate the Janjaweed militia to eliminate civilians after he failed to defeat rebel groups such as SPLA and JEM.<sup>5</sup> Bashir's solution to the problem in Sudan is to eliminate opposition parties, and he has used ethnicity as a means of political mobilization.<sup>7</sup> It is no coincidence that the victims of the genocide in Darfur are predominately Christian and have a darker skin color than those that are ethnically Arabic. According to Lois Moreno Ocampo, the

chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, al-Bashir “masterminded and implemented” a plan to destroy the three main ethnic groups in Darfur: the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa.<sup>8</sup> He states that “Omar al-Bashir’s motives were largely political. His alibi was a ‘counter-insurgency.’ His intent was genocide.”<sup>8</sup> Bashir believes in Islamic supremacy and holds near absolute control over the Sudanese government.<sup>6</sup> Incidentally, Bashir banned political parties in Sudan not only as a means of increasing his own power, but also as a means of oppressing the voice of non-Arab citizens.<sup>9</sup> Bashir’s insistence on excluding non Arabs from joining the Janjaweed also reinforces the influence of ethnic sentiment over Bashir’s policies regarding his role in the development of the genocide in Darfur.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, the coup by which Bashir seized power in 1989 was in part intended to prevent the signing of a peace treaty with the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) which would have allowed secular law in the south as opposed to Shari’a.<sup>10</sup> By seizing power, Bashir thwarted the SPLM efforts, allowing him to establish a Muslim state. Driven by ethnic sentiments of superiority, Bashir demonstrates his political and economic influence in Darfur by unilaterally pursuing power and manipulating the Sudanese government for his own benefits.

Bashir repeatedly attempts to superimpose his own goals with those of the government regimes in order to tighten his grip and extend his influence in Sudan.<sup>7</sup> An example of Bashir’s tendency to politically manipulate the Sudanese people to increase his own power was Bashir’s decision to divide Darfur into three states in 1994 to allegedly “increase the government’s control by diminishing the size and power of provincial administration units.”<sup>6</sup> In actuality, his intent was to make the Fur a minority in each of the states to dilute the sway of opposition parties, in particular, those that consisted of black Christian citizens.<sup>6</sup> Bashir’s relationship with other political leaders in Sudan who have threatened his control in the past such as Hassan al-Turabi also

reveals his empirical political agenda. Hassan al-Turabi came to power via the nonviolent coup with Bashir in 1989 as the leader of the National Islamic Front.<sup>11</sup> By 1999, however, his policies began to clash with Bashir's when he advocated for a change in the constitution that would permit a two-thirds vote of parliament to trump the president's vote among other issues.<sup>11</sup> Because of General Bashir's military background and support, he forcefully removed Turabi from power and put him in jail based on accusations of conspiracy.<sup>11</sup> Not only did this rift between Turabi and Bashir lead to an increase in military and political strength of the rebel groups, it also foreshadowed Bashir's inclination to use military force as opposed to diplomacy to achieve his political ends.<sup>12</sup> Incidentally, Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations at the UN insists that "negotiations are required to bring this crisis to an end, but with the government intent on military action and the rebels either fighting or fragmenting it is difficult to see an opening for political negotiations."<sup>13</sup> Efforts to resolve the conflict in Darfur do not coincide with Bashir's tactics, and the end result has been and continues to be genocide.

Economically, Bashir has neglected to provide for the Sudanese people due in part to the conflict over oil between the north and south. The location of oil in the middle of Sudan makes north-south reconciliation particularly difficult, and rebel groups from the eastern and western regions including Darfur have felt marginalized by the governmental exclusion from the peace process.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, Bashir's failure to resolve issues related to and including famine and malnutrition has not gone unnoticed. Bashir stated that "We (the Sudanese) will never accept any food aid, even if famine is declared" as a means of provoking a sense of nationalist pride.<sup>6</sup> However, famine and disease have contributed to some two million war-related deaths, discrediting Bashir's claim that Sudan is above foreign aid.<sup>9</sup> Bashir's insistence on isolating

Sudan from international aid is a means of protecting the national sovereignty of his government and, therefore, his power. The economic and political repercussions of Bashir's policies overlap in that conditions of poverty, meager job opportunities, and severe droughts all lead to violent uprisings from rebel groups.<sup>3</sup> By failing to provide for his country, Bashir has promoted desperate living conditions in Sudan, thereby allowing the manifestation of violence and social unrest from rebel groups.

Given this evidence, however, the notion that genocide is solely a byproduct of poor leadership is unrealistic. However, leadership does directly affect the conditions suitable for the development of genocide. In cases such as Darfur, it is a leader's inability to resolve the ethnic differences within a state to moderately satisfy the groups in conflict that can lead to the development of genocide. For example, Jack D. Eller asserts that nationalism is built upon a foundation of ethnicity that has the ability to "manage and mobilize the political will of the people."<sup>14</sup> His theory runs parallel with that of Stefan Wolff who argues that some leaders tend to take a nationalist approach, using ethnicity as a tool to mobilize and organize followers in pursuit of power or other economic gain.<sup>15</sup> Wolff also asserts that ethnicity is only a threat when it is politicized, addressing why it is that not all ethnic groups fight each other.<sup>15</sup> By politically discriminating against ethnic groups within Sudan, Bashir is to some extent blameworthy for the continual presence of the strong ethnic sentiments that divide Sudan, but he is not responsible for their origin. Wolff also refers to discrimination, persistent violation of human rights, and deliberate economic and social neglect of leaders as leading causes of ethnic conflicts.<sup>15</sup> Wolff notes that a vital component to resolve ethnic conflict revolves around the ability of a political leader to accept that their opponent has legitimate concerns.<sup>15</sup> Bashir has failed to address the concerns of the rebel groups. Lastly, J. David Singer finds the personality and experience of the leader is

essential to the outcome of a decision because he feels that “people are experiences, images, and expectations while institutional abstractions are not, except in the metaphorical sense.”<sup>16</sup> By arguing that institutions are merely a byproduct of the individual, Singer validates the notion that a heavy percentage of blame can be portioned to Bashir for this genocide.

The evidence demonstrates Omar al-Bashir’s ability to manipulate the ethnic sentiments of the Sudanese people to achieve his own personal wealth and power. However, al-Bashir cannot be held accountable for the existence of the political and racial divide between the north and south that has plagued Sudan for the past century prior to his regime. Although Bashir is not responsible for the conditions preceding the genocide, he can be held accountable for failing to prevent and manage the ethnic conflict in Darfur that evolved into a full-blown genocide under his watch.

### **A State Level of Analysis: Khartoum**

Given that al-Bashir cannot be entirely blamed for instigating the genocide due to the fact that he had minimal control over the dysfunctional preconditions of the state when he seized power, the natural progression then is to examine these preconditions to further investigate the origin of this genocide. A combination of the nature of the Sudanese government, commonly known as Khartoum, and the devolution of Darfur from an independent state to a colonized state, then finally to a region within Sudan, offers evidence concerning the development of the genocide. All of these factors foreshadow conflict within the state; however, a closer analysis of each can help determine whether or not one is indirectly or directly related to the cause of the genocide.

Since the end of British colonialism in 1956, the Arab population dominated Khartoum while also favoring northern Sudan with its policies.<sup>17</sup> In 1983, President Gaafar Nimeri instated

Shari'a laws and the Sudan Government has embraced these Islamic laws since then, much to the dismay of the black Christian population within Sudan.<sup>18</sup> Because of this religious distinction, both the government and the rebel groups consider these cultural values non negotiable, situating the notion of a compromise well beyond the realm of possibility. In addition, Jim Hentz points to the structure of the state itself as a source of conflict. Because Khartoum has failed to project its power into the periphery, the state has not developed in the traditional Western sense, but has become what he considers a "quasi-state," or one that fails to provide for its inhabitants.<sup>19</sup> In congruence with Hentz's argument, the endemic insecurity resulting from the Sahelian Famine of 1984 instigated violence between Arab nomads and African sedentary peasants in Darfur that Khartoum failed to resolve because it was more focused on its eastern borders.<sup>17</sup> On a similar note, Grono recognizes how the type of government can initiate conflict within a given region. He acknowledges failed democracies and authoritarian regimes as a leading source of genocide when he says, "The countries where democracy has failed are the very ones that ushered in the severest in the magnitude of crimes against humanity."<sup>7</sup> Grono concludes that the cause of most genocides directly corresponds with a non-democratic government "which came to power through a military coup, and is supported by extremist religious forces that do not subscribe to the ethos of democratic governance."<sup>7</sup> The genocide in Darfur applies to his assessment in that the Sudanese government evolved from a military coup led by Bashir and that Sudan has long suffered from a government deficit. In hindsight, the elitist nature of Khartoum and its failure to establish a working democracy has had a major effect on the cause of the genocide.

In addition, British colonialism of Darfur and Sudan contributes to the state level of analysis in that Darfur suffered and continues to suffer from the political, economic, and social

repercussions that resulted from British rule from 1917 to 1956. Never fully integrated into Sudan, Darfur has been considered an appendage of a larger ensemble since 1917. Pre-colonial Darfur had a strong geographical coherence and was considered relatively prosperous.<sup>17</sup> While the British were in power, Darfur endured few setbacks because the British exercised their power through local traditional authorities.<sup>17</sup> Whether as a means of monopolizing their power within the region or out of respect for African chiefs, the British shut out the natives from the modern world, leaving them worse off when Sudan finally proclaimed its independence in 1956. Not only was Darfur non-industrialized following British colonialism, it became marginalized by Khartoum both politically and economically. Specifically, 56% of international investment was concentrated in Khartoum against the 6% that reached Darfur post-colonization.<sup>17</sup> In addition to excluding Darfur from the Western world, Britain's establishment of completely artificial borders surrounding Sudan had negative consequences, particularly for the Zaghawa group that was split between Chad and the Darfur region within Sudan.<sup>17</sup> These feelings of political marginalization offset the rebel groups in 2003 against Khartoum, thereby triggering what evolved into a full-blown genocide.

While the lasting effect of British colonialism from 1917 to 1956 proved detrimental to the political, economic, and social health of Darfur, the country saw relative stability for the duration of their occupation.<sup>17</sup> In fact, the south preferred the benevolent and neglectful colonial rule of the British to the tyrannical and oppressive rule of the northern Arabs.<sup>17</sup> Despite these sentiments, Prunier asserts that "the purity of tribal life (in Darfur) had been preserved at the expense of its future."<sup>17</sup> Because of Great Britain's failure to educate, industrialize, or invest in Sudan, British colonialism set Sudan and Darfur back by roughly fifty years. British support for slave trade in southern Sudan also contributed to the degradation and degeneration in the country. Furthermore,

Britain's decision to unify the northern and southern regions of Sudan encouraged the two successive civil wars, thereby providing a politically unstable atmosphere that would influence both the rebel groups and Khartoum's response in the events preceding genocide.

While the state level of analysis helps identify the factors that contributed to the political and economic instability within Darfur, its direct impact on the genocide itself is limited. Khartoum plays the largest role within the state level of analysis concerning the origin of the genocide as it is responsible for the actions of the Janjaweed. Subsequently, Lake argues that "an economic or political crisis with ethnic undertones" lends itself as a precipitating cause of an ethnic conflict, whereas "a total collapse of national government" can be considered a facilitating cause."<sup>18</sup> The Sahelian Famine resulting from the severe draught in 1984 properly exemplifies Lake's concept of a precipitating cause. Based on these two terms, the failure of Khartoum falls under the classification of a facilitating cause as opposed to a precipitating cause. Despite this assertion, the two civil wars in Sudan, the nature of Khartoum, British colonialism, and the annexation of Darfur all profoundly affected the development of the conditions which generated the genocide. The evidence suggests that the problems within the state both historically and currently are also at fault for initiating the conflict in Darfur.

### **External Level of Analysis: Financing the Genocide**

Jan Egeland, the United Nations' emergency aid coordinator, targets those responsible for financing and arming the Janjaweed as primary suspects for the cause of the genocide.<sup>2</sup> As in most cases, financial prestige is the most effective means to an end, and Darfur is no exception. Sudan's greatest source of wealth is through its oil trade with China; however, Sudan also receives



aid through both international organizations and regional alliances with neighboring states. These international and external actors assume the role as the benefactor of the genocide, perpetuating the conflict via indirect but efficient means.

Despite the United States' best efforts to thwart Sudan's financial resources through multilateral economic sanctions, China insists on maintaining good relations with Sudan based on the success and demand of its oil industry.<sup>11</sup> In 1994, Sudanese exports to China were \$84 million and accounted for more than 20% of its exports.<sup>11</sup> By 2005, China began providing army lorries and training grounds for the Sudanese military, thereby becoming a tangible asset for the perpetrators of the genocide.<sup>20</sup> Because of its commercial interests in the area, China has been tacitly supporting and arming the Sudanese government, thereby providing a means in which the Janjaweed can carry out the genocide.<sup>20</sup>

Organizations such as the former Organization of African Unity (OAU), the current African Union (AU), and the European Union (EU) are all involved in the development of the genocide as well, though their approaches are slightly less intentional than China's. First, when the OAU was formed in 1963, the members agreed to refrain from making any boundary changes between states.<sup>19</sup> Given that the once unified people of Darfur were now split between Chad and Sudan, a surge of instability resulted because of this agreement.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, Muammar Qaddafi, the current chairman of the African Union and leader of Libya, supported the political ideology of "Arabism," thereby encouraging the ethnic domination of Khartoum over the inferior Christian black citizens.<sup>21</sup> His quest for a United State of Africa under Shari'a law mirrors the ambitions of Bashir within his own realm of control. Finally, the EU indirectly offered financial aid to the Janjaweed by offering Sudan 4.3 billion euros for signing the Comprehensive Peace Accord that ended the civil war in Sudan.<sup>22</sup> By providing financial incentives for this agreement, the EU

indirectly financed the group responsible for pillaging entire villages of innocent civilians.

Alternatively, the countries within close proximity of Sudan, mainly Libya, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Chad, attenuated the ongoing genocide as well by assisting the rebels of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army financially and militarily throughout the 1990s.<sup>18</sup> In particular, Chad poses the largest threat to the stability of the Sudan government because of its active support of Darfur rebel groups today.<sup>11</sup> As previously mentioned, the Zaghawa's transcendence of national boundaries between Sudan and Chad facilitated an alliance between the rebel groups.<sup>17</sup> Incidentally, Chadian President Idriss Deby, who is of Zaghawa descent, supports the Darfur rebels at the expense of angering the Chadian rebels who are allied by Khartoum.<sup>23</sup> Although Chad does not immediately support the Janjaweed, it does offer financial and military aid for the rebel groups in the Western region in Darfur who are responsible for provoking violence, regardless of whether or not it is believed to be a worthy cause.

At the international level of analysis, the minimal evidence concerning the origin of the genocide in Darfur shows that such a conflict is more contingent upon statewide and individual level factors. While the international community plays a large role in attempted conflict resolution, these systemic variables weakly assist the origin of genocide in Darfur; however, by providing the financial and military support for its continuation, the argument stands that international actors are just as much at fault for the death of hundreds of thousands of innocent lives regardless what the preexisting developmental conditions. Lake correlates an increase in violent ethnic conflict in Africa to the availability of massive amounts of weapons in Northeast Africa following the end of the Cold War; however, relative to the contributing factors at the state and individual levels, this association to the genocide is rather weak. Aside from the generous flow of money into the hands of

Khartoum from international and external players, the genocide in Darfur proves to be a byproduct of internal domestic issues that are tacitly influenced and exacerbated by international states.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, an attempt to explain the origin of the genocide in Darfur is comparable to an attempt to extract the endpoint of a distraught ball of yarn. Continuing this analogy, the individual, state, and external levels of analysis are a means of untangling the yarn by helping to identify its endpoint. In the case of Darfur, the evidence indicates that the yarn is composed of multiple strands and any attempt to untangle one of them might worsen another area by tightening the knot. Metaphors aside, the accumulation of individual, state, and international actors contributed to the origin of this massacre. Atrocities such as these develop over a period of time under extremely devastating and oppressive living conditions. Of the three levels of analysis, however, the individual level outweighs the state and international levels for a number of reasons. Firstly, based on the fact that individuals compose the order within a state and that a conglomeration of states defines internationality, individuals must be at the source of the problem as they are the most basic unit of the system in question. To this end, any state government does not function of its own accord, but merely reflects the agenda of an individual or group of individuals in power. Secondly, since permanent solutions to problems in conflicted countries such as Sudan are nearly impossible to obtain according to Lake, whether or not a country's problems escalate into genocide is determined by the capability of the individual in power to properly manage such a conflict. While international, state, and other external factors provide the background conditions for such a conflict, it was primarily Omar al-Bashir's

mismanagement of the situation in Sudan and Darfur that led to an escalation of the violence that became genocide.

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**When Political Rivalry Goes Too Far**

Bradley Bledsoe

The city of Memphis, Tennessee has struggled with problems stemming from racial and political tension throughout the city's history. This tension creates heated battles between city leaders. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, two of these leaders became caught up in one of the most intense political battles in the city's history. This paper examines the rivalry between political tyrant Edward Hull Crump and black Republican leader Robert R. Church. Through investigation of personal letters, newspaper articles, and other archival sources, it is clear to see how complex and extreme this rivalry became and how it affected the lives of these Memphis politicians.

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**The Debate surrounding Female Ordination in the Catholic Church: Argument in favor of the Installation of Women Priests**

Stephanie Brenzel

The Catholic Church has had a long-standing tradition of an all-male priesthood. Since the Vatican believes that Jesus gave priestly authority only to men, they feel themselves justified in their exclusion of women from the clergy. The Church, however, is having a harder time defending their assertions on this matter in light of their decision to become a more "modern" institution. This paper then explores not only the types of arguments employed by the Catholic Church in this debate about the ordination of women priests but also the ways in which one can refute these claims. By looking at both biblical passages as well as the writings produced by the early Church fathers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, it is clear that the New Testament does not reject the idea of having women priests. In fact, the opposite is true; there are many passages in these texts that seem to advocate women taking on spiritual leadership roles.

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**Men, Women, and the Question of Food: Gender in 12<sup>th</sup> Century Europe**

Ellen Rast

The study of medieval culture has unearthed many perplexing conundrums in the social hierarchy of the world. Through an in-depth study of documents, centered on the 12<sup>th</sup> century and its social/political surge, this paper examines the depth of gender divisions in lay and religious societies by drawing parallels between gender and the idea of food.

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**Darfur's Genocide: A Causal Analysis at the Individual, State, and Global Level**

Olivia Wells

As Darfur continues to suffer from genocide, Omar al-Bashir, president of Sudan, has expelled international aid from Sudan, calling it an attack on the country's autonomy. This research paper explores the causes of the conflict that generated this genocide with the intent that by addressing these causes, a resolution can be developed. This paper looks at the origin of conflict in Darfur from the individual, state, and international levels of analysis.