CLASSICS AND THE TIMES IN EARLY AMERICA: SELF FASHIONING IDEALS OF MANHOOD, VIRTUE, AND MODEL CITIZENSHIP IN H.H. BRACKENRIDGE, J. BARLOW, AND F.S. KEY

by

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(Under the Direction of Dezsö Benedek)

ABSTRACT

This is intended to be a project which expands on previous work on the traditions of classical and eighteenth-century virtues and manhood as they appeared to and were perceived by the highly educated, elite producers of literature, in particular poetry, in early America. The bulk of the volume produced will focus on a limited number of authors for the sake of depth and clarity, examining selections of their poetic corpora for critical discussion in the scope of "manly virtues." The results should yield important insights into these authors' personal dealings with elite standards of literacy and manhood of the time, according to their own personal experiences, and how they interacted with their countrymen accordingly.

INDEX WORDS: Classics, Greece, Rome, Martial Poetry, Early America, Literary Reception, Manhood, Virtue

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This is intended to be a project which expands on previous work[1] on the traditions of classical and eighteenth-century virtues and manhood, as they appeared to and were perceived by the highly educated, elite producers of literature, especially poetry, in early America. The bulk of the volume produced will focus on a limited number of authors for the sake of depth and clarity, examining selections of their poetic corpora for critical discussion in the scope of "manly virtues" and literary reception. The results should yield important insights into these authors' personal dealings with elite standards of literacy and manhood of the time, according to their own personal experiences, and how they interacted with their countrymen accordingly.

The *mores* of the Romans and the Greeks were by and large readily adopted by many early American[2] scholars, politicians, and artists. Coming from a background in European education, the foundation was already laid for a swift and easy appropriation of classical ideals. The classical tradition, as it was adapted (or received) by the British elite

[1] For American interactions with Classics, cf. Reinhold (1984), Shalev (2009), Shields (2001), Winterer (2002); for American manhood and culture, cf. Stephen Berry II (2003), Carter (2001), Davidoff&Hall (1987), Friend&Glover (2004), Gallman (2015), Leverenz (1989), Wells (2004). One will find that, as the American male identity was influenced by American reception of the Classics, many of these will demonstrate overlap in some spaces, especially as early Americans supplemented their conceptions of manhood with Classical moralists, politicians, and historians.

[2] It will be noted here, for the sake of clarity, simplicity, and correctness, that references to "Americans" in this project connote, generally, "colonial" Americans, or white male elite Americans. It should go without saying that, while women and minorities, including Native Americans and African Americans, were indeed present and composing literature at the time, the majority of what was prioritized (however unjustly) and widely circulated at the time was of the "ruling elite," which constitutes the subject matter of this dissertation. In certain cases, particularly in discussing the opinions and conceptions of certain historical individuals, the definition of "Americans" may vary. For the sake of brevity, these distinctions will not be restated over and again.

and handed down to the colonists in America, saw new branches of adaptations spring out from the greater river of American classical influence and reception. The river metaphor, I pull from Gilbert Highet's work *The Classical Tradition*.[3] This was problematized by Maarten De Pourcq,[4] who found it too culturally derivative, as assuming a debt or *sine qua non* of the receptive culture toward the "parent" or "tributary," if one would stick with the metaphor. This appears to me to be prudent, in fact. I find it rather apt, assuming one acknowledges that, in order to receive, something must first be given (handed down). This requires no mitigation of the receptive culture, but could actually present them with power (I will specify below). As I think the contents of this project will demonstrate, one might think of traditional reception as a series of currents, eddies, floodplains, etc. Some of these, we may find, contain pollution. The three authors I have chosen to discuss here each have their own eddies in the larger American undercurrent.

These authors, as all others who expand influence into reception, a formative force into a reformative force, exert power over the text, weaving it into their own narrative of their experiences in their world (the time and space they inhabit). As Lorna Hardwick says, though the "great chain of influence" attributed to Greece and Rome has indeed its own problems, its falling out of fashion "is partly to be regretted, since studies of transmission… and adaptation are valuable adjuncts to other aspects of classical study, and help to explain how and why classical texts have been interpreted in particular times

[3] For the "river metaphor," see Highet, Gilbert. *The Classical Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949 (p.154)

[4] De Pourcq, Maarten (Classical Reception Studies: Reconceptualizing the Study of the Classical Tradition." *The International Journal of the Humanities*, Vol.9, Issue 4, pp.219-225 Champaign: Common Ground, 2012

and contexts."[5] As the Greeks and Romans reconfigured their own stories, knowing how these reconfigurations and their authors functioned and interacted with themselves and the cultures they sprang from will help us to assess later adaptations and learn more about the people and their environments. A brief reading in Plato[6] will attest to the length and age of the discourse over the precarity of the text as an object of or for interpretation, especially in the absence of its author. Without the author present to guard his creation, any actor can treat with it as desired, rendering it according to their own necessity.

Accordingly, with distance and with subsequent animosity between the continually developing societies "across the pond" from one another, Americans began to reform their own receptions of the classical tradition. This reception generally consisted among the elite of the superficial reorientation of the same characters and ethnicities around different contemporary people and nations, and the latent morphology of ethical and moral concepts. But, as will be demonstrated, there were other, smaller streams which issued forth from certain individuals as they shaped their perception of the classical tradition according to their own experiences and attempted to map it onto the world and the people around them, to varying levels of success. This, of course, was not a new practice, nor has it died out, nor is it unique to an age outside of the foundation of the stories we find so often co-opted for the sake of convenient and inspiring narratives. As Hardwick points out, the Greeks and the Romans were engaged in the same sort of "refiguration of myth," in "metatheatrical allusion, creation of dialogue with and critique of entrenched cultural practices and assumptions, selection and refashioning in the

[5] Hardwick, Lorna. *Reception Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003 (pp.2-4)
[6] Cf. *Phaedrus*, esp. The Myth of Theuth (274b-278d)

context of current concerns."[7] Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides appropriated the myths and legends or (recent) legendary history of their own people for their own commentary on current events. The comedians of the time also used elements of the mythic makeup of the pantheon to suit their needs, with Aristophanes expanding on the gods' vacation to the other end of the world (a well-known occurrence since the Iliad), expressly to be rid of mortal conflicts and Ares (the distaste among the gods for whose warmongering was also well known), who egged them on by manipulating his human "tools."[8] The Romans in their own turn took from the Greek mythological corpus and their own to inform their literary endeavors, especially effectively when they coopted the heir of the villains of Greek epic, forming from him the divine heroic lineage which would eventually give to the Caesars the power and authority of god-emperors.

The foundations of American political policy from the years of and surrounding the Revolutionary war are a comparable example, with certain traits of the classical tradition which were drawn out and stamped upon the new American tradition, which have demonstrated a long "shelf-life," as their entrenchment in the systemic framework of the country demands their familiarity to one who would work within it. Individuals among early Americans also had their own ideas, based on their own morals and ideals, which they occasionally attempted to affect upon those around them, expecting the same results. Most of them were disappointed in the long run. Nevertheless, it is worth exploring some of these shorter-lived, idealistic receptions of the classical tradition and examining how these individuals interacted with their peers, how they variously synthesized the two major traditions (incorporating a third in some cases, as did Barlow)

[7] Hardwick (2003, p.4)
[8] Aristoph. *Peace* (204-219, 619-628)

by which especially the elite of America structured their lives, and perhaps discovering nuggets of wisdom (or foolishness) with which we might change our perspectives on how we interact with or receive the various traditions and frameworks we interact with ourselves. As each of the authors below fashioned the political realities of their experiences with Classics according to the time and place they found themselves in, so we shape our own, perhaps even as we observe them. Steven Mailloux was a proponent of such an approach to the examination of the authors below as it progresses: how do the authors interact with the times and places they found themselves in? [9]

Hans Robert Jauss made a major impact on this field of study as well, especially as it pertains to those Americans, including our examples below, who attempted to mold the classical tradition to fit their peculiar cultural and political agendae. These one might consider in the scope of the literary zeitgeist of the nineteen-sixties, which, as Irmgard Wagner says, saw that "literary studies, based as they were on a canonical approach to the "great works," had increasingly come under attack as reflecting and perpetuating the status quo of establishment culture."[10] The fear of this appropriation of elder literary works to suit an establishment (or elite) narrative is rooted in the truth of the action itself, which has occurred throughout history, from the Greeks to modern authors. Examinations of the tragic tradition, for example, will prove perfectly sufficient to demonstrate this, with the revisions of Euripides' *Bacchae* and Sophocles' *Antigone* serving various political agendae, including counter-establishment narratives.[11] Jauss himself still came

[9] Cf. Steven Mailloux, in Le Juez, Brigitte. "Creative Reception: Reviving a Comparative Method." *ACLA State of the Discipline*, ACLA, 2023, https://stateofthediscipline.acla.org/entry/creative-reception-reviving-comparative-method, Accessed April 13 2023

[10] Wagner, Irmgard. "Hans Robert Jauss and Classicity." *MLN*, Vol. 99, No. 5, Comparative Literature, pp. 1173-1184: December 1984 (p. 1173)

[11] For *Bacchae*, Cf. Wole Soyinka's adaptation. For *Antigone*, Cf. Irigare's.

around from his being set against the idea of classicity, and its elimination, producing "a reappraisal of Theodor W. Adorno's Aesthetic theory…" which "attributes a temporal nucleus to truth."[12] Wagner notes that Jauss became less radical, apparently, with age, specifying that, in "The Partiality of Reception Theory"[13] Jauss rectifies what he thought was a problem in his earlier theses: that

> ""[t]he lack of this distinction [between tradition and selection] was a flaw of my precious conception and… needs to be revised" (386). He now distinguishes between a good and a bad type of canon formation, which he calls "chosen tradition" and "grown tradition" respectively."[14]

This chosen tradition is what the likes of Soyinka and Irigare, and to some extent our examples below, participate in. Some of the American authors may exhibit elements of the grown tradition in their actions as well.[15] In particular, Barlow was compelled by the Old-World traditions of culture through Classics to incorporate those into is epic compositions beside his contemporary American. His addition of the ancient American tradition is an attempt at the formation of a new canon. The works of Brackenridge and Key both take their own liberties with their selected literary traditions and build anew from them, adding to the growing "American" literary corpus of the day, with Brackenridge claiming and reorganizing the Iliadic narrative and other classical motifs, and Key inserting himself physically and literarily into the scene of the War of 1812,

[12] Wagner (1984, p.1173)
[13] 1973
[14] Wagner (1984, p.1176)
[15] In truth, the chosen cannot exist without an acknowledgement of the grown tradition. As a child owes whatever good or bad formative experiences they carry to those who did (or did not) raise them, the scholar or the literary initiate owes their formative ideas to those they originated from. The chosen tradition, that which is selected and adjusted from the grown tradition to fit the times, is a natural exhibition of cyclical life events.

fusing two backgrounds in Classical and Christian training through a parodic lyric tradition.

Americans, it has been argued with convincing strength, were particularly zealous for the classical tradition, as it was "grown" and as it was "chosen," and some of them were keen to instill that zeal in others. Some of the earliest arrivals in the American colonies came with alumni of Oxford in their company,[16] some of which attempted to impose their passion for the ancient world to their fellow colonists over time, with a general educational, if often missionary, curriculum. They also conferred amongst themselves, the more educated and wealthier classes, "in the coffeehouses, clubs, private societies, and salons."[17] These colonists fancied themselves and the republic which was eventually founded a reemergence of the ancient model they idolized. At the same time, they held assumptions about this tradition as it pertained to themselves and the world around them, which they wove into it, thereby reforming it to a degree. They also inserted their own paragons of American virtue, laying claim to and claiming right to edit the tradition by its insertion into their own culture, and their culture heroes into it.

It should be no surprise, then, that these, via their attempt at emulation of Greek and Roman values, and via the Christian European values they were already possessed of, engendered a hybridized literary tradition by their receptions of both, sometimes with strong classical overtones, in a synthesis of what John C. Shields calls Aeneadic and Adamic foundational myths.[18] The potential which poetic literature, with its memorable verse form, has for influence on public affairs and political theater, was enticing for those

[16] Winterer, Caroline. *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780-1910*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002 (pp. 10-12)

[17] Winterer (2002, p.25)

[18] See *The American Aeneas: Classical Origins of the American Self* (2001).

who were at the formative vanguard of literary reception, in which our present subjects played intimate roles.

This fascination begins with the colonization of the Americas, when a classical education was in fact a part of certain evangelical missions of European settlers.[19] According to Caroline Winterer, high ranking early British colonists "placed the ancient authors at the core of their ideals of civility, learning, and piety."[20] Early students of grammar schools were taught with Latin readers and finished their training with Cicero's *Orationes*. Admission requirements for most early American colleges included the ability to read Cicero, Vergil, and the Greek New Testament, and students continued on in readings in *De Oratore* and the *Aeneid*.[21] There was an obsession with Roman identity which saw American colonists, including a considerable number of those who would become Revolutionaries, adopt the rhetoric, influence their philosophies by, and even make pseudonyms of their ancient role models: "'young Senates,'[sic] 'new Catos,' 'Brutii,' and 'Cassii' … the Roman Republic's irregular militias composed of arms-bearing citizens imprinted a lasting impression on eighteenth-century political sensibilities."[22] Patrick Henry became a sort of American Demosthenes, and General Montgomery was posthumously hailed by William Smith, Cincinnatus, "General from the plough!"[23]

In *The American Aeneas*, Shields suggests that early America was shaped with a dual heroic ideal between Adam and Aeneas. The journey across the sea, to the west,

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[19] Winterer (2002, p.10)
[20] Ibid.
[21] Winterer (2002, pp. 11-13
[22] Shalev, Aren. *Rome Reborn on Western Shores: Historical Imagination and the Creation of the American Republic*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009 (p.94)
[23] Shalev (2009, pp. 142-3, 25)

which is referenced in Brackenridge's play *The Battle of Bunker's Hill* and Joel Barlow's 1807 *The Columbiad*,[24] is but one point at which the colonization of America was likened to the Virgilian epic. Shields identifies George Washington's reward of "Roman Valour" with Aeneas' *pietas*, the same virtue which, Shields argues, made Addison's *Cato* a great success.[25] Furthermore, the religious missions, either for evangelistic or libertarian purposes, inspired new colonists, those with the inclination and the required access to the materials, to identify themselves with the fugitive Trojans and, so that this could be acceptable, to make efforts towards a "Christianized" Aeneas.[26]

The fusion of these foundational characters and the European American identity dialogued with classical and biblical texts to create new intertextual and intercultural situations, which were then interpreted according to the sensibilities and ideals Americans had constructed for themselves, forming a new literary text by the play between the "intended" reader and the "actual" reader *a la* Wolfgang Iser.[27] It fits similarly into Gadamer's theory of interplay between historic understandings and meanings, where the subsequent receptions or interpretations of a text collectively impact its meaning.[28] Americans took this interplay of meaning and history and used it to shape their own, newly emerging identity, and to distance themselves from the Old-World identities in the faces of which they sought to justify themselves.

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[24] Barlow, Joel. *The Columbiad*, in *The Works of Joel Barlow in Two Volumes*, Vol. II, Ed. Henry R. Warfel, Gainesville: Scholars Facsimiles & Reprints, 1970 (1.1); Brackenridge, Hugh Henry. *The Battle of Bunkers-Hill*. In *Representative Plays by American Dramatists.* Vol. 1, 1765-1819, 236-276, Philadelphia: Robert Bell 1776, Ed. Montrose J. Moses, (June 26, 2009, E-book, Via *Project Gutenberg*. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/29225/29225-h/29225-h.htm.) accessed April 10, 2023 (5.1)

[25] Shields, John C. *The American Aeneas: Classical Origins of the American Self*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001 (pp. xxix-xxx; 174)

[26] Shields (2001, p. xxx)

[27] Hardwick (2003, p.8)

[28] Ibid.

Shields notes also American authors who made "self-conscious attempts to either diverge from British and/or European literary traditions or to define the idea of Americanness in contradistinction to ideas of what is considered British or European…"[29] citing in particular Joseph Breintnall's "An Encomium to Aquilla Rose, on His Art in Praising:"

Go on and find more Candidates for Praise,

Our infant Country's Reputation raise;

Doubt not but Strangers far remote will come

For what they are so much in Want at Home

And visit us as ancient *Greece or Rome*. (Rose 43)[30]

Perry Miller, too, emphasizes this American identity crisis in discussing Whitman,[31] as the poet strived to become the quintessential, "foundational" American literary figure: "Americans, particularly from the early nineteenth century on, have been in search of an identity." The English take their English for granted. The French do not have to confirm their frenchness; "being American is not something to be inherited so much as something to be achieved."[32] So, members of upper-class America strove to establish this identity in the synthesis of biblical and classical traditions. Joseph

[29] Shields (2001, p.84)

[30] Ibid.

[31] This note is included in demonstration of the enduring desire of Americans to create a unique identity for themselves. Whitman himself will not make an appearance here, as producing a viable contribution to this volume about Whitman's poetry (for example, Whitman and epic) would require wading through the vast collections on both *Drum Taps* and *Leaves of Grass*, by at least dozens of scholars who spent their entire lives and careers on the singular poet. The results of this, if properly and precisely pursued, would produce an entire book on their own. A similar study of Emerson would yield the same outcome.

[32] Miller, Perry. "The Shaping of the American Character." in *Whitman: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Ed. Roy Harvey Pierce, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1962. (pp. 134-35)

Addison's *Cato* is a potent example of the spread of favored Roman virtues through poetry and play:

> Because this play constitutes an English-language presentation and promulgation of the virtue of pietas, requiring no knowledge of classical languages or cultures, *Cato* served as a primary vehicle for disseminating pietas[sic] to those Early Americans unfamiliar with Vergil's *Aeneid* - that is, to those schooled exclusively in the tenets of the Adamic myth.[33]

The easy comparison of the two cultures' virtues of "piety" made for an apt instrument for the fusion of the two traditions. The popularity of this play saw its production with such frequency and demand as to make an appearance in the camp of George Washington at Valley Forge.[34] Washington was apparently "intimately" acquainted with the play,[35] no doubt owing to a keen awareness of his nearly unassailable status as the American reincarnation of the Roman statesman.

When discussing the eager consumption of classical literature in America, it is entirely possible that a certain "flagging" of which Goethe speaks in a national literature planted the seeds of desire for new identities in the classical world. This sort of literary "flagging" would have weighed especially heavily in the minds of early Americans, most of whom were preoccupied with distancing themselves from the European traditions they came from. In Goethe's words:

> In the end, every literature grows bored if it [is] not refreshed by foreign participation. What scholar does not delight in the wonders wrought by mirroring

[33] Shields (2001, p.174)
[34] Winterer (2002, p.25)
[35] Shields (2001, p.175)

> and reflection? And what mirroring means in the moral sphere has been experienced by everyone, perhaps unconsciously; and, if one stops to consider, one will realize how much of his own formation throughout life he owes to it.[36]

This statement of Goethe's will apply to the American efforts between the chosen and grown traditions of Jauss. Early Americans were negotiating between their own European grown traditions which, for both themselves and their cousins across the Atlantic, whether they liked it or not, imparted civilization to their culture, and their chosen tradition in the New World, where they had conjured up a dialogue between the European, the American, and the "American."

Goethe stresses the highest goal of translation, too, "is to achieve perfect identity with the original, so that the one does not exist instead of the other, but in the other's place… the translator identifies so strongly with the original that he more or less gives up the uniqueness of his own nation…"[37] The same European-American literary and cultural dialogue which existed was active in translation, and certain scholars, like Barlow and Longfellow doubled down this effort by the integration of European-American, Classical-American, and Native-"American" materials. With the scholars of American Universities engaging in their own productions of Greek works like *Medea*, this theory must not be overlooked under those circumstances. These productions, American translations of them, and commentaries on both of these (see "Character of Medea," below) were methods by which Americans inserted themselves and their specific circumstances,

[36] Quoted in *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*, ed. Antoine Berman, Albany: SUNY Press, 1992 (p.65)

[37] Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, New York: Routledge, 2012 (p.65)

especially spatial circumstances, into the classical narrative, selecting aspects of the Old-World tradition for incorporation into their own New-World foundations.

Winterer points out the early affinity of "America's young agrarian republicans"[38] with Sparta, and the early identification of Southern genteel with ancient aristocratic agrarian soldiery. Both the North and the South built their own established narratives based on classical literature, increasingly cast one another as the Spartans and identified themselves with the preferable, more democratic Athens (except, in the case of the South, both polities were claimed for their specific virtues, while only one was thrust upon the Northern other);[39] a North-South opposition which, Shalev points out, existed long before the hellenization of the American identity:

> Two competing paradigms reflected radically different understandings of the past, its relation to the present as well as disparate expectations from America's national future… While southerners, mostly elite planters, contemplating ancient history expressed common civic-humanistic notions of time as cyclical and corrupting, northerners discoursing the classics habitually held to a view of history derived from the reformed Christian exegesis, which indicated a tendency toward millennial optimism.[40]

In both the North and the South, classicism was eventually looked to as a remedy for the problems in the republic, which issues saw some overlap between the regions: "materialism, civic decay, industrialization, and anti-intellectualism."[41] While the problem of industrialization and the materialism which, by and large, follows it was not

[38] Winterer (2002, pp.20-21)
[39] Winterer (2002, p.75)
[40] Shalev (2009, pp.73-74)
[41] Winterer (2002, p.4)

to come along until the mid-nineteenth century, some years after the last of the compositions in this volume, classicism was still sought by some as a moral directive and a political compass.

In the June, 1839 issue of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, an anonymous writer says in opening and concluding "Character of 'Medea':"

> Nor is [tragic] influence on morals in any way inconsiderable. The higher capacities of our nature are charmed and gratified by such high and noble objects presented to their enjoyment; scorning the gross sensualities of vice, they seek a more congenial clime, where the flowers and fragrance of virtue for ever bloom and the divinity of the soul beams with never-fading lustre.

And

> … have not Grecian classics a special claim on the attention of American youth? Were not their authors *freemen*, and their thoughts beating high with the fervor of liberty? Were not Sophocles and Æschylus patriot soldiers in the battles of Greece against the proud invader? Was not their language that of the heroes of Marathon and Thermopylae? Surely we would reverence and study so valuable a memorial of the past - embodying the breathing thoughts of heroes - the vehicle of indignant rebukes of tyranny - and connected, in its history, with the first dawnings of liberty and the proudest epochs of the ancient world.[42]

The general thrust of the article as a whole is in a receptive dialogue with the complexities of classical and contemporary literature, to which point the author states

[42] "Character of Medea" (1835, pp.383, 392)

"Medea's character was a strange compound of vice and virtue."[43] "A judicious mind," the author says, "will discriminate, nor wantonly confound virtue with vice. We would treat the Latin and Greek classics precisely as we treat our own; the plea of antiquity never does consecrate immorality in our eyes…"[44] In truth, the nature of the moralistic musings of these admonishments in the article is that of a proto receptionist digression on the American reception of the Greek drama, its personae, and its moral conundrum, which one found persistent to date, examining the perceived and the expected or preferred response in the audience.

Nor were Americans the first to engage in reception-based dialogue. These analytical discussions, as noted above, were already in play among the Greeks themselves, as they were composing their dramata and observing audience reactions to them - commentaries spurred by temporally and spatially unique receptions of the text, upon which Aristotle began to comment in *Poetics.*[45] And before him was Plato's commentary on the potential dangers of ill- or under-advised receptions in mythology among the Greek youth.[46] Thus the precedent for reception based work, whether of academic or poetic nature was established by the time of the Revolution (and well before), and an educated or informed individual such as Brackenridge, for example, could easily conceive of a composition which harnesses the values and the personae of a model culture towards the achievement of a political agenda, the establishment of a neo-Roman empire on the shores of a new land. Brackenridge would have seen the American public

[43] "Character of Medea" (1835, p.385)
[44] "Character of Medea" (1835, p.383)
[45] Holub, Robert C. *Reception Theory: A critical introduction*. New York: Methuen, 1984 (p.13). Comments on the identification of audience *catharsis* as one of the first identifiable reception based analyses.
[46] Plato. *Republic* 2.377e-378d

”classicized” towards a greater moral and empirical existence, in part by the influence of his own education-motivated dramata. Brackenridge also had his own experiences with the reception of his own work, when his verse compositions flopped, falling well short of the creator’s goals, and his later education-oriented political machinations were undermined by his differences with his constituency, both spoken and unspoken (more in Ch. 2 below). Someone like Francis Scott Key, on the other hand, was generally more interested in solely moralistic and utilitarian applications of classical texts.

In the more religious sphere of American literary reception, from before the United States was founded, Americans had sought to moralize the less Christian aspects of the Classics. This led some to reaches for moralistic value in classical texts and, where none could be found, to conflicts between more fundamentalist ministries and Enlightenment thinkers. Jonathan Boucher claimed minds were “lost” or “undone” (heathen) “by the habit, first acquired at school, of reading only classics.”[47] Yet Cotton Mather confessed in 1726 that he could not find reason strong enough to teach his son completely away from poetry.[48] Most were of a mind to adopt the best aspects of the ancients and replace the worst with their preferences. Interest was mainly instrumental, in moralists and historians, and less in *belle letres*, except for the purpose of moral instruction. The inculcation of piety and moral truths was the goal of a common core curriculum of classics.[49] Homer, Vergil, Horace, etc. were taken by the reluctant Christian scholar where their lessons or other utility presented the opportunity.

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[47] Reinhold, Meyer. *Classica Americana: The Greek and Roman Heritage of the United States*. Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1984, p. 25

[48] Reinhold (1984, n.13, ch.1)

[49] Reinhold (1984, 27)

Utility, after all, was and still is a major preoccupation for many American attitudes which influence literary reception. William Bradford, in 1774, said to a friend: "This does not seem the time for poetry, unless it be such as Tyrtaeus wrote."[50] The value of the poet is his encouraging to the youth a stout heart and an inclination toward service to the nation, leaving the less palatable aspects of the Spartans by the wayside.[51] This was in line with the demand for utility among Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[52]

The colonies' and early United States' conceptions of honor surrounding battle and war, were partially informed by those of Greece and Rome. Stephen W. Berry II's *All That Makes a Man* proffers useful examples of early Americans and their experiences with war, honor, and manhood, and provides some commentary on whence these values are sprung. Twenty five year old Joshua Callaway of Alabama found the army itself to be immoral and backwards relative to its alleged purpose, "[e]ating out the fields and plundering the livestock of the land it was supposed to protect…"[53] Yet, heeding dutifully the words of the governor, that "No man of true patriotism… suffer himself forced into the protection of his own country,"[54] Callaway enlisted and remained with the army until his death on Missionary Ridge; and, it seems, if disapproving of the army as a whole and its questionable actions and motivations, he remained devoted to serving in that capacity,

[50] Reinhold (1984, n.11, ch.1)

[51] The potential for poetry to influence, and the resultant need for appropriate poems on productive topics, was recognized, in the West, first by Plato (Rep. III.376e-399e). Theories such as this likely also made their way into the colonies and the United States from the platonic corpus.

[52] Reinhold (1984, 32-36) John Adams, in the same pursuit of utility, claimed his practices in politics and war were to the betterment of his sons, who might pursue mathematics and philosophy in turn. Reinhold (1984, 34)

[53] Berry II. *Stephen W. All that Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003* (p.6)

[54] Quoted in Berry II, ibid.

even unto death: "I am as sick of the war as any man who ever deserted… But do not you think I have any notion of a similar course. No, never."[55] Here is a prioritization of *patria* over certain moralities, and the preference for death in service to the country over desertion or martial slacking. These are strongly identifiable with Roman values. Indeed, one can refer to the famous line of Horace "*dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*."[56] The preference of death over dishonor is equally present in Greek lyric, epic, and prose.[57]

Following this train of Classical thought in America, closer to the elite classes, one runs into the planter James Henry Hammond, who, despite gaining certain notoriety contemporaneously and historically for his scandalous conduct and large slave holdings, can offer further insight into the Southern man's honor and strivings. "There are but two things worth living for… love in life, immortality after death… to fill a niche in History to the end of time, not to die out with the death of [his] contemporaries."[58] A quick glance at the *Iliad* will reveal the likely inspiration for Hammond's preoccupations in life and death. Hammond was a highly educated man. He was a graduate of South Carolina College, a member of the Euphradian Society of Greek literature, a teacher, a law practitioner,[59] and a congressman. His sentiments followed those of many in the South. Southerners at the time had in many respects fashioned themselves to resemble the ancient people admired since the foundation of the republic.

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[55] Quoted in Berry II, ibid. From *The Civil War Letters of Joshua K Callaway*, ed. Judith Lee Hallock, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997, pp. 157, 85.

[56] Horace. Od. III.2

[57] Il. 2. 333-339, 3.38-57, 421-434, 6.440-465, 9.620-642, 16.20-45, 22 90-130; Tyrt. Frag 9 (Campbell), etc.

[58] Quoted in Berry II (2005, p.12). From *Secret and Sacred: The Diaries of James Henry Hammond, a Southern Slaveholder.* Ed. Carol Blesser, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. p. 150

[59] Berry II (2005, p.11)

For the young man, martial service or exploit was an avenue to manhood. In Laver's chapter, "Refuge of Manhood: Masculinity and the Militia Experience" the militia functioned as a proving ground and a boon to masculine self-confidence. Men could prove themselves in battle via militia service, and militias also helped to secure the collective and self-identities of the young men serving in them and, in part, required the integration of various classes.[60] Additionally, "historian John Hope Franklin noted that in the south handling a gun was part and parcel of growing up and becoming a man."

Alongside the above, Berry II demonstrates that, in a rather Roman style, elite Southern Americans were especially concerned with having virtually all things associated with the height of civilization, wealth, and power, simultaneously as they were concerned that they should not be observed or perceived having any of these (perhaps in excess or without purpose), lest they be alleged "vain." A similar preoccupation allegedly left patricians of Rome scrambling to provide the self-same set of silverware to each home visited by Carthaginian emissaries. These stoic virtues cooperated well with the virtues of the Christian, which also demanded self-denial and modesty.

The elite Southern man, as a sort of *paterfamilias*, was "expected to provide a varied constituency – slaves, women, children, and (in some measure) poorer whites – with an array of goods and services: food, shelter, clothing, justice, moral leadership, and a sense of common identity and direction."[61] Craig Friend and Lorri Glover, introducing *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, suggest the same:

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[60] Laver, Henry S., In *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, ed. Craig Friend & Lorri Glover, Athens: UGA Press, 2004 (pp. 2-4) This style of training and integrating on communal grounds for parading, drilling, and building collective identities is reminiscent of the Roman's annual drilling on the *Campus Martius*, though derivation ought to be foregone as an origin, in favor of convergence.

[61] Berry II (2005, pp. 18-19)

> Family and Household were the crucibles in which mastery was forged. Manhood therefore required an independent household and landownership, a submissive wife and children, and, ideally, slaves. Vigilant household authority over those subordinates mixed with self-restraint thus made a man in his own mind and in his home.[62]

This particular approach to household and community affairs follows the Roman pattern closely, and ought to situate the Southern social hierarchy somewhere neatly between the arguments Friend and Glover discuss, over the nature of the Southern male and his systems of operation, between the "middling white yeoman farmer" and "elite men."[63]

This system of semi-patronage was accompanied by a desire toward civilization-building. Nineteenth-century Southerners in particular were also concerned with building civilization and culture, whereas Americans of the North seem to have been more preoccupied with *being* civilized and cultured. And what others have established, Berry II corroborates with some assistance from Wayne K. Durrill, Bruce A. Kimball, and more,[64] that the influences toward the civilization which early elites hoped to (re)build come heavily tinted with Greek and Roman hues.

> "The term civilization," an author for the [*Southern Literary*] *Messenger* intoned, "has a philosophical signification – a signification fixed by history, developed by

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Cf. Kaster's *invidia*, *verecundia* (2005); Cairns' discussions in shame and visibility (1993)

[62] Friend, Craig & Glover, Lorri. *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, ed. Craig Friend & Lorri Glover, Athens: UGA Press (2004, p. ix)

[63] Friend & Glover (2004, p. viii). This placement, of course, ought to be considered mobile upon a sliding spectrum, as ought in most similar arguments.

[64] Berry II (2005, p.242 n.11). See Durrill, "The Power of Ancient Words: Classical Teaching and Social Change at Couth Carolina College, 1804-1860," *Journal of Southern history*, 1999, 469-98; Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* New York: Teachers College Press, 1986.

> moral sciences, containing wide, boundless elements, and implying a compendium of man's best and noblest ideas." … this definition could only be the product of an antebellum education. Moral philosophy, progressive history, and noble ideas constituted something like the core curriculum of most colleges of the period, and this author mentions all three in one sentence. If he had added dead languages, he would have captured the full course load of the acreage antebellum freshmen… Dead languages, especially Latin and Greek, opened the door to dead civilizations, which functioned as tutorials on the dos and don'ts of civilization building generally. The rise and fall of each of the world's once-great powers was understood as a moral tale whose narrative arc resembled that of a grand epic.[65]

The same global historical perspective which produced conceptions of the rise and fall of empires as epic literature produced an elite self-perception or self-fashioning which expanded to envision America as potential global empire or as an up-and-coming major historical civilization. This striving for nation building was a relatively common sight in the elite compositions of early Americans, and will be demonstrated especially in the discussions of Brackenridge and Barlow below.

These norms and imperatives of early America did not generate for and of the Civil War, but are traceable back to the Revolutionary period. Friend and Glover make an interesting connection out of the very Declaration of Independence,

> Independence and self-determination reverberated throughout revolutionary political tracts, justifying rebellion and inspiring civilian soldiers to find gendered meaning in war. The Declaration of Independence was, in its own fashion, a call

[65] Berry II (2005, pp. 26-27)

> to manly service, endowing masculinity with civic purpose through duty… fortitude… and commitment…[66]

The point of their volume, of course, is to observe the less perceptible or spectacular aspects of manhood, changes of its requirements around the time, etc., and they point out the glaring fact that most men in the South at the time were excluded from this planting or slave owning class. At the same time, it is acknowledged that "these so-called marginalized men lived within a society dominated physically, politically, and culturally by slave-holding patriarchs. Not surprisingly, their notions of manhood bore the imprint of elite values."[67]

According to David Leverenz, "the vital relation between classic American writers and history… can be located in the broad pressures of class and gender ideology, noting specific links between texts and cultural contexts."[68] In the case of manhood and martial or physical expectations, especially as the definition of manhood for the elite intersects with Classics, I suggest the relation rests more in the former than the latter. In defining a man, of course, as with any definition, semiotics first requires that the thing or the entity *being* something also *be not* something else. In defining manhood or the makings of a "man," if one is to assume, in particular, an *adult* male human being, the definitionally excluded are not adult and not male. However, particularly in eighteenth [and nineteenth] century white America, manly virtue was defined in what a man ought to do, which is ultimately subject to some change when one moves across class

[66] Friend & Glover (2004, p. vii-viii)

[67] Friend & Glover (2004, p. xi) This is a prime example of perhaps the most indirect influence active in American society. Hence, if the elites are intent on adopting certain character traits or normative practices, those who exist in the world they create are at least in part bound to adopt the same, if they aspire to any degree of social or financial movement or maintenance of their own status quo.

[68] Leverenz, David. *Manhood and the American Renaissance*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989 (p.3)

boundaries. Variations appear, then, in what is demanded in work and leisure, which are influenced increasingly, as one moves up in class-based hierarchies, on etiquette and propriety. For especially the upper class, elite (writing/composing) white American, this involved a notably more extensive education, including topics in Classics. In this case, political and cultural context is made a part of the informative apparatus for defining manhood.

Michele Cohen, in concert with multiple other scholars, belabors this gentlemanly, intellectual sophistication and its interplay with physical, martial expectations of men. Between the gentlemanly masculinity, defined in gender identity, according to one's "capacity for gentlemanly social performance,"[69] and the physical masculinity, "based on sport and codes of honor derived from military prowess… hunting, riding, drinking, and 'wenching,'"[70] arguing in favor of the former as the more prominently displayed or defining standard. This was probably correct, or at least has the closer of the two to the typical standard pinned, though Cohen correctly suggests that both were existent and influential.[71] I would go a step further and suggest that they are not quite so separate as has been supposed. If one assumes some merit to Leverenz' theory, as I do, male conceptions of honor and shame are built in large part around avoidance of failure. Especially in a society where the judgement would come, in large, from other men, with whom any man would spend most of his time, the extension of

[69] Cohen, Michele. "Manners Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830." *Journal of British Studies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, December 2012. (p.312) Cf. Philip Carter. *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain, 1660-1800*. London: Pearson, 2001; Caroll Smith Rosenberg. "The Republican Gentleman: The Race to Rhetorical Stability in the New United States." in *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004

[70] Ibid. Cf. Lee Davidoff and Catherine Hall. *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle-Class, 1780-1850*. London: Routledge, 1987

[71] Ibid. pp.312-313

Leverenz' theory into an inclusive focus on rivalry between men is important.[72] Cohen, too, says that the study of masculinity "has brought into focus not only "the structural relationship between men's power over women" but unequal power relations between different categories of men. [73] Leverenz says:

> Male writers… found themselves situated on the edge between the contending classes. Patrician, almost without exception, in their backgrounds and self-expectations, they were ambivalently fascinated and horrified by the aggressive materialism they witnessed in their yeomen and perhaps by the rivalries they felt in themselves as well.[74]

Thus, I suggest that standards of manhood at the time were constructed by an interplay of the two types of standards, the physical and the social. Cohen notes "[p]oliteness, as an *art de plaire,* required self-control and discipline of both body and tongue… as Addison saw it early in the century, men also had to be polished "out of those Manners most natural to them.""[75] The emphasis on temperance of body and tongue, or body and mind, indicates that these two gentlemanly fields of play checked and tempered one-another. Indeed, it is the abandonment, in part, by individuals like Emerson,[76] of the emphasis or the value placed on the physical criteria, which brought about the radical shift of the nineteenth century. The cultural trends of elite white America shifted from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, but before that, and even as it greeted the challenge of the eventually successful, middle-class "*homo novus*," the

[72] Leverenz (1989, p.3-4)
[73] Cohen (2012, p.313)
[74] Leverenz (1989, p.4)
[75] Cohen (2012, p.313)
[76] Leverenz (1989, pp.34-40)

patrician identity of many of its membership was a defining factor. Newcomers to this exclusive group had strong incentive to move up the social hierarchy.

The demand for physical competence was something relatively unchanging until the early-mid-nineteenth century, especially for classically educated upper-class Americans, who knew simultaneously the demand for utility and physical prowess in the world they lived in and in the one from which they borrowed some of their virtues, including martial virtues. The writer, in this case, needed to prove his physical worth as well as mental. Hence all three of the examples below had at least one adventure in the army, even if it was by circumstantial demand (The fact that Key finally joined when the enemy was on the doorstep, when the capital was threatened, speaks to the impetus of defense of family, home, and country upon the standards of manhood at the time). In an elite society, in leisure as well as at work, intellectually as well as physically, there were expectations placed upon the man which define by their being met one's position in the male-to-male hierarchy, intellectually/culturally, and monetarily; likely somewhat more the former than the latter.

Still, As Cohen points out,

> [a] critical aspect of polite gentlemanliness was precisely that it was not homogeneous but, rather, rent with anxieties, in particular the anxiety about effeminacy, because tensions between masculinity and refinement made it difficult for a man to be at once polite and manly.[77]

This is how one finds George Washington, the general in the field, and a paragon of virtue and courage, equally respected next to the likes of Madison, Brackenridge, or

[77] Cohen (2012, p.313). Cf. George Barker-Benfield. *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain.* London: 1992; Carter. *Polite Society*.

Barlow, all of which served relatively short and uneventful spans in the militia or the Continental Army. The demand for cultured gentility, which included that one be relatively well-read, acquainted men by matter of course with classical and chivalric stories and histories, which are saturated with examples of martial virtue. Naturally, one would then pursue the manly pursuits in the field and the public house, but with an understanding that, if he would find himself respected, hyper-masculine traits must be reined in and kept under control. The various standards of manhood in the eighteenth century, then, would each have sat along some acceptable standard deviation from the true middle.[78]

The demand for immersion in Classics by upper-class Americans of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, as demonstrated above, created an immersive encounter also with the classical virtues in the texts the elite were reading. Returning to Reinhold, the inculcation of piety and moral truths were at the heart of the beginnings of Classical learning as an adornment for the educated elite.[79] But utility was still among the highest demands, if not the highest itself. "[T]he tradition of the ideals of civic humanism fostered by the Renaissance; Puritan and Quaker insistence on the utilitarian value of knowledge; and the emphasis on science and the social function of knowledge promoted by Bacon, Locke, and the Royal Society,"[80] demanded that literature read and produced should have some valuable contribution to society. Many of the reading elite, then, displayed a desire to tutor their fellow citizens, by the texts they read, towards the

[78] Interestingly enough, as the eighteenth century gave way to the next, Cohen points out (p.314), politeness broke down or dropped "out of fashion." The masculine national character, she says, was no longer in sync with politeness as a character trait by the mid-century, conveniently coinciding with three notable processes: the literary revolution of the American Renaissance, the Jackson Era, and the waning of Classical Studies as a dominant or imperative field in American Universities. But that is for another paper.

[79] Reinhold (1984, p.27)

[80] Ibid. (p.32)

achievement of a better citizenry and republic, as is demonstrated in some of the examples below. The reader's reception of these virtues, based on their personal and public or communal experiences and sensibilities, was influential in how they expressed themselves in their public and private lives, including the private and public literature they produced, the latter of which is the subject of this discourse.

American literature boasts a wealth of poets, the whole of which corpus might well require for our purposes an entire series on its own. Part of the task of this volume, then, lies in the process of selection for those authors who are included in the following analyses. The final selection of authors takes into account the available texts by authors who were educated to some extent in, and dialogued with, the corpora of Greek and Latin. These, in turn, are those who were wealthy enough to engineer the preservation of their own work, or talented enough to attract the attention of the general public or a wealthy patron who ensured their survival, or both. Therefore, this volume will include some of those authors who were influential at the time, those who were able to see their work frequently published, and those who were able to secure patronage for their literary endeavors. These, then, are members of the early American elite class, who had the ambition, the time, and/or the money to get their work out and into broad-reaching publication. All of those selected below, being a part of the upper class as they were, had an education in Classics which influenced their poetry to a considerable extent, which they dealt with, sometimes uniquely, and sometimes according to the trending of the elite.

Hugh Henry Brackenridge is a difficult man to track down these days, as his poetry is concerned, but once produced what is considered some of the best literary work

before the time of Emerson.[81] His time later in life spent as a judge tends to overshadow his poetic work, as well as his larger prose collection, but Brackenridge is worth revisiting, if only to gift the man the broader critical presence he deserves, compared to the dearth of information on him at present. His poetry itself, as this project is concerned, is highly applicable to the work at hand, being by design heroic and propagandic, and his collaboration with Philip Freneau, *The Rising Glory of America*, was one of the most influential compositions of its time. This first poetic composition was followed up by a few others before Brackenridge opted to pursue prose composition in main. Of these, we will particularly discuss the verse tragedies *The Battle of Bunkers Hill*, and *The Death of General Montgomery*, which Brackenridge wrote for student performances while he was still a schoolmaster. His composition in cooperation with Freneau of *The Rising Glory of America* was a collaboration in effort to spur not only American political (and possibly military) sentiments at the height of tension between the colonies and Great Britain prior to the American Revolution, but American cultural pursuits, an attempt "to argue for a growing, almost millennial, American Greatness, but also to demonstrate the potential for American literature, which, with a few notable exceptions, was not widely read in Europe, and even less respected.[82]

Joel Barlow, a man of American colleges (Dartmouth and Yale), who joined the continental army during a break from school, had a significant, if short-lived impact on the literary world of his time. His work as a diplomat mirrored this, though it was considerably more productive. He produced a verse composition on peace, which he

[81] Marder, Daniel. *A Hugh Henry Brackenridge Reader* 1770-1815. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970 (p.6)

[82] Simon, Edward. "Joel Barlow's Miltonic Epic and Western Directional Poetics." *Milton Studies*, Vol.58, pp.87-102, University Park: Penn State University Press, 2017 (p.89)

delivered as a commencement address for Yale College. His primary work of poetry is found in the *Columbiad* or its predecessor *Vision of Columbus*, which germinated from an original plan for an epic on Cyrus the Great, the concept of which he was beaten to.[83] While the epic works, particularly the *Columbiad*, which was composed in spite of desperate pleas from Thomas Jefferson and James Madison,[84] made little aesthetic impression on the contemporary community, paling to the likes of Milton, Virgil, and Homer, Barlow still found some praise for his philosophical and moral commentary therein, the sort of work for which he seems to have been better suited. Barlow spent plenty of time as an ambassador in France and was for some time rather engrossed in international affairs. He was better known as a political theorist, if his opinions had the tendency to reach for the utopian, and he was a major proponent of the *bona fides* of republicanism.[85] Barlow's poetry may not have been the most memorable. His friendship with the other high-class folk of the time, particularly with membership of the Founders, saw his compositions published respectably. His advocacy for republicanism and his desire to play a role in the fashioning of a new, uniquely American, literary tradition,[86] makes him important for this volume.

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[83] Woodress, James. *A Yankee's Odyssey: The Life of Jowl Barlow*. New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1958 (pp.49-51). Buel (2011, 29-34)

[84] For the composition of a comprehensive prose history of the United States. Woodress (1958, 245) "In doing so, he missed a chance that comes to few men. Jefferson and Madison were urging him to write the history and were offering the resources of government archives and their own files. They also were ready with their memories and interpretations of men and events."

Buel, (1985, 261, 290) "Everyone, from Thomas Jefferson to Barlow's More recent biographers have lamented that Barlow preferred redoing his epic to writing a prose history of the American Revolution."

[85] Buel (1985, 4) "Barlow won a reputation on [two] continents for trumpeting the redemptive promise of representative republicanism." His vision would have seen the nations of the world united in a singular republican body. We can see today (as he surely saw) the difficulty of achieving this.

[86] Buel (1985, 29) Beside Freneau and Brackenridge, and followed by the likes of Longfellow and Emerson. The desires for a new poetic tradition attest to the influence of cultural desire and aporia on early Americans.

Francis Scott Key must be included in such a volume as this, if only for his composition which would become the national anthem of the United States of America. In truth, the rest of his poetry is, by and large, personal and/or unpublished, but there are other compositions we can examine beside the originally unwitting giant of American poetry. Key was quite the patriot when properly provoked. Though originally opposed to the War of 1812, when the British arrived practically on his doorstep, threatening his community, his family, himself, and his nation's capital, Key was quick to enlist, though it seems he saw little of combat.[87] He was apparently struck by a quotation supplied to him by John Randolph of Roanoke, attributed to Sallust: *Egregia virtus paucorum*, finding it "admirably suited for these times; and that if this 'egregia virtus' can be found among even a few of our politicians, who can be pressed and kept in the public service, we may be safe."[88] "The Defence of Fort M'Henry," which would become "The Star-Spangled Banner," rose out of a tradition which adapted dozens of lyrics to the original "To Anacreon in Heaven." Key's personal acquaintance with the song and/or its descendants Weybright has discussed in some detail.[89] Fresher in mind was likely Thomas Paine's adaptation "Adams and Liberty," which had been highly popular.[90]

Key, among American poets, has been surprisingly difficult to pin down critical information for. Given a relatively short span of time, the best possible effort has been made to provide a good general overview of his character beside analysis of his poetry relative to his own life and experiences. Today, most searches for Francis Scott Key the poet are choked out by material referring to Francis Scott *Key* Fitzgerald, the novelist.

[87] Weybright, Victor. *Spangled Banner: The Story of Francis Scott Key*. New York: Farrar & Rinehart Inc. 1935 (pp. 57, 68-69, 78)

[88] Weybright (1935, 74-75)

[89] (1935, 142-47)

[90] Ibid.

The last bit of information the reader should be left with relative to the dearth of information available on Francis Scott Key, then should be this fitting entry from the entry in the *Bibliographic Society of America*: "In preparing our entry for "The Star Spangled Banner" it became surprisingly apparent that many of the bibliographical dicta regarding it were based on flimsy evidence."[91]

[91] Blanck, Jacob. "The Star Spangled Banner." *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, Vol.60, No.2, pp.176-184, Chicago: University of Chicago Press on behalf of the Bibliographical Society of America, Second Quarter, 1966 (p.176)

CHAPTER 2

BRACKENRIDGE: SCHOOLMASTER, CHAPLAIN, AND POLITICIAN

The focus in the life and works of Brackenridge for this dissertation is in his early, "Rising Glory" phase. This is important to distinguish. This contains products of the works of Brackenridge, as is specified by Marder in description of his mid to late life work, which contain the author's thoughts and ambitions at their most idealistic.[92] Hence his attempts made at lofty verse tragedies and great fervor for the Classical-American experiment of the Revolutionary elite. Brackenridge's work at this time was done while he was still convinced that his brief participation as a chaplain in the Continental Army nevertheless qualified him relatively closely with other members of the elite who served in official and combat roles. Even at this time, however, the reality of his comparable "non-participation" must have weighed on his mind, as he still felt the need to justify himself to the soldiers he left in the field when he ran off chasing the foundation of the short-lived *United States Magazine.*[93] It was a distinct lacking which arguably lent itself to his movement to Pittsburgh from Philadelphia, where the previous giants were too large for him to rise above. His striving to overcome this lack might have been the major factor in his life which kept him from the success he desired in the frontier.

In this way, Brackenridge may most epitomize among his peers the long crisis of American identity, first in finding one's self as it exists outside the old European world,

[92] Marder (1970, p.ix)
[93] Marder (1970, p.8)

second in finding one's place among the membership of the new American. This aspect of Brackenridge's life holds a certain significance for me, being, literally, a "long-hair" myself; having lived my entire life in a United States at war (or with federal troops in combat overseas), but never participated. The greater Irony is not unknown, that I compose this having earned my Bachelor's degree from Texas A&M. Of course, it was in fact during my undergraduate years, encountering the Greek and Roman historians, that the gravity of my grandfather's, my uncles', and my great uncle's military experiences came to roost in my conscience, shortly before concerns over increasingly adversarial interactions between the United States and Russia began to creep into the public mind; and I realized, as a fledgling scholar and a lifelong athlete, that the arrogant and youthful resolve, or claim to resolve, towards conflicts and particular methods of their resolution, were quite meaningless. Although the willingness and the ability to participate under necessity is certain, the knowledge, even tangential, of the actual consequences of participation convinced me that I would certainly prefer it not, and increasingly appreciate those who have "answered the call." This acknowledgement is in large part a factor in the production of work on martial poetry and identity by a *man* who has never seen the face of combat or agonistic engagements outside of a football field, with which conundrum it seems Brackenridge was also preoccupied: even in the modern age (perhaps post-modern?), wherein the definition of manhood is still undergoing change, far and away from the assumptions of the eighteenth century, among the conscientious (there may be a pun in the word), there is an underlying concern about lack or slack in non-participation, which even in acknowledgement and reasonable contemplation compels one to attempt some contribution. Brackenridge went the way of the Chaplain,

and then of the producer or the patron of national and patriotic literature and artistic innovation.

For Brackenridge, this American identity crisis manifested itself in a compulsion to educate the public toward a fusion of Classical and European ideals with the land, the new inhabitants, and burgeoning republican nation of the Americas. This compulsion drove Brackenridge to appropriate considerable quantities of Classical and Biblical content into his compositions, where he pinned them onto those whom he styled the avatars of each persona, virtue, and vice. These attempts to engender his favorite qualities especially into the youth of the colonies and the nation did not seem in the end to have much effect, determined as they were. Even when Brackenridge attempted his magazine publication, also aimed at educational material which would uplift the intellect of the masses, his endeavors saw little success. By the end of his career, his frustration with these failures and with the public which, by its apathy towards them, participated in the undesirable outcomes saw him stranded in appointed positions, with his most memorable work being an embittered satirization of American society and culture.

He was quite intent on the establishment of a uniquely American literature, especially to the end of demonstrating competence in absence of the British and British resources. Hence his justification to the soldiers: "There are two ways… in which a man can contribute to the defense of his country, by the tongue to speak or by the hand to act… The talent of speech is mine, and that alone is my province."[94] The magazine he went to establish in this "province" lasted just a year before foundering. Nevertheless, Brackenridge considered it his calling to educate the American public in the arts which he

[94] Leary, Lewis ed. *Modern Chivalry*. New Haven: University and College Press, 1965 (pp.9-10);

thought would make their culture elite, on par with those he grew up knowing and wished Americans would surpass in Europe. As stated above, Brackenridge was one of multiple elite members of early American society who were gravely concerned with the lack of publicity and respect which American literature (that which was in existence at the time) had garnered to date.

The periodical *United States Magazine* was intended to educate the reader, "aimed particularly at the mechanic of the city or the husbandman who ploughs his farm by the river [and who] has it in his power to become one day the first magistrate of his respective commonwealth or to fill a seat in the Continental Congress.""[95] Brackenridge wanted to see that the American frontier experiments "flowered according to agrarianism."[96] The elite ideal of the American Cincinnatus was what Brackenridge, like many of his contemporaries had for the American citizen, though he was in fact opposed to the Order of the Cincinnati.[97] The Order and its heavily patrician (therefore hereditary) organization were at odds with the republican principles of Brackenridge and many of the Founding Fathers. Nevertheless, he never advocated against it, because, he thought, though it would do little good, it could do no harm.

The frontier's confounding of his efforts led to much of the cynicism in his late career. Unfortunately for Brackenridge, it seems American farmer had developed his own discipline, which did not necessarily include the Agrarianism one finds in the ideals of

[95] Marder (1970, pp.8-9)

[96] Sanderson, James. "Agrarianism in Hugh Henry Brackenridge's Articles for the Pittsburgh Gazette." *Early American Literature*, Vol.22, No.3, pp.306-319, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987 (p.306)

[97] Van Domelen, John E. "Hugh Henry Brackenridge and the Order of the Cincinnati." *Western Pennsylvania History*, pp.47-53 Pittsburgh: Heinz History Center, 1964 (pp.51-53)

the classical tradition.[98] Many of Brackenridge's attempts to similarly educate his fellow citizens to himself ended underwhelmingly, or disastrously. The political enemies he made in the process eventually saw to it that he was hard-pressed and eventually never gained another elected office.[99]

Even so, he still made his efforts to influence the trajectory of American sensibilities, especially on the frontier in his later life. His earlier endeavors, before he generally abandoned poetry and drama as a productive or profitable pursuit, produced some notable compositions, which will be discussed below. His lack of substantial presence in the more famed pursuits of the Revolution, however, may have contributed to his lack of literary success. Others, like Barlow, who were better connected and consequently more renowned, managed to secure the patronage of characters like Washington, if only to humor them in their efforts.

Brackenridge's Scottish birth makes it particularly notable that he composed drama at all, and should encourage one to think that much more of his attempts, which were not above criticism, but certainly not beneath praise. Virginia Hajek covers in introduction elements of the life of the writer and politician which were of particular import to his dramatic endeavors. The Scotts, she notes,

> had curbed the drama by ecclesiastical and governmental censure from the Reformation until quite late in the eighteenth century. The north Britons who considered the theater Satanic, curtailed drama in their country to the extent that no national drama has ever flourished. Because this negativistic attitude toward

[98] Sanderson (1987, p.317)
[99] For more information, see Marder (1970)

the stage existed for three hundred years, the Scottish immigrants had a heritage of hatred for the theater, which they transported to the New World.[100]

But, as Brackenridge has demonstrated, this was not enough of a deterrent for members of the Scottish community in America that they were completely absent from the dramatic literary community.

Brackenridge began his literary endeavors early in life, after his family emigrated from Scotland to the colonies. He was an avid and quick acquirer of literary knowledge, and he supported himself by teaching grammar school classes during his years at Princeton. There he became acquainted and/or friendly with other future politicians and men of letters in his generation, including James Madison and Philip Freneau. With these classmates he was educated in a curriculum "absorbed with ideals of Greek democracy, particularly those of Thucydides, and with the satirical habits of Lucian."[101] Based on his literary works alone, we know that he was also exposed to Herodotus, Homer, Solon, Aeschylus, and Virgil. As a man intent, for at least some time, on entering the ministry, and given the importance to the generally Christian public, he would have had experience with the Greek New Testament. He was sent to the Slate Ridge School "where a Presbyterian divine gave the lad a rigourous grounding in the classics."[102] Given his penchant for literary discovery, for oratory,[103] and his education at Princeton, it is safe to assume he was acquainted with the works of at least a few of Cicero, Demosthenes, Plato,

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[100] Hajek, Virginia A. "The Dramatic Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge." *Dissertations*, 1186, Chicago: Loyola eCommons, 1971, https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/1186?utm_source=ecommons.luc.edu%2Fluc_diss%2F1186&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages, Accessed 04/22/2023 (pp.3-4)

[101] Marder (1970, p.7)

[102] Hajek, (1971, p.8)

[103] Marder (1970, pp.7-8); Hajek (1971, pp.135-136)

Caesar, Sallust, Livy, Horace, Terence, Xenophon, Sophocles, and Euripides, all of which were common to the elite libraries of early America.[104] His love for oratory in particular would predispose one to an assumption about Cicero and/or Demosthenes. One of his own publications in the January 1779 issue of *United States Magazine* styled itself "A letter to the Poets, Philosophers, Orators, Statesmen, and Heroes of Antiquity," encouraging them to abandon Britain and Europe for a new domain in America.[105] Together with Freneau, he would compose and deliver *The Rising Glory of America* at the 1771 commencement ceremony, a prophetic poem with an ambitious prediction for what were then the colonies.[106]

The prerevolutionary *Rising Glory of America* "attempted to argue for a growing, almost millennial, American greatness, but also to demonstrate the potential for American literature, which, with a few notable exceptions, was not widely read in Europe, and even less respected."[107] The poem, written like an epic (for its *relative* brevity I call it "pseudo-epic"), following the tradition of Virgil and Milton, especially in its prophetic tones, looking forward to the aggrandizement of the American civilization, similar to the vision of Columbus in Barlow's *Columbiad* (or in his earlier *Vision of Columbus*), contains multiple allusions to the ancient world. The renowned empires of the ancient Mediterranean, Assyria, Macedon, and Rome, notably, emerge early. The grand cities Palmyra, Ecbatan, Babylon, Chaldea, and Nineveh also make appearances, providing the audience with early and lofty models to be surpassed or perfected by the

[104] Reinhold (1984, p.28); Shalev (2009, pp.10-11); Winterer (2001, pp.32-35)
[105] Reinhold (1984, p.95, n.5)
[106] Leary (1965, p.8); Marder (1970, pp.6-8)
[107] Simon, Edward. "Joel Barlow's Miltonic Epic and Western Directional Poetics." *Milton Studies*, Vol.58, pp.87-102, University Park: Penn State University Press, 2017 (p.89)

republic to come in the New World. The Muses also make their appearance, shifting their home to American mountain ranges.

The Rising Glory of America begins, as some other epic or pseudo-epic poems of contemporary Americans (see Barlow, below), with the discovery by Columbus and a description of the "savage" early inhabitants of the Americas, before moving on to the arrival and the affairs of the first British colonists. This, after the declaration of purpose, to narrate the "rising glory" of America, or the "western world," which is destined to surpass the old.

A Theme more new, tho' not less noble, claims

Our ev'ry thought on this auspicious day;

The rising glory of this western world,

Where now the dawning light of science spreads

Her orient ray, and wakes the muse's song;

Where freedom holds her sacred banner high,

And commerce rolls her golden tides profuse

Of elegance and ev'ry joy of life.[108]

What follows is a fairly typical narrative, with descriptions of the Native Americans of North and South America, some of which imagery borders on the satanic,

[108] Brackenridge, Hugh Henry. *The Rising Glory of America.* Philadelphia: Joseph Cruckshank, 1772: Text Creation Partnership, https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=evans;idno=N09743.0001.001, Accessed April 13, 2023 (p.4)

some which Plato would marvel at; and the conquest first by the Spanish of these, rendered in some places with equal brutality to that which was attributed to the indigenous nations of North America, keeping with the attitude dismissive or censorious of the Old World. The introduction of the colonists puts before the audience a people wronged and in search of a free and peaceful life, opposed to the conquests of Cortez or "Edward's and Henry's thunderbolts of war."[109] It paints the land untilled and uninhabited, until the sudden appearance of "fierce Indian tribes / with deadly malice armed and black design" who "murder'd half the hapless colonies."[110] Of course, the same "hapless colonies," seven lines later, nobly fought and died (ex. Wolfe) for the British cause during the French and Indian War. Here begin the lavish praises which will rise up over the colonists, and the calls to action, even death.

> What Heart but mourns the untimely fate of Wolf[sic],
>
> Who dying conquer'd, or what breast but beats
>
> To share a fate like his, and die like him?
>
> ACASTO: And he [Braddock] demands our lay who bravely fell
>
> By Monangahela and the Ohio's stream.[111]

Eugenio bids Acasto leave the dead to lie, and the next many lines extoll the many and quick achievements of the British colonists, which, they say, outstrip already the cities and the nations of Europe and the old world. Their ancient heroes will be reborn or

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[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid. (p.11)
[111] Ibid. (p.12)

surpassed in the new world, including Alexander and Pompey though Caesar, notably is skipped over.[112] The omission of Caesar in a poem which bears resemblance to Virgil's vision of Aeneas is notable, but not an unpredictable or discouraging thing for the time. Caesar was taken to be a tyrant and the ruin of the republic. Hence his rival Pompey is given pride of place in *The Rising Glory of America,* while Caesar, just as every modern American presidential candidate/elect, is eventually given the "Rubicon Award" for his ambitions. Ultimately, as Aeneas is shown a vision of the future of Rome, so Brackenridge and Freneau show to their audience their prediction of the future of America. Nor does the title of the poem seem haphazardly contrived. Virgil's Anchises expressly states:

> Now come, and that which will follow Dardanian progeny,
>
> The glory, what descendants remain among the Italian people,
>
> Illustrious spirits to walk on in our name,
>
> I shall disclose in words, and I will show you your own fate.[113]

Brackenridge's poem discloses its own prophecies, economical, political, and social. Where the political future of America was concerned, *The Rising Glory* tends to present the American progeny in similar terms to its classical predecessor:

> Eugenio: Say shall we ask what empires yet must rise
>
> What kingdoms, pow'rs and states where now are seen

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[112] Ibid. (p.21)
[113] Virg.A.6.756-759

But deary wastes and awful solitude...

Acasto: “I see, I see

A thousand kingdoms rais’d, cities and men

Num’rous as sand upon the ocean shore...

Nations shall grow and states not less in fame

Than Greece and Rome of old: we too shall boast

Our Alexanders, Pompeys, heroes, kings

That in the womb of time yet dormant lye

Waiting the joyful hour for life and light.

O snatch us hence, ye muses! To those days...[114]

The major difference between the prophecies of Virgil’s and Brackenridge’s works lies in the temporal aspect of the prophecy itself: Virgil’s vision is generally confined to the limits of the deeds of Augustus, while Brackenridge, temporally unlimited by the egotisms of an absolute monarch (short of treason), was able to project into the future. Nearing the end of the commencement presentation, Leander sings the praises of the American patriot in positive comparison with the battle dead of Athens and Rome. Though falling before the onset of the Revolutionary War, it suggests an early fervor for confrontation in response to “our injur’d rights.”[115] This is increasingly potent as one

[114] Brackenridge (1772, p.20-21)
[115] Ibid. (p.23)

goes through the list of ill-received British colonial policies in the six preceding years, including the Stamp Act, the Townshend Acts, and, just a year earlier, the Boston Massacre. In continuation of the strain of more martial virtues, intersecting with literature, Acasto heralds the coming in the arts, accompanying science, of an American Homer (and a Milton) who will immortalize heroic action "in the fields of fame."[116] Brackenridge's provocative verse dramas which followed this composition in relatively short time testify to just how eager he was in particular for the confrontation, and to promote it himself. He went out of his way to distance the combatants, cousins and countrymen separated by an ocean, as far as possible from one another, morally as well as physically, by charging their actions with legendary and divine attributes. Indeed, while he stopped short in *The Rising Glory* of blatant treason, he did use the vision of the poetic address to predict the rising of kingdoms and states in America. It would be easy to deflect any misgivings about this to reference those lands outside of British sovereignty, but the force which lay behind it should have remained. Based on the circumstances in which Brackenridge's verse drama takes place, it did.

The significance of the speech is remarkable, to say the least. Fred Lewis Pattee comments to the effect that *The Rising Glory of America* was

> the first real poem that America ever made – the first real poem that was impelled hot from a man's soul. It is more than this, it is the first fruit of a new influence in the world of letters – the first literary product of that mighty force which was to

[116] Ibid. (p.24)

> set in motion the American and French Revolutions, with all that they mean in human history.[117]

This does of course ignore certain other early works like Wheatley and Bradstreet, which is worth noting.[118] However, the influence of the poem as it contributed to the American revolution appears to be accurate. Pattee, alongside a provision of the utmost praise, considers Brackenridge's commencement poem to be a catalyst of the American Revolution and the French. It was, indeed, a spur to the graduating class, the young successors of the American tradition, and Brackenridge's contemporaries, to outpace and distance themselves from the Old World; and the frequent repetition of American names accompanying the more preferable lofty appellations (again, note the omission of Caesar) of the ancient archetypal heroes and great men, and their martyrdom in opposition to the negative tones surrounding European gentry and royalty, accompanied by the notation of "injured rights" is a call to action, which did occur just a few years later. Hajek too calls it evocative, saying "*The Rising Glory of America* is as much prophecy as history."[119] The futuristic projections of the convocation poem are, after all, remarkable in their temporal context, particularly in thinly veiled threats against violators of colonial rights

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[117] Pattee, Fred Lewis. ed. *The Poems of Philip Freneau*. Vol.1, Princeton: Princeton Historical Association, 1902 (pp. cii-ciii)

[118] As has been said above, the attribution of worth to the author or the composer of literature in the eighteenth century was by a picky and exclusive process. Even the acknowledgement of Phillis Wheatley came only after the work was vouched for and approved by a long list of "leading men" of the time. Wheatley's poetry itself merits a close and careful examination in a similar strain to this, considering her unique positionality as a poet, and the use her poetry saw in her time, not by her, but by others like Washington.

[119] Hajek (1971, p.15)

and the negation of all European and Mediterranean powers before, from Egypt to Greece, to Rome, to Britain.[120] There will be

> No more, of Britain and her kings renown'd
>
> Edward's and Henry's thunderbolts of war;
>
> Her chiefs victorious o'er her Gallic foe;
>
> Illustrious senators, immortal bards,
>
> And wise philosopher, of these no more.[121]

Nevertheless, Brackenridge, who was, after all, still a colonist of British America, had to acknowledge the merits he found in the processes of British settlement in America. "He contrasted the peace the English had achieved by settling the continent as farmers rather than conquerors. This romantic notion which persisted in a nation's ever seeking the unspoiled has led to the quest of new frontiers."[122] The focus on the agrarian settlement as opposed to the conquering (he quite ignores the many violent encounters the English colonists had with multiple Native American nations) is in line with the agrarian idealism Sanderson finds in Brackenridge's *Pittsburgh Gazette*, and with the classical virtues which many elite colonists and United States citizens, Jefferson, Washington, etc. had adopted, which praised, along with manly virtue and valor, agrarian retreats and lifestyles. There is also an element of Brackenridge's personal virtues one may find elsewhere in the *Rising Glory of America*, in the eulogy for General Braddock

[120] Ibid. (p.19)
[121] Brackenridge (pp.3-4)
[122] Hajek (1971, p.23)

and his slain men at Fort Duquesne, in the declaration of the bravery of the Virginians present, and of Braddock and even the British soldiers, who fought in the face of a foe who "bellowed" and lay in ambush. The combination of the negative sentiments surrounding the "skulking" Native Americans, who are narrated fighting dishonorably and cowardly from the shadows, and the noble and brave Virginians and British gives us a rather classical image of the Achillean warrior, who wants to meet his enemy face-to-face, and of a warrior who endures battle in silence, or at least maintaining some gentlemanly poise rather than whooping and shouting.[123]

"Viewed as a single effort," Hajek says,

> *The Rising Glory of America* represents an embryonic American drama through the assorted views of the past, present, and future… in this work, the Rising Empire Ideal is first articulated. By its encouragement to think of America as not British, by its national address, by its projection of the national past beyond the migration of the seventeenth century, *The Rising Glory of America* inaugurates a period of national literary consciousness.[124]

The pseudo epic as a whole is bent on raising up America and Americans to meet and surpass the people and nations of Europe, populated here and there with the virtues which Brackenridge developed during his school years, and with rather strong anti-British overtones. That Brackenridge stands at the forefront of a burgeoning colonial American literary tradition and national consciousness is considerable in the face of those classical authors we know he had access to, particularly Aeschylus. *Persians*, in

[123] Brackenridge (1772, p.12)
[124] Hajek 1971 (pp.34-35)

particular, was in print at the time since the 16th-17th century.[125] As will be reiterated below, American scholars had been reading and translating the work of Aeschylus themselves, with students and faculty of Princeton producing a translation of *Seven* by 1826.[126] Aeschylus himself is among the best (and only) surviving examples of poetic reception in his own time, providing in tragic form the commentary which raises up his own people over the *barbaroi* while simultaneously inviting consideration and pity for the enemy. *Persians* represents an early pseudo-nationalistic literary work, extolling the virtues of the Greeks through the eyes of the Persians. As will be discussed below, Brackenridge takes a similar approach in his own work, even paying respect to the ancient playwright. Brackenridge hoped, in his early days, to see himself like the Greek, among the poetic *avant garde* of the age.

And so, Brackenridge enters the American poetic and dramatic scene a fiery preacher and propagandist, who, as this and his later works display, sought to instill in his peers and in the future generations of Americans the ideals of manhood and martial valor which he found desirable in the classics and in the culture of the century he found himself in: the examples of manhood displayed in the "best" of ancient and early modern leadership and heroism, which markers of virtue and refinement he thought would catapult America to its rightful place ahead of Europe.

Brackenridge spent the next few years teaching, before the Revolutionary War began, when he penned his verse tragedies for students' performances, *The Battle of*

[125] Ex. MS Nn3.17, from the collection of Richard Mead, acquired some time between 1673 and 1722, which can be accessed in the Cambridge Library's digital database: https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-NN-00003-00017/11

[126] Winterer (2002, p.56)

Bunkers Hill (1776) and *The Death of General Montgomery* (1777), and spent a short time as a chaplain in Washington's army in 1777.[127] These tragedies made great efforts to "[wring] a moral victory out of the defeat, and… [scream] his outrage at British atrocities in the siege of Quebec."[128] His tragedies are peculiar in the way they depart from tragic norms as they were known to the literary circles of the time, since the Greeks. Rather than display a typical tragic hero (especially as the classical tragic hero is known), Brackenridge's dramata present the audience with a far more mortal hero than one would expect of a classic tragedy; Brackenridge's hero is one who balances the pulls of his every-day life with his duties to *patriae*.[129]

The Battle of Bunker Hill is retold in the eponymous play, from the perspective of the officers on either side. The play indulged liberally in Greek and Roman referents. In the comparisons of Americans to Achilles, avenging Patroclus (Warren), and Leonidas' warriors at the battle of Thermopylae, Brackenridge becomes one of many to depict the British, their armies and their leadership, as one of the archetypal adversaries of the classical tradition, and one of the first to raise members of the American Generalship into a place of martyrdom.

His second play, *The Death of General Montgomery*, has seen less attention and publicity. It was intended, as was the first, strictly as a school piece.

> It is intended for the private entertainment of Gentlemen of taste, and martial enterprise, but by no means for the exhibition of the stage. The subject is not love

[127] He returned to Philadelphia as soon as the British evacuated in 1778.
[128] Marder (1970, p.8)
[129] Hajek (1971, p.115)

> but valour. I meddle not with any of the effeminating passions, but consecrate my muse to the great themes of patriotic virtue, bravery and heroism.[130]

The first edition by which the play was performed could have been refined and republished in a slightly more finessed form than the original Brackenridge produced, but it is, per Brackenridge,

> seasonable. An oration, eulogium, or production of any kind, in honour of our brave countrymen who have fallen, or of those who do yet contend in the glorious cause of freedom, is likely to do greater good and will be more acceptable at present, than hereafter when the foe is entirely repulsed and the danger over.[131]

The work, as stated above was intended to be refined and republished when proper time presented itself. Based on the scarcity of this presence in the publishing world, it does not appear Brackenridge ever found that time. The admission of the plays' purpose for, and audience of, "tasteful Gentlemen" does little to decrease the value of the dramata written and enacted. The significance of these plays' being written by Brackenridge for the performance of students of the academy, considering that fact, must not be downplayed. It is directly in line with Brackenridge's great endeavor, which he considered important enough that it merited his quitting service in the Continental Army (so far as he told his soldiers and himself), that is, the education of the American people.

It is a prime example of Shields' fusion of classical and biblical literature and ideals in the attempt to create a unique American literature and culture, and by nature requires those performing it to acquaint themselves with those very ideals as they are

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[130] Brackenridge, Hugh Henry. *The Death of General Montgomery*. Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1777: Text Creation Partnership, https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=evans;idno=N12088.0001.001, Accessed April 09, 2023 (pp.4-5) In the address from "The Author to the Public,"

[131] Ibid.

applied over and again to American personae. Brackenridge's students must have been familiar, then, with not just the characters and the events of the plays he produced, in the present, but with the characters and the events of the ancient world which were so often referenced as anecdotal examples beside those of the eighteenth century. *The Death of General Montgomery*'s value as a propaganda piece, then, is redoubled, as it is not only "seasonable," as the author says, and "representative of the spirit of the times,"[132] swiftly following and turning the defeat in Quebec into a moral victory and a rallying call for Americans who might have been discouraged by it, but doing so while also piling on an educative effect for the youthful minds which memorized and performed it.

They are both written strictly for the moment, with "attention to the classic unities of time, place, and action."[133] The chief design, in the first, was to inspire martial fervor and confidence in the American audience. *The Battle of Bunkers-Hill* came in the wake of a strategically insignificant defeat, but one which required finesse to navigate for the colonists turned revolutionaries/nation builders. Brackenridge was keen to take advantage of this opportunity. Not only is it filled with admissions by British officers of past and present American courage and valor, but with moral judgements of the battle and the conflict as a whole, meant to instill moral indignance, fuel for the vigor of the cause against the reproachable enemy.

The play is a rhetorical exercise. It is a utilitarian presentation meant to inculcate patriotism and to nurture declamation. Brackenridge encourages martial ardor in those

[132] Hajek (p.285)

[133] Tyler, Moses Coit. *The Literary History of the American Revolution* 1763-1783 Vol. 2. New York: Facsimile Library, Inc., 1941, 1897 (p.210)

who would be free, and promises immortality to those who fight.[134] He places American valor in the mouths of the British Generalship, that "the Americans possess fierce calor because they are fighting for their ideals."[135]

General Howe's first speech in Act 2 scene 1 depicts the American colonist and soldier as

> A people brave,
> Who never yet, of luxury or soft
> Delights, effeminate, and false, have tasted.
> ……..
> Oft have I heard their valour published:
> Their perseverance, and untamable,
> Fierce mind, when late they fought with us and drove,
> The French encroaching on their settlements,
> Back to their frozen lakes. Or when with us
> On Cape Breton, they stormed Louisberg.
> With us in Canada, they took Quebec;
> And at Havanna, these New-England Men,
> Led on by Putnam, acted gallantly[136]

The primary motivation here is in the acknowledgement of the past efforts of Americans to the effect of morally buttressing their current actions. It not only rebuilds

[134] Hajek (1971, p.51)
[135] Ibid. (p.52)
[136] Brackenridge (1776, 2.1). Owing to the great dearth of critical representation Brackenridge had experienced, most of the source material here must be taken from online collections.

the confidence of previously humbled or shaken colonials at war, but it reminds the audience of the previous services performed by colonials for the British cause, which they claim have been forgotten, or in this case ignored. Thus it justifies, practically and morally, the war effort. The speech also bears a striking resemblance to the content of Aeschylus' *Persians*, which, as discussed above, placed the glories of the Greeks in the mouths of Persians who, already stricken by divine retribution, lament the hubristic behavior of their leader before the gods. Darius, given answer to his question, "Which one of my sons led an army there?" that it was "impetuous Xerxes," that Xerxes "the wretched thing, attempted this folly,"[137] proceeds to lament that his son must have been afflicted with some mental illness,[138] that he would attempt to rise up and tame divine rivers and seas, drawing the wrath of the gods. Atossa posits instead that "This he taught himself consorting with the wicked... hearing so much reproach from wicked men."[139] The same sort of illness of the soul or of the mind, the divine outrage, and the folly of the ill-conceived expedition may have been an aim of Brackenridge in *Bunkers-Hill,* wherein Generals Gage, Burgoyne, and Howe debate the righteousness of their cause and the revolutionaries':

> Gage: Oh, sweet tranquility, and peace of soul,
>
> That in the bosom of the cottager,
>
> Tak'st up thy residence – cannot the beams,
>
> Of royal sunshine, call thee to my breast?
>
> ... Why then, ye Gods,

[137] Aesch. Pers. 717-719

[138] Ibid. 750-751. The translation of this is rather variable, since the Greek used is φρενῶν, which indicates heart/mind/soul.

[139] Ibid. 757

This inward gnawing, and remorse of thought,

For perfidy, and breach of promises!

... Or is it guilt,

That plays the coward, with my trembling heart,

And cools the blood, with frightful images.

O guilt, the blackness, hovers on the mind...

Burgoyne: The rebel foe, grown yet more insolent,

By that small loss, or rout, at Lexington,

Prevent our purpose and the night by-past,

Have push'd intrenchments, and some flimsy works,

With rude achievement...

Yet ev'ry hour we languish in delay,

Inspires fresh hope, and fills their pig'my souls,

With thoughts of holding it...

Howe: To your alarm posts, officers; come, gallant souls,

Let's out, and drive them from that eminence,

On which the foe, doth earth himself.

I relish not, such haughty neighborhood...

Yes, strew the hill, with death, and carcasses,

And offer up, this band, a hecatomb,

To *Britain's*[sic] glory, and the cause of kings.

Exeunt Burgoyne and Howe

Gage [*solus*]: May Heaven protect us, from their rage, I say,

When but a boy, I deam'd of death in bed,

And ever since that time, I hated things

Which put him, like a pair of spectacles,

Before my eyes...

Eternity, is like a winding sheet -

The seven commandments like – I think there's seven -

I scratch my head – but yet in vain I scratch -

Oh Bute, and Dartmouth, knew ye what I feel,

You sure would pity and old drinking man,

That has more heart-ake, than philosophy.[140]

The least haughty, or the least determined (Howe might have been the most upright) of the generals displayed happens, unfortunately for the British, to be that with the least willpower or initiative, who can sense the wrong of the cause, but not articulate it to sway the minds of the other two, which are overcome with "Britain's glory, and the cause of kings."

The outcome of the events was known to the actors and the audience, but the hope was that the broader outcome following, for the entire war, would be different, and more fitting to the righteousness revolutionary Americans saw in their own cause, opposed to that of the British, as it happened for the Greeks Brackenridge knew from Marathon, Thermopylae, Salamis, and Plataea. The play itself, it was argued, harnessed quite closely the method and manner of ancient Greek dramata, which Brackenridge was aware of. The Abbé Robin suggested:

[140] Brackenridge (1776, Act 4 Scene 1)

> ... their pupils often act tragedies, the subject of which is generally taken from their national events, such as the battle of Bunkers-Hill, the burning of Charlestown, the Death of General Montgomery, the capture of Burgoyne, the treason of Arnold, and the Fall of British Tyranny. You will easily conclude, that in such a new nation as this, these pieces must fall infinitely short of that perfection to which our European literary productions of this time are wrought up; but still, they have a greater effect upon the mind than the best of ours would have among them, because those manners and customs are delineated, which are peculiar to themselves, and the events are such as interest them above all others: The drama is here reduced to its true and ancient origin.[141]

This final assertion the Abbé thought important enough to merit a lengthy note in explanation, that those viewing contemporary European theater could not take part in the drama themselves, as the productions bore "little or no resemblance to ours," or represented the actions of a distinct and privileged minority of the population, in or for whose affairs the masses could not participate or sympathize. "The Greeks," he contends,

> whom we have badly imitated, were in these points much more rational; all their dramatical subjects had a reference to their own mythology, form of worship, government, and the manners and customs of the several States; hence, their

[141] Robin, Abbé. *New Travels through North-America: In a Series of Letters*. Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1783: Text Creation Partnership, https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=evans;idno=N14342.0001.001, Accessed July 7, 2023 (p. 19)

theatrical pieces could be supported without love fictions, or an absurd mixture of incidents.[142]

Brackenridge's drama, if not stupendously successful, was at least perceived by those other than himself as a proper representation of drama, in the classical sense, the broader reflection of which he clearly strove for, pulling characters and scenes from both Greek and Roman history and epic to suit his purpose: using the historical and/or legendary events of his own people to demonstrate a particular, narrativized reception of events.

A similarly important element of this strain, as we discuss the tendencies of Brackenridge himself as a producer of literature and literary narrative, is the ascription of disdain for, or unfamiliarity with soft, "effeminate" luxuries, which was a decidedly Roman trait. The same ignorance or forbearance of luxury was noted in the author's preface of *The Death of General Montgomery* (above).

The presence of these classical virtues and of characters which housed them is frequent in the play, and a testament to the strength of their influence on Brackenridge's conception of virtue and manhood, which he was intent on passing on to his audience. On the American side, in Act 5, General Warren spurs on his own troops with a string of classical references, including Bellona, Aetna, and Vesuvius. There also appears to be a nod to the *Aeneid*:

That Liberty,

Which, not the thunder of Bellona's voice,

---

[142] Ibid. https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/evans/N14342.0001.001?id=DLPS4;lvl=1;note=inline;rgn=div2;view=trgt, Accessed July 7, 2023

With fleets, and armies, from the *British* Shore,

Shall wrest from us. Our noble ancestors,

Out-brav'd the tempests, of the hoary deep,

And on these hills, uncultivate, and wild,

Sought an asylum, from despotic sway;[143]

The flight of the ancestors across the sea, similar to the "arms and a man" who first came fugitive from Troy, would not be a surprising reference, given the importance of the Aeneid to the American elite, which Shalev, Winterer, and Shields have argued convincingly. Barlow also included more than a shred of the Aeneid in *The Columbiad*, which borrows content from the Roman epic: "I sing the mariner who first unfurl'd / an eastern banner o'er the western world." The rest of the play is filled with references to both the biblical and classical traditions, including Thermopylae and the Iliad, with General Warren fashioned an early-modern Patroclus;[144] and sports "A Military Song by the Army" in closing which lilts along well with the verses of the Battle Hymn of the Republic (minus the refrain), testaments to the importance of the martial element of manly virtue for Brackenridge in his early years.

I. Sons of valour, taste the glories,

Of Celestial Liberty,

Sing a Triumph o'er the Tories

Let the pulse of joy beat high.

……

IV. Should they touch at fair Rhode-Island,

[143] Brackenridge, (1776, 5.1) Emphasis mine.
[144] Brackenridge, (1776, 3.1; ibid.; 5.6; ibid., respectively)

There to combat with the brave,

Driven, from each hill, and high-land,

They shall plough the purple wave[145]

V. Should they thence, to fair Virgin'y

Bend a squadron to Dunmore,

Still with fear and ignominy,

They shall quit the hostile shore.

VI. To Carolina or to Georg'y

Should they next advance their fame,

This land of heroes shall disgorge the

Sons of tyranny and shame.

……

X. War, fierce war, shall break their forces,

Nerves of tory men shall fail,

Seeing Howe with alter'd courses,

Bending to the Western gale[146]

The multiple declarations, with varying detail, on how the British shall be driven from the shores of America and the Americans' association with Heaven, Celestial Liberty, bravery, and heroism, are contrasted with the British' association with tyranny, shame, cowardice and ignominy, and finally with Satan:

XII. Like Satan banished from Heaven,

[145] The "purple wave" is a Greek concept. One finds it in the formulaic lines of Homeric epic in the "wine-dark sea." οἶνοψ πόντος.

[146] Brackenridge (1776, Military Song)

Never see the smiling shore,

From this land so happy, driven,

Never stain its bosom more.[147]

The poem to end the play in verse speaks to the position Americans in line with Brackenridge's own sensibilities felt themselves in: righteous, justified, and glorious, where the British were cast as everything opposite. This, again, was to be performed by students, most of them probably between 12 and 15 years old. Brackenridge compounds further the sentiments they are meant to feel. The death of Warren, Tyler compares to "one of Plutarch's men… [who] having received his death wound, falls upon his right knee, and "covering his breast with his right hand, and supporting himself with his firelock in his left," spends his fast-ebbing strength in this appeal to his comrades…

Weep not for him who first espoused the cause,

And risking life, hath met the enemy

In fatal opposition – but rejoice!

For now I go to mingle with the dead, --

Great Brutus, Hampden, Sidney, and the rest…"[148]

So, Brackenridge has ascribed honor and righteousness to those who fight for idealism. Those who embrace these and fight, even (or perhaps especially) dying, will be preserved eternally in national memory. His emphasis on the glorification and the immortalization of heroism and death in battle it especially potent, knowing that those performing, memorizing the lines, and knowing the characters, were schoolboys.

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[147] Ibid.

[148] Brackenridge (1777) in Tyler (1897, p. 215-216)

Nicola Paladin expands on Warren's death as presented by Brackenridge in discussion of the iconography of war and death in the American Revolution and the Civil War. The fictional extension of Warren's death, which Tyler also lingers on, is especially elongated, considering, as Paladin points out via Samuel Foreman (2011), that Warren was shot through the cheekbone and died instantly. Paladin also notes that Warren was the only character in early American propaganda plays to die on-stage. "The death was strongly subjected to the necessities of its contingency," and Brackenridge was only one of many who contributed to the postmortem martyrdom of General Warren.[149] Trumbull, for just one example, helped to immortalize the man after his death through the medium of paint.[150] Sarah J. Purcell suggests, in this line of discussion, the Revolution "created a new kind of national martyr, one who sacrificed himself purely for the cause of liberty and sanctified the American nation with his death."[151] By sharing in "a propagandistic commitment to the patriot movement's radical Whig politics," Brackenridge caters the experience of death and mourning to stir up patriotism in the reader or the audience.[152]

Indeed, in 1775 "Franklin stated before the House of Commons that in his extensive colonial wanderings he had not heard anyone wish for complete independence," even after Lexington and Concord.[153] The Battle of Bunker Hill was a major pulling factor for the moderate and fence-sitting members of the colonial citizenry.

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[149] Paladin, Nicola. "Immortalizing Death on the Battlefield: US Iconography of war from the American Revolution to the Civil War." *Iperstoria* Issue 11, Spring/Summer 2018, pp.80-87, Verona: University of Verona Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, 2018 (p.82-84)

[150] Ibid. The possibility for another paper exists here, in dialogue with Barthes (1980) (*Camera Lucida*) and Lessing (1767), on various media and representation.

[151] Purcell, Sarah J. *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002 (p.21)

[152] Shaffer, Jason. "Making "An Excellent Die": Death, Mourning, and Patriotism in the Propaganda Plays of the American Revolution." *Early American Literature* Vol. 41, No.1, pp.1-27, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006 (p.4)

[153] Hajek (1971, p.44)

It was a highly influential engagement, not for its military significance (which was rather small), but for its political significance and the narratives it produced. "[T]he ramifications of the battle are inestimable because the valiant if foolhardy encounter captured the American imagination,"[154] and Brackenridge made completely sure that he became a part of the construction of the American narrative of the incident. His contribution was an extreme dramatic valorization of the events and the people at the Battle of Bunker Hill, equating bravery "with conviction that America's struggle has divine approbation."[155]

Though Brackenridge does identify his scapegoats in the drama, he still maintains at least one who is a good or neutral British General, in what seems to be some form of gentlemanly allowance, the same as that which seemed to shake his resolve in *The Death of General Montgomery* (more below). In *The Battle of Bunkers Hill*, it is Howe, whose dramatic persona, Hajek says is, in truth, rather accurate to the real man,

> dedicated to corps, country and king. His keen appraisal of the enemy's background is most accurate… Although he is anxious to crush the "insurrection," he grieves to draw his sword against those who gained esteem as valiant British fighting men.[156]

And, at least in *The Battle of Bunkers Hill*, Brackenridge made use of at least some part of each character's real-life personality to build his narrative. As he used the nobility of General Howe (otherwise inconvenient to one who wants to demonize the mother country in propagandic publications), and his honor and sense of duty, in order to

[154] Ibid. (p.45)
[155] Ibid. (pp.49-50)
[156] Ibid. (p.84)

build American valor through the eyes of the most credible character (since Gage is made into a drunk), so he used the others to variously raise American militiamen and officers up and tear down the image of the British Army and Generals.[157]

In the second drama, the goal was to inspire further American military resolution and promote greater hatred and animosity against the enemy, through the honorable actions of friendly soldiers and officers and through the deplorable words and actions of British officers. Brackenridge provides a moral to the audience, taken from Virgil: "*hic manus, ob patriam pugnando, vulnera passi*," which he translates via Pitt's Virgil: "Patriots who perish'd in their Country's Right…" For the early American dramatist, the ways in which one gains honor in death for country were a source of fascination."[158] Brackenridge harnesses this fascination Hajek mentions with the "good death," the noble and heroic death in service to the nation, to an augmented effect, given that its original publication was in a student performance. It is well in line with his educational goals for the American public, including the inculcation of certain classical values among the public.

The play's unique location in American history and under the circumstances meant that Brackenridge, while yet bound to a significant extent to the facts of a very recent event, could extend the scope of those actions taken within the event, making a fertile ground for the propagandist's work. Hajek notes, whereas most drama, from Greece to the eighteenth century, used historical distance to allow for the formation of legend and myth, observance of context, etc., all of which informed the reproduction of

[157] Ibid. (p.87)
[158] Ibid. (p.115)

events in dramatic form, "the siege of Quebec did not have this historical distance."[159] It should be noted, however, that this historical distance was not always so great so much as it was masked. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes all wrote in response to current events, especially of the wars the Greeks found themselves in. Many of these were placed at a mythological or comical distance, but some, like *Persians* were produced quite soon after the events they correspond with, to the effect of other similar events involving contemporary Greeks. The main idea it seems one should draw from this issue is that the Greeks, by and large, distanced their drama from the present *reality* more than the present *temporality* by somehow or another deflecting the characters and the events which were the target of intended commentary into different *dramatis personae*. Brackenridge, on the other hand, put words directly into the mouths of those involved in the conflicts, some of whom were still living at the time (sometimes not more than a few days journey away).

In any case, this lack of separation was less a deterrent for Brackenridge than might be expected. Toward the purpose of informing the drama he was producing on the Americans' siege of Quebec, he was possessed of

> a fund of "instant legend" from which to draw, quasi-facts and "reported events" of heroes and heroism as well as enemy perfidy and treachery. Many soldiers, especially officers, kept journals under the most unfavorable circumstances… In a country starved for regular, "authorized" coverage, these journals and letters,

[159] Ibid. (pp.129-130) Arguably the Battle of Bunker Hill also lacked such historical distance, which would make this discussion relevant to both plays.

whose contents were noised about, gained the same credibility that our communications media today enjoy.[160]

Drawing from this body of literature, composed of the varied opinions and perspectives of those soldiers who could write, particularly officers, Brackenridge was able to selectively determine his source material and then tailor it to utilize only those which "embodied the noble virtue valor and exalted the "great themes of patriotic virtue, bravery and heroism.""[161]

Just as the reader found in *The Battle of Bunkers-Hill,* so in *The Death of General Montgomery* the American leadership displays Brackenridge's textbook manly virtues, and the British demonstrates a most contemnable conduct (Montgomery even implies their engaging in cannibalism, roasting Bostonians, or at least their facilitation of something similar in the sacrifices of the Native Americans, which would be equally dubious).[162] On the more virtuous and valorous side of this, Act 1 Scene 2 brings the audience General Montgomery and his Delaware Aid-de-Camp, the young Macpherson in dialogue, where the general remembers the dead of past Canadian engagements, and foretells his own demise.

… This is the plain where Wolfe,

Victorious Wolfe, fought with brave Montcalm;

And even yet, the dreary snow-clad tomb,

Of many a hero, slaughter'd on that day,

Recalls the memory, of the bloody strife…

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[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Brackenridge (1777, 4.2)

But methinks, Macpherson, that I feel,

Within this hour, some knowledge of my end;

Some sure presentiment, that you and I,

This day, shall be with them, shall leave,

Our breathless bodies on this mortal soil.

But this allotment, should it be our case,

Fear not young soldier, for our cause is just…

All things are mortal, but the warrior's fame;

This lives eternal, in the mouths of men.[163]

This virtue through death in battle is redoubled by Macpherson, who, tells his thoughts embarking: that although death is terrible,

… when I left my father, and my friends,

I thought of this, and counted it but gain,

If fighting bravely, in my country's cause,

I tasted death, and met an equal fame,

With those at Lexington, and Bunker's-hill. [164]

This depiction of the noble death, which one finds in both the tragedies of Brackenridge, begins in the prologue. Hajek corroborates this, that the prologue "closes on an optimistic note, picturing the hero disregarding danger and laughing at pain, spreading the flag wide open to assault."[165] Here Montgomery and Macpherson continue this trend. That Macpherson, for his part, along with Cheesman, also a member of

[163] Brackenridge (1777, 1.2)
[164] Ibid.
[165] Hajek (1971, p.117)

Montgomery's staff, was noted at the time for great youthful attractiveness and upright character might lend itself to the formation of another patroclean character in Brackenridge's drama, where he had already displayed a tendency toward the young companion of Achilles in the previous play via General Warren. If one were to make the jump instead to Roman materials, there comes a comparison with Virgil's "Patroclus," Pallas. And the speech of Macpherson is comparable to Pallas' in his confrontation with Turnus:

> For either rich spoils captured I will be praised,
>
> Or for a remarkable death: toward either lot my father is agreeable.
>
> Do Away with your threats...[166]
>
> And, having been slain,
>
> His friends with many groans
>
> And with many tears carried Pallas laid on his shield.
>
> O! Great Anguish and dignity in return to your father,
>
> This, the first day given into war, this same carries you out,
>
> While you yet leave an immense mound of Rutulians![167]

At the same time, the foreknowledge and acceptance, of the hero's fate, by the hero, and his sallying boldly forth into battle, to complete the actions which he knows will catalyze his own death, makes General Montgomery a relatively sound anecdote to Achilles. The Greek hero, too, had a choice and a home and family life to look back to before he committed himself to killing Hector, which would guarantee his young death.

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[166] Virgil. *Aeneid.* Ed. Gian Biagio Conte et al. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019 (10.449-451)
[167] Ibid. (10.505-509)

Failing the direct intentions of the author towards heroic allusions, the effect of raising up a young officer beside the great general is substantial; it constitutes a strong and compelling inspiration to the young actors taking on the *dramatis personae*, that the nobler of the characters they portray ought to be zealously emulated in their own lives. The impetus of the resolute soldier makes its mark, then, even in the absence of such frequent and pointed referents to the ancient world, excepting a mention here and there of Gaul[168] and an interesting positive twist of Hamilcar and Hannibal into the hearts of the American public[169] (as discussed in the Introduction, the values which informed eighteenth century conceptions of manhood were drawn from multiple places. The classical Mediterranean was not the only producer of cultures which placed a high value on self-sacrifice).

As relates to the Christian tradition, which is, coincidentally heavy handed in its demands for self-denial, most of the glory gained in this play is through the chaplain, who calls the fiery wrath of God upon the British, likening their leadership to Beelzebub, and declaring the American cause sacred.[170] This acts as a second inspiration, from another major tradition which informed their ideals of virtue and manhood, for the schoolboys who were acting the parts of the play.

These virtues in the American characters are in juxtaposition with the British General/Governor Carleton, who, when American troops surrendered themselves, having been guaranteed fair and honorable treatment, immediately after viciously rebuking them,

[168] Brackenridge (1777, 4.1, 4.2)
[169] Brackenridge (1777, 4.2)
[170] Ibid. There may be a certain egotistical element of Brackenridge's self here, seeing as he was himself a chaplain.

taunting them, and condemning them to many of the most gruesome fates, including one wherein:

> three victims from your shattered band
>
> Must to the savages be given up, --
>
> Some three Bostonians sacrificed and slain,
>
> to glut the appetites of Indian chiefs.[171]

The vitriol and the infamy of such an accusation is enough to rouse the blood of any audience, and to sow in their hearts the seeds of deep hatred (Brackenridge's goal, after all), but it seems it was done with a heavy conscience, lest he actually tarnish the good reputation of the Governor. He included a footnote in the original publication, to the effect that:

> "Want of candor is very blameable [sic], even in the account given of an enemy. For this reason I have been sometimes uneasy lest these words put into the mouth of General Carleton, should seem to give a coloring to his character beyond the real complexion of his Excellency's conduct." [172]

But, he concluded, his conscience was at ease knowing the reports of the deeds of those officers under the General's command, which included scalping and burning prisoners alive on an island in the St. Lawrence River. Nevertheless, this moral tugging in the heart of Brackenridge should tell us something about who just he was and how he fashioned his virtuous ideals. It is no surprise that Brackenridge, a relatively pious man, after all, would feel a little guilty about slandering the character of the enemy, especially when the enemy was a high-ranking man, "Excellency."

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[171] Ibid. (5.5)
[172] Brackenridge, Quoted in Tyler (1897, p.223, n.1)

Brackenridge's ideals were those of the elite of his time. Even though most of the revolutionary elite were set against the idea of heredity and kingship, Brackenridge included, the expectations for chivalrous behavior were still present. It was not, after all, until Sherman's March through Georgia, during the Civil War, that the "gentleman's game" of war truly died out in America.[173] It would have been improper to so heavily slander the name of an upright man, even an enemy at war. But Brackenridge put his conscience at ease by the actions of the lower ranking officers, allegedly allowed or approved by the Governor. There was, apparently, true precedent for Carleton's alleged acting in such an inhumane way as was portrayed in the drama, which Brackenridge seems to have acquired, in a letter from General Schuyler to the Continental congress. Brackenridge's inspiration in this case, Hajek indicates, arises from somewhere between this report and Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*. It seems this inspiration leaned more toward the latter. "While crediting the original idea to a passage in Aeschylus' *The Seven Commanders At Thebes*[sic], Brackenridge deplores the actual translation into fact in the hands of a people supposedly Christian."[174]

Brackenridge's goals as a poet and pamphletist are patently evident throughout the plays. They were, in the first place, meant for student performers, and

> it must be remembered that the dictum "repetition is the mother of study" was a fundamental educational principle of the day. The numerous speeches praising the

[173] For more on this, see Steiner's introduction to Huizinga (1970). Although, I argue, to label Sherman the ultimate spoil-sport in a gentlemen's game is not entirely justified. The ultimate spoil-sport, as the "game" of war is carried out, is the one who initiates a civil war. Civil war is the stasis which arises when political play in a state loses its sanctity and becomes ultimately destructive, wanton, or futile. Therefore, the civil war is an act against the rules of another "play" engagement by its very own existence.

[174] Hajek (1971, pp. 135-136)

patriotic cause do provide ample opportunities for student actors and audience to receive the message…[175]

The plays represent a successful attempt at dramatic composition toward the purpose of propagandic and educational narrative construction, and *The Battle of Bunkers Hill* was probably one of Brackenridge's most successful efforts in his short career as a poet. They were also perfect verse plays for the Americans of the time, who were averse to poetry without some demonstrable utility.[176] These particular examples were of prime utility for the time, when Americans supportive of the Revolutionary cause were desperate for support and for more young men to join the fight. These plays acted toward the achievement of both of these goals by the encouragement of the actors and the audience toward upholding the values of the time, and toward manly action in service of the budding American nation.

Together with the commencement speech, they supply us with a mixture of the heroes and demons Brackenridge praised and censured. The tragedy of the famous stand on Bunker Hill was an easy subject for his appetite for classical manliness, painting the American defenders Spartans against the many and inferior Persian assailants of the "invading" British army. The Bible-heavy play on the invasion of Quebec gave him room to flex the chaplain's "hellfire," perhaps honed in his seminary days, and to depict in Americans the more ideal form of chivalrous soldiery in the face of the fallen and hated British. *The Rising Glory of America* is a synthesis of the two, naming the Old-World characters and characteristics which are to be assumed and left behind, under the auspices of divine sanction and revelation. Between all three of them, one finds the prominent

[175] Hajek (1971, pp.107-108)
[176] Ibid. (p.111)

theme of Brackenridge's early poetry: It is fated and divinely sanctioned that America should rise to prominence; it is natural that Americans are equally, if not more capable in the noble pursuits than the British and other Europeans of the Old World, including war; and the war they currently waged with such competence in the face of a statistically superior enemy was just, and therefore winnable by force of their greater morality.

Known in his life after the Revolution for eccentricity and rebellion, "in the East, Brackenridge had become notorious as the "worst of the Whiskey Rebels, and in the West as the elected representative of the backwoodsmen who sold them out 'for a dinner of some stockholder's fat beef.'"[177] He was an advocate of the French Revolution and the Federal Constitution, and was rather concerned with the education and the rectitude of his countrymen's morals. His multi-volume prose composition *Modern Chivalry*, a quixotic satire of the struggles of the budding early American nation (especially as he saw it had gone astray from his personal ideals and agendae), was read across the frontier, and saw greater literary success than his previous endeavors (particularly his early magazines).[178]

He was highly interested in the enlightenment of his fellow citizens, which contributed to the patriotic didacticism of his earliest poetry. Contrary to Marder's idea, that the dramas of Brackenridge were not among the bulk of the man's work "worth saving,"[179] I say the tragedies Brackenridge wrote on the Revolution are of utmost importance, given the long and continuing discussions of influences of literature, especially poetry, on young minds in particular. That his plays synthesized classical and biblical allusion in patriotic drama for students is quite significant and telling of his early

[177] Marder (1970, p.3)
[178] Marder (1970, p.4-5)
[179] Ibid. (ix)

ambitions for the republic. Given his education, it is safe to say that Brackenridge was aware of the dangers Plato ascribed to poetry, as were others among early American elites. The combination of this education and his highly religious upbringing among the Scotts indicates that Brackenridge was quite aware of the potential of his dramatic verse compositions.

As Marder says himself, "Although his purpose was seldom artistic, [Brackenridge] was always aware of literary values… even some of his poems have enduring power in what they say and how they say it."[180] Tyler writes in agreement with this statement, that, while other early American drama merits discussion as vestiges of a developing literary culture, if crude and "provincial," the works of Brackenridge have in themselves "a literary merit so positive and so remarkable as to justify our study of them even on that alone… having in themselves a striking distinctness of method and purpose."[181] The plays and the commencement speech given above demonstrate the strong educational and propagandic drive of Hugh Henry Brackenridge, toward the elevation of his country and countrymen to a highly educated moral and ethical ideal which displayed his favorite character traits of elite virtues of the time.

Brackenridge's compulsion to be a part of an elite, into which he could not fully integrate on a martial basis, either for lack of connection or lack of gumption, ended only in part after his move from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. He continued his efforts to join the literary elite, which in Philadelphia culminated in the move to Pittsburgh, where he became the more jaded judge he is remembered as, satirizing the progress of the United States. The desire to join this elite group of Americans was surely related to his schooling

[180] Ibid. (p.6)
[181] Tyler (1897, p.210)

with them. Informed by an education in Classics, he imbibed the same materials and formed similar ideals with different methods, which were ultimately disappointed when his poetic endeavors showcasing those classical characters and traits were less than successful. Where Barlow, for example, aimed to create a world republic by his interaction with the elite of various countries, beginning with the United States and France, Brackenridge sought the betterment of the American republic through the education of the populace, including classical education. Global politics and an unreceptive public, respectively, foiled both of their plans. Barlow, however, still maintained helpful friends and acquaintances among the founding fathers. Brackenridge was confined to the frontier. His quixotic satire on American society, *Modern Chivalry*, could be explored as a major form of protest over his low late life literary success rate, and the lackluster reception his idealism met in the American west. But that is for another project.

What he began fashioning in himself, what he intended for the United States, seems in the end to have run a course not entirely dissimilar to a plurality of current American political representatives: an idealist, first and foremost, who loved the American public, as the ward of the Republic, but stopped short of the *person*. In his insistence that all Americans should be educated in the most valued texts of the elite, he forgot that, without a proper bridge in the chasm between the ideal and the practical, the farmer and the mechanic he so desired to enlighten would (and did) reject him. It helped him no more that it was quite obvious he had an ambition to make a name for himself in the process. Sometime soon after the *United States Magazine*'s failure, he moved to the frontier. The failure of the magazine seemed to be the final straw that drove him and his

disappointed ideals away from the bigger city politics and into a place where he could salvage his attempt to foist literary enlightenment on the public, and simultaneously make his name. He became increasingly embroiled in politics, until he was scarcely able to win an office. He fell into another trap for the politician as he made his way westward to Pittsburgh, that is to grow embittered at the disappointment of political ideals and ambitions rather than to reform, to blame and belittle, especially in intelligence, his constituency, and this particularly in front of the wrong people, who published his remarks. The major position he managed to hold after that, whence his better-known title "Judge Brackenridge" derives, was by appointment.

CHAPTER 3

BARLOW: POLITICAL POET AND IDEALIST

Joel Barlow was a unique character among early Americans. He spent his later years as a diplomat serving the United States and, unlike Brackenridge, never seems to have fully abandoned his idealism. He wanted to see the United States become the model which the world would emulate: an enlightened republic with sound morals. Nearly a pacifist, his time spent in the army, as Brackenridge's, was spent as a chaplain. While so employed, he managed to impress the sensibilities of George Washington with his sermons, making him immediately far better connected than Brackenridge would ever be. Though he never secured proper patronage for his epic works, his acquaintance with Washington was helpful in generating subscribers, who received copies of their own. Washington never actually read his.

Barlow expanded his hopes and designs for republicanism far beyond the Americas, being one among a few who sought the establishment of a global republic. The United States served as a template and potentially a successful example of this republican project, which he hoped other nations, starting with France, would emulate. As the United States and other nations continued their historical trajectories, and as philosophers continued to comment on them and the forces which moved them, Barlow continually shifted in his opinions and his ideals, particularly regarding the place of God or gods among enlightened cultures and in republics, the methodology for the achievement of a republican state or a global republic, and the viability and/or justification of the use of

violence for the achievement or maintenance of the republican state and world. His "flip-flopping" has been considered both a virtue and a flaw of his character as a scholar and an author, making it difficult at any given time, even his own, to fully nail down what exactly he intended himself and the world around him to be, and serving as a consistent cop-out when definitions and oppositions got tough; but also being a marker of a highly open-minded and maleable, but discerning and tempered intellectual. His compositions were in constant dialogue with his contemporaries' and his predecessors in both Europe and the Americas. His epics were composed with intent to create a competitor in the Americas for the European tradition at the same time as they paid homage. They fused the heroic characters of the ancient Mediterranean and Americas with modern colonial Americans' within a Miltonian thematic setting, and through them voiced the philosophy Barlow adopted over time in the context of his republican ideal.

Despite the lackluster performance of his endeavors, "[h]e never voiced regrets… and later affirmed his original intent: to inspire his countrymen with a vision of the unfolding splendor that he believed had preceded and now attended their nation building."[182] Barlow made little in the way of money off of the ill-advised epic project, and soon took up various positions in diplomacy, especially in France, his prime subject for the continuity of the global takeover of republicanism. His literary upbringing, including Latin, Greek, and French languages was a helpful factor here, not just for the removal of linguistic barriers, but for the establishment of a firm and well-meaning moral philosophy, especially surrounding the ideas of war and governance.

[182] Hill, Peter P. *Joel Barlow, American Diplomat and Nation Builder*. Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2012 (p.7)

Barlow was nearly a pacifist. He did briefly enlist when Governor Trumbull of Connecticut called upon the colony's young men to serve in the Revolution,[183] but the extent of his service it not well-known. Afterward, as stated above, most of his military career was spent as a chaplain. Among the great vices of the ancient world, its violence was the one most often excused. Whereas Brackenridge was more partial, especially given his comments on Native Americans,[184] Barlow was quite against violence, especially as it seemed so often to be utilized by despots in building their empires and sustaining their power. Even more idealistic and utopian in his writings and his ambitions than Brackenridge, not just for the United States but for the world, he was wary of the concept of honor as it was able to be co-opted by malicious actors, especially, in his later years, by the leadership of organized religions and sovereign states:

> ...its object is incapable of precise definition; and consequently, though given us in aid of the more definable feelings of morality, it is capable of total perversion, of losing sight of its own original nature, and still retaining its name; of pursuing the destruction of moral sentiments, instead of being their ornament; of debasing, instead of supporting, the dignity of man… We must look pretty far into human nature, before we shall discover the cause, why killing men in battle should be deemed, *in itself*, an honourable employment.[185]

[183] Woodress, James. *A Yankee's Odyssey: The Life of Joel Barlow*. New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1958 (pp.34-40)

[184] See Marder (1970)

[185] Barlow, Joel. "Advice to the privileged orders in the several states of Europe, resulting from the necessity and propriety of a general revolution in the principle of government" in *The Political Writings of Joel Barlow*. Ed. Florence S. Hellman, New York: Burt Franklin, 1971, pp. 50-51

While trained quite extensively in Classics,[186] he was rather selective about whom he admired. He regarded Homer with a certain contemptuous affection, as the rightful recipient of the praises which were lavished upon him and his work, and very nearly as the sole actor in the debasement and corruption of human society and morality. The pleasure gained from the poems is wonderful, says Barlow,

> but in a view of philanthropy, I consider his existence as having been a serious misfortune to the human race. He has given to military life, a charm, which few men can resist, a splendour which envelopes the scenes of carnage in a cloud of glory, which dazzles the eyes of every beholder, steals from us our natural sensibilities, in exchange for the artificial, debases men to brutes, under the pretext of exalting them to Gods, and obliterates, with the same irresistible stroke, the moral duties of life and the true policy of nations.[187]

Barlow does seem to have an outlook on things (at least those related to war) that would fit nicely with the transcendentalists. The allegation of use of the "military system" (one could almost substitute "military industrial complex") as a cudgel for gain, via sanctification and glorification of killing by attribution of honor to them, is one which, surely, the likes of some such as Thoreau would immediately find resonance with. The military system and its martial glory and honor support the feudal or governing system, with the latter holding power over the former system's actions. In line with this, he was a

[186] Woodress (1958, pp.34-40). He was taught at Yale, where he studied Cicero, Horace, the Greek and Latin New Testaments. His list of influential "legislators of the world in *Vision of Columbus*, included Moses, Lycurgus, Solon, and Numa," implying at least a familiarity with Plutarch, Solon, and Livy. His discourse in Epics in *The Columbiad* suggests that he had read and was confident to comment on Lucan, Virgil, and Homer.

[187] Barlow, in Hellman (1971, pp.53-54)

strong supporter of the French Revolution, though he "did not believe in the necessity of war to introduce and establish the republic."[188]

Even so, Barlow was no stranger to, nor averse to heaping honor and praise upon the heroes of war – if the cause was correct. Even in a poem on peace, he takes the time to note the heroes of the age. "The Prospect of Peace," provides the praise for heroes of the nation, similar to the heroic examples of Greece and Rome.

> Behold, where late the trembling squadrons fled,
> Hosts bow'd in chains, and hapless numbers bled,
> In different fields our numerous heroes rouse,
> To crop the wreath from Britain's impious brows.
> Age following age shall these events relate
> 'Till time's old empire yield to destin'd Fate;
> Historic truth our guardian chiefs proclaim,
> Their worth – their actions, and their deathless fame.[189]

The "heroes" of Barlow and the events they precipitated, he suggests, will be related by "age following age," with the heroes and the events themselves being destined by "Fate," which has taken its divine form in the poet's capitalization, as Freedom does in the lines preceding it and Peace and Virtue in the lines after.

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[188] Hellman, Florence S., Ed. *The Political Writings of Joel Barlow*. New York: Burth Franklin, 1971 (1)

[189] Barlow, Joel. "The Prospect of Peace," in *The Works of Joel Barlow in Two Volumes*, Vol. II: Poetry, ed. Henry R. Warfel, Facsimiles with intro by William K. Bottorff and Arthur L. Ford, Gainesville: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1970 (pp.1-2)

Having carried out their tasks, outstanding from those set before most others, they earn their own "deathless fame." Their leader (Washington) is hailed in "heroic song" in the verses following.[190] The Muses make an appearance in the later poem and the Legions in the earlier space. While much of the rest of the poem is dedicated to calvary and the will and coming of God toward men, the presence of the Classics is also apparent; and "deathless fame" is a relatively important focal point, if only for the sake of *kleos*, the fame of continued hearsay.[191] Washington, in particular, is given a reward which amounts to epic memorial. This poem was given at the commencement of the graduates of the class of 1778 of Yale College. The purpose was to impart to the graduates, the future of the United States, not only the hope that peace might be maintained in the aftermath of the revolution, God willing, but hope also that the exploits of the heroes of the Revolution be remembered and, if necessary, reenacted in the event of a disturbance of Peace. The Founders, in this case, were to be used as an example for the American youth, just as Achilles and other heroic dead were to be emulated by the Greek, though Barlow would likely have preferred a less temperamental role model.

While the highlights until now have been about heroic dead and veterans of the republic, Barlow's commencement poem is, after all, a poem looking forward to "the prospect of peace."

> Long has Columbia rung with dire alarms,
>
> While Freedom call'd her injur'd sons to arms;
>
> While various fortune fir'd th' embattled field

[190] That these events brought about peace as well informs the glory of the deeds.

[191] As a proponent for the establishment of a unique national literature, this is important to establishing Barlow's literary character.

Conquest delayed, and victory stood conceal'd…

……

In this grand conflict heaven's Eternal Sire,

At whose dread frown the sons of guilt expire,

Bade vengeance rise, with sacred fury driven,

On those who war with Innocence and Heaven…

……

And soon, emerging from the orient skies,

The blissful morn in glorious pomp shall rise,

Wafting fair Peace from Europe's fated coast…

……..

Now see the Goddess mounting on the day,

To these fair climes direct her circling way,

Willing to seek, once more, an earthly throne,

To cheer the globe, and emulate the sun.

With placid look she eyes the blissful shore,

Bids the loud-thundering cannon cease to roar;

Bids British navies from these ports be tosst,

And hostile keels no more insult the coast.[192]

The assumption here is that peace is a thing to be preserved once achieved, that one ought to hope for peace once the dust has settled and avoid further conflict. Barlow assumes much of Peace in the wake of conflict, ushered over from the shores of Europe

[192] Barlow, In Warfel (1970, pp.3-4)

to shine and dote upon America, in whose presence not only will hostile ships be long away but the slaves freed, and the Kingdom of Heaven come to earth.[193] It is a poem which was probably one of Barlow's more rational, wishing for continued peace and all of the good it ought to bring with it, but recognizing the price by which peace was bought and by which it is preserved.

Still, not all of Barlow's poetry was strictly about peace. In *The Columbiad*, Barlow expands most extensively on his characterization of the American as the avatar of his personal virtues. Book 6, for example, contains an allegory in the Persian Wars which is quite flattering and inspiring to the "colonial band":

> Brave Sparta springs where first the danger lies,
> Her self-devoted band, in one steel'd mass,
> Plunge in the gorge of death and choke the pass.
> Athenian youths the unwieldy war to meet,
> Couch the stiff lance or mount the well arm'd fleet;
> They sweep the incumber'd seas of their vast load
> And fat their fields with lakes of Asian blood.
> So lept our youths to meet the invading hordes,
> Fame fired their courage, freedom edged their swords.[194]

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[193] Ibid. (1970, pp. 11-12)
This is yet another instance in which Barlow presents his audience with his utopian conception of republicanism. Indeed, his ideal republican world would have seen peace on earth, come to fruition. See again Buel (1985).

[194] Barlow, Joel. *The Columbiad*. In *The Works of Joel Barlow in Two Volumes*, Vol. II, Ed. Henry R. Warfel, Gainesville: Scholars Facsimiles & Reprints, 1970 (6.328-336)

Perhaps betraying something of an acknowledgement of violent conflict resolution (and some familiarity with Herodotus), when necessary, Barlow yet maintained his stance on most epic of the ancient world. He said in preface to the epic,

> the real design in the Iliad… was to inflame the minds of young readers with an enthusiastic ardor for military fame… that conquest, violence and war were the best employment of nations, the most glorious prerogative of bodily strength and of cultivated mind.[195]

The notion of honor given in Homer he claimed to be false. "... his existence has really proved one of the signal misfortunes of mankind." The heroes of Barlow's work turned out to be more Platonic philosopher-kings who were capable but reluctant to go to battle, rather than the imitation Patrocluses, Achilles, and Hectors of Brackenridge's (see above). And the treatment he gave to Virgil was not much better.

> Had Virgil written his poem one or two centuries earlier than he did, while his countrymen felt that they had a country and were not themselves the property of a master, they must have glowed with enthusiasm in reciting the fabulous labors of their ancestors, and adored the songster who could have thus elevated so endearing a subject; who could have adorned it with such an interesting variety of incidents, such weight of pathos, such majesty of sentiment and harmony of verse. But Virgil wrote like a subject, not like a citizen. The real design of his poem was to increase the veneration of the people for a master… and to encourage like Homer the great system of military depredation. [196]

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[195] Ibid. (ix-x)
[196] Ibid. (ix-xii)

He treats Lucan, the only of the epicists he might have cared for, morally speaking, with unfortunate condescension, believing him the only republican, but the worst among the epic poets. His aim in his own epic, he says was moral and political:

> to inculcate the love of rational liberty, and to discountenance the deleterious passion for violence and war; to show that on the basis of the republican principle all good morals, as well as good government and hopes of permanent peace, must be founded; and to convince the student in political science that the theoretical question of the future advancement of human society… is held in dispute and unsettled only because we have had too little experience of organised liberty in the government of nations to have well considered its effects.[197]

Certain elements of Barlow's ideals of manhood and virtue are displayed in summary here: the virtuous man is not passionate for war (though not necessarily averse to it), he is morally upright, he is educated and rational, and is not just free, but free of "slavish" actions or mindsets.[198]

Barlow's involvement with the history of the Americas and with Enlightenment discussions on religion and mythology suggest that, in large, the goal of such identifications in his epics, which were written with an express purpose, is a matter of nationalistic myth-making, similar to Virgil's task assigned for the Aeneid. As Robert D. Richardson Jr. suggests, there were two main theoretical receptions of mythology in the eighteenth century: one which was skeptical, drawing its inspiration from Bayle, Voltaire, and English deism; and another which was affirmative along the intellectual lines of Sacvan Bercovitch and Bishop Lowth, that myth was a genuine expression of human

[197] Ibid.
[198] A similar attitude towards "servile" existences exists in Key's poetry.

imagination in its natural state, which was revealed in poetry.[199] Barlow's work, he argues, consists of an interaction between the two, with euhemeristic digressions in the machinations of Manco Capac being tempered and offset by a more affirmative, productive view of myth, "that myth embodies and conveys the real or necessary truth of things."[200]

Barlow was interested in the pretensions of Manco Capac to divinity, and in myth and legend "insofar as it provides heroic models and institutions for social, scientific, civic, and religious progress." The mythic figures he and the Enlightenment most preferred included Moses, Orpheus, mythic civilizers, lawgivers, etc.[201] His own correspondences attest to this. "[T]o Jefferson, he wrote modestly: "As a poem of the Epic character it can never rank high. As a patriotic legacy to my country, I hope it may prove acceptable.""[202]

The poem includes elements of both Classical and Miltonian epic, with its Muses and with Washington leading the army of the Revolutionaries against England as if the angel Michael against Satan. His angelic visionary is the "Hesper," A musing spirit of the Western World.[203] The addition of American entities to the divine potluck easily earns the reputation Shields would have for it as an example of American creative literary departures from the Old-World ways. The combination of classical and biblical characters and events, with the addition of new ancient American, might actually make it something more than Shields' quintessential Adamic-Aeneadic composition but, perhaps,

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[199] Richardson, Robert D. Jr. "The Enlightenment View of Myth and Joel Barlow's "Vision of Columbus." *Early American Literature*, Vol.13, No.1, Spring, pp.34-44, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978 (pp.34-39)

[200] Ibid. (p.37)

[201] Ibid. (p.42)

[202] Woodress (1958, pp.248-249)

[203] More on this to come below. Cf. Simon (2017)

the quintessential American composition, according to the times. The poem, then, is an experiment in the formation and tempering of an American identity and virtuous ideal, the latter of which Barlow forms out of Christian principles and the more christianizable aspects of Classical literature and Enlightenment philosophy.

Barlow appears at first to have been too Christian (or perhaps genteel) to outright disparage the enemies of the United States, but *The Vision of Columbus* and *The Columbiad* are filled with barbarous referents disguised in the conflicts between Manco Capac and the hostile "mountain savages" who "lead war and slaughter o'er the happy lands… And feast their souls on future scenes of blood."[204] Manco Capac describes them swarming with ravening eyes, making libations to their gods with the blood of their Incan enemies' children, and calls them "sons of blood."[205] The scenes presented are innocent enough if left as a contrived myth of a creative mind, but knowing that Manco Capac is, in essence, Barlow's metaphor for Aeneas and for Washington, the descriptions soon become rather extreme. Indeed, after an interlude on the strife of the nations in *The Columbiad,* Book 4, Book 5 brings the French and their Native American allies during the French and Indian War with "hideous" and "discordant" yells and whoops (strikingly similar to the "savages" of the earlier parts of the epic), likening them to swarming animals, wolves, and vultures.[206] The animalistic characteristics ascribed to these mimic similar barbarous epithets that one sees in Brackenridge, though they may be less direct. The parallel construction of the composition, with attention to the comparability of the contrivances around the Peruvians and colonial Americans, is, in truth, rather skillful, if

[204] Barlow, Joel. *The Vision of Columbus*. In *The Works of Joel Barlow in Two Volumes*, Vol. II, Ed. Henry R. Warfel, Gainesville: Scholars Facsimiles & Reprints, 1970 (195-196 (Book 3))

[205] Barlow, *The Columbiad* (3.571-580)

[206] Ibid. (5.50-68)

nowhere near the quality of the poets who came before in the epic tradition; and the scenes and characteristics he creates in his own epic, through this lense, lend themselves as much to a Lucanian as a Virgilian style, with Lucanian scenes of blood and gore as one finds in *Pharsalia,* either in the death of Pompey or more similar selections like Sextus' consultation of witchcraft:

> There was Sextus, son unworthy of his parent Magnus.
> … who, spurred by fear of fate to foresee the way,
> Impatient of the delay and anxious about all things to come,
> Counseled neither the tripod of Deli nor the Pythian cave,
> Nor did it please him to seek out, first, by its fruits, what
> The nurturing bronze of Jove said at Dodona, who could interpret
> The sacrificial entrails, who could report on the birds, who watched
> The lightning in the sky, and watched with care the stars in Assyria,
> Or whatever, if secret, was lawful. He sought out
> The secrets of savage mysteries, detestable to the gods,
> And gloomy altars with funeral rites.[207]

The British only briefly see a favorable light before they become the new antagonists of the Revolution. What is more, in association with the demon that is War[208] they come to assail the coast in comparison with Caesar and with Xerxes, while Roman and Greek Genius belong to the colonists.[209] In these comparisons, not so subtle, but subtextual enough to be passed off as sophisticated, Barlow displays some of the

[207] Lucan. *De Bello Civili*. Ed. D.R. Shackleton Bailey. Stuttgart: G.B. Teubner 1988 (6.420-432)
[208] Ibid. (5.369-402; 5.469-490)
[209] Ibid. (6.328-336)

conflicting aspects of human and masculine nature, and the gentlemanly character traits which ought to temper them. The "mountain savages" to which the enemies of the colonists and the United States are compared are crude. They are more than competent in physical contest, but are so to the extent that they overstep propriety and enter the realm of the brute, lacking proper knowledge, manners, and self-control.

One finds a similar problem of characterization for Lucan's "heroes," with Caesar the thunderbolt, rushing recklessly through the bounds of Roman tradition and striking down the old oak, Pompey, who, though a paragon of classic *virtus*, is too sluggish and careful to prevent the disaster of the civil war. Both characterizations are symbolic of Jove, implying that both men could potentially find themselves on the right track. Both of them, in fact, have been given a metaphorical claim to divinity: Caesar through the Julians, and Pompey by the honor of being depicted comparably with Priam in his death, as a trunk, and therefore being identifiable with the genitor of the Julian line. But both of them have strayed so far from the proper balance of character that they have lost their claim to any real heroism. Barlow, being well aware of Lucan's work, would surely have been aware of this conundrum himself.

Ralph Bauer discusses the more American side of this interaction between old and new traditions and character traits, and their influences on a new, uniquely American tradition as Barlow entertained the concept of tradition and its contents, beginning with a quotation of Derek Walcott:

> The Person over on this part of the world is an American… Even the white American had the same problem of identification. In fact, I think this – identity – has been the obsession of any race in this part of the world. Americans themselves

have been made to feel inferior to England in terms of literature, painting, etc…. White, black, any color…[210]

Along with other "Connecticut Wits," Barlow was preoccupied with demonstrating that America was once inhabited by a "civilized people" in order to assist in both the proving of American intellectual potential and establishing an appropriable American tradition as a moral and intellectual precedent, by which the goal, shared with Brackenridge, of equaling, distancing from, and surpassing European (especially British) traditions and precedents, could be achieved. American Revolutionaries, says Bauer, "flirted with an identification with indigenous culture in their quest to express cultural difference from England." But there was a natural barrier to this, in part on account of their status, already identified as "invaders," and in the problematic nature of generally oral or undeciphered literary traditions in the New World.[211] They could find no palatable traditions with which they could identify, so they were in some cases obliged to manufacture them within their own scope of knowledge. Barlow, for his part, was an avid reader of the early historians of American affairs, and of personal accounts like Las Casas' (1552). "More importantly, however, he avidly read in the Yale library a 1688 translation of one of the most important Spanish American classics: the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios reales de los incas* (1607)"[212]

Thus, he is heavily influenced, as is made obvious by his epics, by the literary traditions available to him through all of the British, classical, and (Native) American heritages. Bauer suggests, in this light, that "in order to adequately appreciate Barlow's

[210] Bauer, Ralph. "Colonial Discourse and Early American Literary History: Ercilla, the Inca Garcilaso, and Joel Barlow's Conception of a New World Epic." *Early American Literature* Vol.30, No.3, pp.203-232, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995 (p.203)

[211] Ibid. (p.205)

[212] Ibid.

epic poetry, it is essential to reread him in the context of colonial and counter-colonial discourses about America in a hemispheric perspective." Bauer argues that Barlow's is one of the first creolized epics of the Americas, "with postcolonial configuration of a tradition of colonial discourse in the European language of history about America," Borrowing the Old-World rhetorical strategies to create an epic with New-World contents. Thus, in a fusion of the European "redeemer" mentality and rebellious, indignant New-World identity, Barlow brings together his Christlike Columbus and his Adamic/Aeneadic heroes, the enlightened (but martially capable) Manco Capac and George Washington. [213]

Nevertheless, "the most important parallel between Barlow and Ercilla," says Bauer, "is that in both epic poems the present appears as epic time." Unlike Old-World epics, Barlow's simply uses the past to glorify the present. He rewrites history from his own New-World perspective. This enables him to pick and choose the morals of his story from both traditions available to him, which he does with great liberty, reinventing America in the process.[214] Barlow, Bauer argues, is among the first in a transformation of Western culture into the new American, which bears a trademark "polemical (magico-) realism and its metahistorical obsession…

> It is the writing at the colonial periphery, which first initiated – and has continued to be the driving force of – the evolution of this American literature, in which the

[213] Ibid. (pp.206-207). Their more intermittent heroism, however, led to complaints about their non-equitability with the old European hero. Rather, they must be "read within the tradition of "the Vision [poem] as Anglo-American epic genre."" (209)

[214] Ibid. (pp.210-214)

> "colonial imagination is driven to recreate, again and again, the experience of writing in colonial space. (Lee 162-63)."[215]

So, the epic of Barlow brings the reader a fusion of multiple systems of existent and contrived value systems, including those which he prefers to keep close to him, which define the standards of martial manhood. When Manco Capac, the allegorical Washington of the Inca, is moving his soldiers against the invading "savages," he exhorts them with a line similar to that which we find in Classical martial imperatives: "The warrior conquers or the infant dies,"[216] a repetition of which appears in the speech of Washington:

> Look thro' the world, see endless years descend,
> What realms what ages on your arms depend!
> Reverse the fate, avenge the insulted sky,
> Move to the work; we conquer or we die.[217]

The identification of Washington with Capac gives extreme force to the depiction of the antagonistic forces in both parts of the epic, which shall be discussed below. In the narration of the Revolution, Barlow makes direct reference to the Roman civil war waged by Pompey and Caesar, comparing the countenance of the Delegates and the Genius of Rome, as "kings and courtiers push their mad career."[218] And, when war is resolved, Barlow plays out the myth of the American Cincinnatus:

> Back to his plow the colon soldier moves,

[215] Ibid. (p.222)
[216] Barlow, *The Columbiad* (3.580)
[217] Ibid. (5.737-740)
[218] Ibid. (5.369-402)

And songs of triumph fill the warbling groves,
The conscious flocks, returning joys that share,
Spread thro' the grassland o'er the walks of war;
Streams freed of gore their crystal course regain,
Serener sunbeams gild the tendless plain;
A general jubilee o'er earth and heaven
Leads the gay morn and lights the lambent even.[219]

By so describing Americans, Barlow not only reinforces through his epic the manly virtues he holds in esteem for the United States, but he does so through the inception of an American "creation myth" (albeit contrived) which makes Washington and the Founders the successors of the tradition of moderate, philosophical leadership in the New World, constituted in Columbus and in Capac.

There is good reason for this identification of Washington with Manco Capac. Barlow's (and other's) project of "distinguishing American literary culture from its British legacy could succeed only if it were acknowledged by both American and European readers alike…" Barlow had to cater to both sensibilities. This he generally succeeded in doing, and was recognized for the political merit of his composition, though the poetic value of it was rather less appreciated (see comments of the *Edinburgh Press*, below). His method required that he tap into "appropriative strategies of the colonialist as surely as he did the authorizing confidence of the nationalist… Just as England looked to Roman antiquity for imperial paradigms, Joel Barlow scanned the Americas for a new

[219] Ibid. (5.295-302)

brand of antiquity…"[220] It was fitting, then, to Barlow, that he composed his attempt at a national poem in epic form. "The cultural status epic poetry conveyed, Barlow reasoned, transferred authority to the new nation."[221]

Now, if Barlow, as one of the earliest poets of the colonial New World "had wished to remember Columbus in an opus of epic proportions… he would have either to fashion the ancient discoverer after the recent Father of America or to make George Washington at least a nobler and more luminous hero." Thus, America was rediscovered "not as a continent but as a conscience, and George Washington became the true beacon of that conscience."[222] Columbus' vision takes him on a rediscovery of America as it was before him and will be. Columbus, in his vision, sees "what Barlow wants him to see," including the divisions of the natives, elevating the Peruvians and the Aztecs over the rest in North America, especially the Native Americans with whom the colonials came into conflict, and the colonists liberating themselves from British rule, lending to the poet's goal of establishing the clout of the nation through his epic poem.[223]

But Barlow's epic was not terribly successful. In fact, it is today one of the least known or read American works of literature. This is in part because it was certainly not the first recent European epic to achieve publication, nor was it even the first written with Columbus as the central character. Terence Martin discusses the three Columbiads of the time: one French, one British, and one American. Each nationalizes Columbus to fit the

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[220] Conger. Danielle E. "Toward a Native American Nationalism: Joel Barlow's The Vision of Columbus." *The New England Quarterly*, Vol.72, No.4, pp.558-576, Boston: The New England Quarterly, Inc., Dec. 1999 (pp.558-559)

[221] Ibid. 562

[222] Tusiani, Joseph. "Christopher Columbus and Joel Barlow." *Italian Americana*, Vol. 3, No.1, pp.30-44, Italian Americana, Autumn 1976 (p.34)

[223] Ibid. (p.39)

needs of the author, and each "presents a vision of the future – bright with Renaissance and post-Renaissance glory for France, fortunate for colonies which can boast English traditions, stubbornly millennial for the new United States of America."[224] Du Boccage and Moore create in Columbus a great leader and explorer, a new Ulysses; "Barlow portrays the Admiral as one whose "virtuous steps" were "Pursued by avarice and blood." Barlow sees his discovery as "an event that fostered a national beginning."[225]

Du Boccage recreates the Odyssey in Columbus' adventure. The story begins with him informing a Caribbean leader of his home and his travels and remaining in that place a while, drawn by love of the chief's daughter, before an angel calls him back to his duty. Martin suggests that the latter scene contains also a strong Miltonian reference.[226] His men combat the natives of Haiti, and is courted by the Queen of the Amazons, who "vows vengeful warfare when he refuses her love."[227] These are less than opaque references, of course, to the adventures of Odysseus and the various people he meets and interacts with on the islands he visits. In all of these things, Madame Du Boccage represents the discovery of the Americas as a European event. The "*Vision de Colomb*" is a revelation to the explorer of "the vast consequences of his enterprise,"[228] which Martin calls a "tribute to Old World consequences of New World discovery, with an unabashed gallic bias directing the accents of Du Boccage's poetic voice." Like Barlow's, "It is not

[224] Martin, Terence. "Three Columbiads, Three Visions of the Future." *Early American Literature*. Vol.27, No.2, pp.128-134, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992 (p.128)
[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid. (pp.128-129)
[227] Ibid.
[228] Ibid.

a fun poem to read, but it can be fun to talk about."[229] The same sentiment was expressed by the *Edinburgh Review*, that

> We have no hesitation in saying that we consider him as a giant, in comparison with any of the pulling and paltry rhymsters, who disgrace our English literature by their occasional success. As an Epic poet, we do think his case is desperate; but, as a philosophical and moral poet, we think that he has talents of no ordinary value.[230]

Moore's *Columbiad* begins with Columbus' adventures in the Caribbean and his return to Europe, then relating missing details in a tale to the King. It contains its own three visions. One, from Raphael, tells of the northern parts of America, which will be settled by English explorers and which is apparently the favorite of God. The spirit of the Orinoco River narrates the northern continent as well, including the events of the American Revolution, and Michael fortifies the explorer for his future, including the schemes of his enemies. Moore, however, moves beyond the Revolution and envisions "a time of amity between England and a prosperous United States."[231] He still reserves some typical disparate remarks for the Native Americans. While:

> Du Boccage's *Columbiade* ends with a declaration that God's law has now been carried to the New World, vanquishing the powers of evil – while Moor's *Columbiad* concludes with honors bestowed upon the happy Admiral – Barlow's poem begins at a tragic end, with Columbus bemoaning "a world explored in

[229] Ibid. (pp.129-130)
[230] Woodress (1958, pp.268-269)
[231] Ibid. (p.131)

vain," Queen Isabella dead, and "cold hearted Ferdinand" offering stern injustice.[232]

This is a fitting place for Barlow to begin, a Revolutionary among Revolutionaries, who considered themselves perpetually wronged by their mother country and therefore on the cusp of slavish existence. The song to the Anacreontic tune "Adams and Liberty" testifies to these sentiments in its refrain:

And ne'er shall the sons of Columbia be slaves

While the earth shall bear a plant and the sea rolls its waves.[233]

It also follows that the Revolutionary republican Barlow should begin the tale with Columbus in chains, from the perspective of United States intellectuals and propagandists, who not only made the ironic claim that Europe (particularly Britain) would make slaves of them and the other nations and peoples, but who believed that, as the Old World had failed in its endeavors to reincarnate or to emulate Roman civilization and the New World ascended to make its own attempt. The sentiments, then, imply not only an injustice but an ingratitude for yet another ennobled figure, whom Americans ought then to take up and make a virtuous paragon of. Edward Simon corroborates this, that:

[i]t is a happy fact for Barlow's patriotism that Columbus was ultimately held in such disrepute by his Spanish Charges, as it allowed not only Barlow but other

[232] Ibid. (p.131)
[233] "Adams and Liberty." In Weybright, Victor. *Spangled Banner: The Story of Francis Scott Key*. New York: Farrar & Rinehart Inc. 1935 (p.144)

hagiographers to enlist Columbus – a staunch Italian Catholic trained in medieval scholasticism – in the cause of Anglo-American hegemony." [234]

Columbus was reconfigured in the epic, then, and in other early American literature "not as the servant of Catholic monarchs, but, rather, as the son of republicanism.

Barlow's preoccupation in *The Columbiad* seems to stem from his time spent as a diplomat, away from the country, and a resultant desire to reaffirm a collective national identity, and personal religious assumptions and metamorphoses. These are likely especially pronounced in the second version of the epic composition in compensation for the need of the prior for dedication to King Louis XVI, mainly in a bid for patronage, which produced much, arguably unnecessary, fawning over the French monarch. Martin follows the argument of Emory Elliott, that "Barlow's *Vision of Columbus* grew out of a resonant assessment of culture and self, while *The Columbiad*, produced after a lengthy separation from the United States in its formative years, embodies an effort both programmatic and anachronistic"[235] However, his methods, especially his breaking traditional epic form, although as visionary as his epic and at the turning point of a new literary era in the United States, seem in large part to have been a major hindrance to its popularity (to say nothing of his actual poetic talents). It was out of line with ancient epic, and it was out of line with the more recent recipients and modifiers of ancient epic, when it engaged with the entire tradition in its own unique way. Therefore, while it was a rather

[234] Simon (2017, p.92)
[235] Martin (1992, p.132)

competent philosophical composition, it has not always been given the recognition it arguably deserves as a rather visionary composition, if poetically incompetent.

Continuing in the discussion on the development of an American epic in an American literature, and nationalistic propaganda in poetry is Edward Simon. Where Barlow certainly borrows liberally from Milton, as he does from Virgil, he still uses the spatial orientation of the New World in the West to separate it from Europe and the Old World.

> Barlow subverts Milton's distinction between the prelapsarian and postlapsarian worlds to present a paradisal America, and thus to make a nationalist, political, commercial, and religious argument about the arrival of a new world order in the form of a United States of America. Barlow's claim about American exceptionality in *The Columbiad* hence functions as a type of "Paradise Found."[236]

This statement by Simon is further supported by the deliberate similarity one discovers in the text of *Paradise Lost* and *The Columbiad* which describes the Garden and the New World, respectively. Simon also points out the importance of the western direction in this case, since in the classical tradition and those who drew influence from it, including Dante, Hesperia was the Other land which was constantly drifting further west. And after Hesperia Barlow calls his messenger to Columbus.[237]

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[236] Simon (2017, p.89)
[237] Ibid. (pp.95-97)

His simultaneous adherence to and breaking from tradition, his use of epic and his departure from some of the major elements of, especially, martial epic (lack of a singular, nearly monarchic cultural hero, establishing *medias res* in the present rather than the past, etc.) contributed by their paradox to the formation of a rather unique form, unintuitively with the times, when "British poets like William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge were heralding a new poetics."[238] Barlow's own originality stands at the beginning of the formation of the American literary identity through the reformation of the hero and through the reformation of the literary perspective, as Edward Simon notes. His "particular conceit," in appropriating Columbus, the maltreated, underappreciated Italian Catholic under Spanish persecution, as the poster boy of (Americans') Western republicanism, "is crucial in challenging the traditional narrative that reads early American history entirely through an Anglocentric frame; indeed, Barlow was fascinated by Columbus' discovery of the Americas, and not just what would be the United States." In his roundly appropriating the narrative frameworks and perspectives of European and "Anglocentric" framing, New World Anglo-American, and (South/Central) Native American, "Barlow sees himself as the inheritor of the entire hemispheric conception of a wider America and not simply as an Englishman living in the Americas."[239]

His teleology in *The Columbiad* also makes of the United States a worthy and deserving inheritor of the new Western World,

> [secularizing] a postmillennialism into an argument for the United States' coming imperial greatness, ostensible spreading liberty throughout North, Central, and

[238] Conger (1999, 562-563)

[239] Simon, Edward. "Joel Barlow's Miltonic Epic and Western Directional Poetics." *Milton Studies*, Vol.58, pp.87-102, University Park: Penn State University Press, 2017 (p.92)

> South America… In his teleology, the United States is required to spread throughout that entire Western Hemisphere to fulfill his poem's eschatological argument.[240]

He combined this new, partially fabricated American story, which he had appropriated towards the formation of American literature, with the uniquely colonial preoccupation with the Romans and recreating Rome in America, creating what one could probably most aptly call a national poem of the United States, despite its underwhelming success.[241]

This can be found in the distinction he maintained between the Native Americans of South and Central America, versus those of North America, with whom British American colonists and United States civilians were in frequent conflict. Barlow's epic, on the subject of Native Americans, draws a distinction between the "noble savage" and the "red devil." Revolutionary colloquialism had established already the saying "behind every Red-Coat is a red devil," that is, the Native American allies of the British. Native Americans in the colonial/United States mindset were "in a word, sublime…" They were "admirable and alarming, noble and base, compassionate and cruel."[242]

He maintains this in books 5 and 2, reiterating the untamability, the faithlessness, and the dreadful rage and fury of "Indians;" and their wild nature, bent on massacre.[243] Treating the Native American subject of literature so permitted Barlow to maintain the antagonism with hostile nations of North America which the colonists and

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[240] Ibid. (p.99)
[241] Conger (1999, pp.558-559)
[242] Ibid. (p.559)
[243] Ibid. (pp.559-560)

the United States had and still struggled with while establishing a link to the ancient origins of America through the ennobled Native Americans who were further removed from New-World European imperial aspirations. He was at the same time, therefore, able to fashion a three sided narrative: with the original inhabitants of the land, which had to be acknowledged in one way or another, divided into one group, which was highly civilized and characterized as a fine model for their successors, the new Americans who brought their own civilization and civilizing aspects with them; and another group which was less or uncivilized, whom this new tribe of Americans would enlighten through conflict, per Barlow's own philosophy of nations.

Barlow's epic "asked its American readers to set aside negative images of Native peoples long enough to accept and embrace a Native American antiquity as their own."[244] His claim and his request would have been recognizable; they mimicked Locke's tabula rasa, equalizing all people in their natural state. At the same time, he creates a paradox of this in a division between the "types" of Native Americans, much as he tended to be paradoxical in the rest of his work. He then used this mythological fusion to raise up the American political experiment and institutions, with Capac's "feudal" society – with checks – incorporating "liberty, happiness, welfare, and an annual redistribution of land according to need. "Property" was a word that resonated throughout Europe…"[245] In these ways, as listed above, Barlow was able to pick and choose the virtues of all three traditions he used to contrive the morals of the epic, with the morals of the Old World

[244] Ibid. (p.563)
[245] Ibid. 568

which he reluctantly preserved; the revolutionary attitude of the American colonist; and the autochthonous origin stories of the Native Americans.

The discussion of the mythological fusion of European and American traditions makes further headway under the critical lens of LeAnne Howe.[246] In her article "Tribalography: The Power of Native Stories," Howe draws conclusions on what exactly "native stories" are and how they influence the people and the environments they find themselves in.

> They create people. They author tribes. America is a tribal creation story. Creation stories, as numerous as Indian tribes, gave birth to our people. It is with absolute certainty that I tell you now – our stories also created the immigrants who landed on our shores… our stories created them…[247]

It was a faith in narratives (that is, primarily the Bible) which kept the first British colonists going when they found themselves in aporia on the shores of America, until they heard from the natives their myths providing aetiology of corn planting. The most important narrative, she says, that

> the immigrants would hear from indigenous people was how to make a united nation. It is the eloquent act of unification that explains how America was created from a story. Native people created narratives that were histories and stories with the power to transform. I call this rhetorical space "tribalography."[248]

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[246] Howe, LeAnne. "Tribalography: The Power of Native Stories." *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, pp.117-125, Fall 1999

[247] Howe (1999, p.118)

[248] Ibid.

Before the final publication of the foundational political articles of the United States, Ben Franklin "proposed what was called the Albany Plan of Union, a proposal based on the philosophy of Indian confederations."[249] The delegates at the convention, of course, were aware of multiple confederations of the past (ex. the Greek Leagues, the Helvetii, the Iceni, and the Caledonians), but the underside of these, their political frameworks, were obscure. That a similar influence to that which existed in the Articles of Confederation existed in Barlow's poetry. Barlow's narrative falls directly in line with this. He took the narratives of his own people and those of his favorite natives, and combined them into the story he meant to establish the worth and the authority of the nation. By Howe's tribalography, the living stories of the natives continue their lives in the stories of the colonies and the United States, asserting various levels of influence on the story of the nation.[250] Barlow harnesses these influences for his own republican political purposes, making "a teleological argument for the American revolution as a distinctly "American" moment, with the United States seen as a summation and culmination of events that happened in the Americas outside of the borders of the nation itself."[251] The equation of George Washington with characters like Tupac Amaru II, the Incan belligerent against Spanish occupation, makes the American Revolution "a

[249] Ibid. p.122

[250] There is an interesting discussion, and perhaps one vital for the moment the United States, the successor of Barlow's epic plan (albeit outside of his designs), which the Native American community (arguably multiple others, including various other ethnic American demographics) has been arguing for some time about the importance of the narratives of each of those demographics which make up the nation which touts itself as the most diverse and tolerant in the world. In cases like this, the existence of the nation and its identity as we know it would not exist without the stories of Native Americans who contributed to it.

[251] Simon (2017, p.93)

distinctly radical, anticolonial event enacted for the benefit of the entire hemisphere and not just the formerly English colonists."[252]

Barlow's work was certainly not without critics. Indeed, it is still agreeable, for example, today that the aesthetics of the epic are wanting. He makes a far better political poet than an actual poet. There are in Barlow's philosophy, which influenced his epic, a set of considerable conundrums which need to be addressed in order to fully and properly understand the text. According to Gregg Camfield, contradictions in Barlow's work and philosophy can be explained by "developing contradictions of late eighteenth-century thought…"[253] Conflicts between Rousseau's proto-romanticism and the rationalism of the Encyclopedists, progressive and mechanical or cyclical models of history, and empirical and "idealistic" philosophies "eventually broke the humanistic consensus of Enlightenment thought into opposing camps of rational materialists and romantics."[254] Because Barlow was not the deepest or most original thinker, he "eclectically drew opposing ideals from his intellectual milieu without great regard for the systematic implications of his arguments."[255] Barlow wrote manifestos and propaganda. He was more concerned with "stimulating or justifying political actions than writing "the truth.""[256] Nevertheless, he did not simply follow the intellectual crowd of the time. He tried to hold onto the increasingly dated humanistic ideals. He had "a flexible and optimistic enough mind to find within Enlightenment tradition the tools to bridge the rifts

[252] Ibid.
[253] Camfield, Gregg. "Joel Barlow's Dialectic of Progress." *Early American Literature*, Vol.21, No.2, pp.131-143, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, Fall 1986 (p.131)
[254] Ibid.
[255] Ibid.
[256] Ibid. (p.132)

between opposing points of view."[257] He had a very open-minded approach, which some who rigorously apply themselves to singular philosophical, religious, or intellectual precepts tend to find disturbing, one which opens inroads to many possibilities, not without question, but without prejudice.

> His intriguing, though probably not completely conscious, originality lies in his leaps over conventional dilemmas using conventional thought. He tentatively advances a model of cultural relativity based on his adoptions of enlightenment models of "human nature," and, working from this base, he flirts with a model of progress based on a dialectic between the relative truths of culture and the absolute truths of "natural law."[258]

His conversion to Deism pulled him away from the idea of the Fall, justifying authority in opposition to the people, and adopted Locke's philosophy of government, which focuses on and represents the will of the people. Barlow's characteristically good law required:

> ... *that it be the perfect expression of the will of the nation*; its excellence is precisely in proportion to the universality and freedom and consent… Every man, as an individual, has a will of his own, and a manner of expressing it. In forming these individuals into society, it is necessary to form their wills into a

[257] Ibid.
[258] Ibid.

government; and in doing this, we have only to find the easiest and clearest mode of expressing their wills in a national manner. (*Convention 41*)"[259]

But Locke's political empiricism did not provide for or suggest cultural unanimity, or unanimous will. Barlow also nearly ignored the potential which Locke and his followers saw, for unanimous decision to be evil.

Barlow went to Fontenelle for his answer to this, claiming "[t]he *habit of thinking* has so much of nature in it… that it is a perfectly safe foundation for any system that we may choose to build upon it…for it is the only point of contact by which men communicate as moral associates."[260] So, Camfield says, Barlow defines away the problem of evil. He preserves the idea of the good in human nature, despite the presence of corruption, for the cause of corruption is contained within the good – a rather Christian idea, depending on the denomination, which is unsurprising considering Barlow's religious upbringing and flexible positionality.

This still leaves room for conflict, by nature, which Barlow considers the catalyst of progress, as mankind takes steps to resolving those problems.[261] Indeed, as Simon says that the epic-visionary nature of the poem (he places his focus on Milton, though the Virgilian influence is certainly present. And Virgil's vision scene for Aeneas has been no less influential on later literature, including upon Milton) is meant to focus the reader towards the redemption of their own world.

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[259] Ibid.
[260] Barlow. *Advice to the Privileged Orders* (pp.112-114) in Camfield (1986, p.134)
[261] In this way, Barlow could also justify violent conflict in extreme cases.

> As any reader of Milton's must also be a character in the grand, universal account of the human Fall and eventually redemption, individual readers of *The Columbiad* are by necessity, regardless of nationality, also participants in the future prophetic drama of Enlightenment political emancipation that Barlow depicts in the text.[262]

The involvement of the reader in the drama, which is in European tradition a development beginning, perhaps, with Virgil's vision of Aeneas, requires them to consider the consequences of the events for themselves, and how they will act accordingly. Whereas this became a moral issue for Milton's readers, contemplating the Fall of humanity into sin and their necessary redemption in the future, it became a political issue for Barlow's, who read about events which had happened during the author's lifetime, in which the author himself was involved, and many of the readers, compelling one to consider their place in the new world order which Barlow had imagined.

His conception of human efforts, however selfish, and their resolution in relation to the rest of the world and the common good, eventually amounts to something of a "zero-spin" universal view (from a modern perspective): that is, as the various revolving and moving objects within the universe, at the level of the whole, cancel each other out, producing a theoretical universe which equals in its entirety "0," the various self-interested actions of humans, too, will cancel. By this presumption, the possibility of evil is also further eliminated, albeit from a very patient, universal point of view.

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[262] Simon (2017, p.92)

This eliminates, however, the potential for his utopia, in which universal Will maintains society. This is not a refutation of Barlow's theory, to the man himself, but a naturally unnatural state of existence which is caused by a separation from nature. However, this naturally unnatural state must sustain itself by existing ever more separate from nature, which ought ultimately to destroy it. Barlow, then, seats himself, especially entering the nineteenth century, on the middle-class side of the class struggle of the 1800s, using the resources typically available only to the elite. This is fully in line with his republicanism, which relies, in the American experiment, on the assumption of equality for all men, which must over time become a preoccupation of the middle-class.[263]

Thus Barlow, Camfield argues, stands at the beginning "of an American tradition of institutionalized individualism, a tradition that vaunts individual action at the same time it ignores individual psychology, that vaunts individual virtue while attributing individual morality no large-scale consequences."[264] Hence the oddity, which was disliked by contemporary critics (elite critics), that none of Barlow's most potentially heroic figures were actually heroic enough according to the traditional European standard, is to be expected from a philosophy which so praises individuality, but must ultimately reduce that individuality to little or nothing. The republicanism of Barlow depends, as did the United States (Barlow included), faced with the great and awe-ful potential of a successful Washington with the entire Continental Army at his disposal, on the humility and the virtue of heroic individualism, tempered with good will. Hence the

[263] Camfield (1986, pp.135-139)
[264] Ibid. (pp.141-142)

epic poetry of Joel Barlow was composed with an intent to engender the United States and its leadership with these qualities, and to encourage its citizens, and those of the rest of the world, to strive to establish and keep a republican world order dependent on and containing the same virtues.

Continuing in this strain, Larry Cunningham discusses Barlow in the context of a literary political movement of international republicanism, especially as its members aimed to affect the upheaval and overthrow of monarchic governments across the world, noting the hopes and desires for republican governance to spread throughout as monarchy moved aside. These sentiments were particularly strong for France, given its recent history with the American Revolution.[265]

The Quasi War and the rise of Napoleon at the end of the eighteenth century was a great disappointment to the dreams of figures in the movement like Paine and Barlow, the latter of whom had long harbored a positive attitude toward France and French affairs.[266] *Advice to the Privileged Orders* and *The Conspiracy of Kings* were written in line with Barlow's efforts to establish and preserve republicanism in France,[267] which causes the first draft of his epic, *The Vision of Columbus*, to take on a certain irony in its dedication to and considerable patronage by Louis XVI, but its penning and publication before the *terminus post quem* Cunningham posits for the movement (1789-1798) may explain the problem away, in part. The French assistance to the American Revolution surely played no small part in it. Much of this reiterates what has been established: Joel

[265] Cunningham, Larry D. *Thomas Paine, Joel Barlow, Philip Freneau, and International Republicanism*. Lubbock: Texas Digital Library, 1971 (p.1)
[266] Ibid. (p.3)
[267] Ibid. (p.23)

Barlow was a fanatical republican. The Jay Treaty soured his relationship with many American political figures, including Washington and Madison, but he was eventually and generally reconciled with them upon his retirement.

Cunningham's main interest in *The Vision of Columbus* is in its "impact on international republican concepts." The poem, he suggests, contains elements of Barlow's developing philosophy which "can be seen as definitely international in character."[268] He echoes the same paradox which Camfield points out, that:

> Barlow seems uncertain about the relationship between humanity and the nature of government in America. Indeed, in one sense, man is nothing more than a mere puppet in the hands of the omnipotent God. But shortly after the poem was published, Barlow began the transition from a religious traditionalist to a scientifically oriented materialist… By the time he wrote *The Columbiad*, the change was complete: Barlow's earlier religious bias is not evident in the poem.[269]

It was one of the many paradoxes Camfield pointed out, that the individual of Barlow's philosophy of humanity is blessed with utmost potential and freedom of action and morality, but apparently is possessed of no psychological mechanisms by which these might be influenced, and exists nearly in a socio-political vacuum, ignorant of al large-scale consequence.[270]

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[268] Ibid. (pp.58-59)
[269] Ibid. (p.55)
[270] Camfield (1986, pp. 141-142)

Of all the examples presented in this volume, Barlow is probably the closest American to achieving what one might call "global citizenship." His diplomatic endeavors do no small part in making this a reality, but the manner in which he pursued this plays the major role. While Barlow, patriot that he was, was concerned with playing his part in creating the American Literature which so many of early Americans desired, he was also wary of the corruptive ability which power and influence had, which would become a hazard if one were to come to dominate others, on the personal, national, or international stage. Indeed, Barlow showed even a wariness for George Washington, with whom he was on relatively good terms. "During the American war," he says,

> and especially towards its close, General Washington might be said to possess the hearts of all the Americans. He recommendation was law, and he was able to command the whole power of that people for any purpose of defence. The philosophers of Europe considered this as a dangerous crisis to the cause of freedom… [Caesar, Sulla, Marius, Alcibiades, Pericles, Cromwell, etc.] ... after he did lay [his arms] down, then came the miracle, – his virtue was cried up to be more than human; and it is by this miracle of virtue in him, that the Americans are supposed to enjoy their liberty at this day.[271]

The virtue of Washington, in this case, is considered so exceptional because it remains, even at a time which is most opportune for martial virtue in the man to turn to excess and tyranny without consequence, tempered and in check, as was the demand for the ranking gentleman, outlined by Leverenz, Cohen, and others at length.

[271] Barlow, in Hellman (1971, pp.63-64)

Barlow's virtues were inspired by traditional Biblical virtues and those Classical virtues which were most in line with them, changing over time to fit his needs has he navigated the world of Enlightenment philosophy and eventually came to prefer it over his Calvinist upbringing. His hope was to influence the world as best he could toward the formation of a global republican utopia. Part of this dream was the establishment in the United States of a shining role model for the rest of the world, an enlightened republic whose virtue and success would be too enticing to ignore. This was achieved through the conception of a flexible, if questionable, philosophy of humanity, which permitted him to ascribe to or demand from humanity the best of all conceivable traits and habits, while disregarding the problems of assuming those traits to be universal, and disregarding the complications of instilling those values in an entire world of people. In effort to affect this among his fellow United States and, he hoped, global citizens, he composed what he intended to be the epic of the Americas, beginning in the mythical past and ending with the open opportunities presented to the world by the success of the American Revolution, showcasing the same philosophy and its ideal character traits in the model characters. His desire to witness, indeed to help bring about, a global republic, and his epic models for *The Vision of Columbus* and *The Columbiad* are a testament to his preferences for the Classical tradition he was exposed to throughout his schooling and his intellectual life. Like Brackenridge, he never saw his ideals realized. Unlike the frontier politician, Barlow appears not to have taken this too hard. Little of the cynicism of the other writer appears to have shown itself in Joel Barlow's literary footprint.

CHAPTER 4

KEY: THE ACCIDENTAL ANTHEM

In the wake of the Revolution, as the United States entered into the War of 1812, Francis Scott Key stamped his name on the list of American war poets with "The Star-Spangled Banner." Key was indeed a patriot, which is unsurprising, given that his father, by his enormous estate, became a major supplier of flour for Washington's Continental Army during the Revolution.[272] He gave an annual speech for the Washington Society in Alexandria on the day of the President's birthday, which was stirring enough to merit an immediate motion for publication,[273] and would later in life join the effort in the War of 1812, during which time he would undergo the events which inspired his most famous song. This was not the only martial composition in Key's arsenal, small as that was. As is his best-known composition, so is Key's other major military poem rather bereft of the classical tradition, save for its constant weaving together the olive and the laurel in the refrain. It nevertheless is a composition of rousing measures, including the celebration of letting infidel blood.[274] If it is lacking a demonstration of classical martial terminology, iconography, or virtues, it is certainly not foreign to the calling cards of these. Key himself was a man educated enough to be aware of these, and the tradition of the "Song" and "The Star-Spangled Banner" would support this.

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[272] Deleplaine, Edward D. *Francis Scott Key: Life and Times*. New York: Biography Press, 1937 (p.5)

[273] Ibid. (pp. vi, 101)

[274] Key, Francis Scott. "Song" in *The Poems of Francis Scott Key*, ed. David B. McCoy, Massillon: Spare Change Press (Stanza 4)

Key, though a highly religious man, never pursued divinity as our previous examples have. Nor was he terribly concerned with influencing the affairs of the nation through poetry, or even so much through his own practice in law, where, although he did take up cases for the abolitionist cause on occasion, he refused to involve himself greatly in politics. He had contacts who were more involved, and his interactions, like those with John Randolph of Roanoke, demonstrate his tendencies as such. They also reveal that Key harbored similar sentiments for Classics as did even the most apathetic of well-educated Americans, that is, a highly utilitarian approach; which saw Key, even as he trended more toward a pious avoidance of certain classical topics, watching for an *egregia virtus paucorum,* which he became acquainted with via Sallust, among his fellow citizens in the early 19th century. Nevertheless, the actions and the poetic compositions of the man still demonstrate an intrenched (or grown) classical influence in his character, especially in his estimations about the martial expectations for the man of the time. Key was a proponent of active participation in military activities, when the defense of the nation was at hand. He was also, as said above, a patriot, and was not above composing propagandic song lyrics about the grand exploits of servants of the nation. This attitude is unsurprising considering the list of classical authors he had read, which included Horace (see below). Key's work, then, perhaps less consciously did, as the works of Brackenridge and Barlow, create a fusion of European-American and Classical patriotism and martial masculine expectations.

He was sent to the grammar school of St. John's College in Annapolis at age 10. It would naturally turn out many patriots of the United States, being founded by four signers of the Declaration of Independence. At its opening ceremony, "Rev. Ralph

Higginbotham, rector of St. Anne's Church of Annapolis, spoke on "The Advantages of a Classical Education."" The same Reverend "had agreed to teach Latin and Greek in the College. In order to give a thorough knowledge of grammar to the younger children, daily exercises were given "with critical exactness." Strict attention was to be directed towards Latin and Greek, for an acquaintance with "the learned languages" was thought to be the surest foundation for other branches of literature."[275] While attending he studied in successive years the works of Livy, Xenophon, Plato, and Demosthenes; Well's *Dionysus*, Horace, Longinus, Aristotle's *Poetics*, and Quintilian; Epictetus and Cicero; along with logic, metaphysics, moral philosophy, and civil history, among other subjects. He became familiar, while there or afterward, with Martial and Ovid, both of whom he translated.[276]

While he was quite extensively trained in Classical literature, Key was not as enthusiastic about many of its principles as the previous two examples. Key was an extremely religious man (after his youth),[277] which created a block for him when it came to much of the Enlightenment literature on Christianity. He was a pacifist on his Christian merits, but, as he did demonstrate, was not opposed to going into battle, if absolutely necessary.[278] Rather than occupy himself extensively with philosophy, he went into law practice, where he could professionally practice his own moral code. Roughly aligned with the Federalist party (though he was reluctant to engage in politicking), Key was rather set against the idea of war with the British in 1812 – until they showed up in his "backyard." As Victor Weybright was keen to point out: "'The Star Spangled Banner'

[275] Ibid. (p.10)
[276] Ibid. (pp.14, 21-22, 74)
[277] Ibid. (pp.65-69)
[278] Ibid. (pp.74, 85)

was a war song, yet Key opposed the war which produced it. Not until Maryland was invaded did he bear arms."[279] Once hostile ships appeared on the Maryland coast, Key was quick to join an artillery company in defense of the State.[280] As noted in the introduction, he was keen about Randolph of Roanoke's Sallust quotation, "*egregia virtus paucorum.*" "It struck me forcible, and I believe it admirably suited for these times…"[281]

The composer of the most famous war song in United States history had his provisos about praising martial valor. As many others of the time (we have seen at least one of them already here), Key reserved his encouragement to and participation in war for the correct circumstances. Indeed, the fourth and final stanza of "The Star-Spangled Banner" reads in the fifth line "Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just." Key sounds out in the trend among elite American martial poets: there is a certain contempt for war which one develops when it is unjust, poorly led, or exceedingly prolonged, but this does not seem to detract from the general acceptance, if not support, of physical or martial virtues themselves. Then, in most cases, it seems the most negative of the martial poets has but a lesson to convey to the reader: "conquer we must, when our cause it is just," a sentiment one could pinpoint in some of the ancient authors Key was familiar with.

Horace (whom Key was familiar with), for example, discourages the notorious impieties of the later Republic and the Empire. The warning against decadence of Ode

[279] Weybright (1935, pp. 57, 68-69)

[280] Though it seems he saw little real combat, he was witness to and participant in the disastrous retreat which left the national capitol open to be fired.

[281] Quoted in Weybright (1935, p. 74-75)

3.3, which the poet must qualify, surely for his and his literature's safety, is a commentary on the sort of impious, or at least nontraditional practices many Romans had picked up by this time, and which arguably was a partial factor in the rise of the Empire. The ode is a caution against the vices considered opposite Roman virtues, a warning to the just man (presumably the statesman) not to yield to the mob or the tyrant, nor to be fearful of natural forces. The reward for this unflappable incorruptibility is attached to figures who achieved immortality, those being Pollux, Hercules, Caesar, Bacchus, and Quirinus. The poem also finished, after a long monologue from Juno, with a less friendly omen about the explosion of Rome's decadence.

But this fate for the warlike Quirites

I speak with this promise, lest they, being of excesses in piety,

Being faithful in their actions, wish

To rebuild the roofs of ancestral Troy:

With mournful nourishment renascent,

The fortune of Troy will be remade, with tragic calamity,

With me leading victorious throngs,

The wife and sister of Jupiter;

If thrice the bronze wall resurges

By its maker Phoebus, thrice it shall perish

Cut down by my Argives, thrice the wife,

Captive, will lament husband and sons.[282]

In Ode 1.29, he promotes philosophy to young Iccius. Or, rather, he lightly shames Iccius for abandoning his pursuit of philosophy. This poem, while full of the typical notes of conquest and glory in battle, quickly turns to a less favorable zeal, pointing out, in a brief lamentation, the fact that Iccius has so eagerly deserted his philosophy books for the sword. Quinn appears to have the right of it, however, that the poem is more indulgent than condemning. The greatest grievance appears to be the disappointment of a mentor, culminating in a question of impossible deeds: in essence, “who might deny it, since you have stretched out your books, collected from across the world, of the noble Paenatus, and your Socratic home, in exchange for the Hibric lorica, having promised better things.” That is, one should suppose no one would be able to stop the plans of so convicted a student, who nevertheless has seen it necessary to put down his books. Quinn states, "no doubt it is Iccius' impulsiveness… which Horace deplores, not his patriotism; no doubt, too, H., having thrown over his philosophical studies to join the army of Brutus, is disposed to be indulgent."[283] Indeed, the playful nature of the text beginning the poem, *acrem militiam paras* "you're planning a tough/harsh campaign" suggests a level of command far beyond the more likely low ranking Iccius. Quinn cleverly translates "going to give them a rough time."[284] One might suggest "going to give them the business/give 'em what for." Horace’s indulgence of patriotism, not impulsiveness or decadence, along with Propertius’, and both their appreciation for the

[282] Horace. *Odes*. Ed. Kenneth Quinn. London: Bristol Classical Press, 2002. 3.3
[283] Quinn (2002, p.178-179)
[284] Ibid.

mos maiorum suggests that, similar to the most reluctant of Greek poets, their grief was not with the act of war, but with its wrongful engagement and execution. The constant undertones of their poetry one would expect to carry through and inform especially the native reader, aware of the nuances of the language. Hence the famous line of Ode 3.2: *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*.

Being opposed to the War of 1812 (if briefly), Key fell beside the Federalist Party. There exists with this loose identification an interesting line of thought about intent in Key's poetry. Though it takes some finesse to render the argument convincing, there is an element of plausibility to some of the suggestions William Coleman makes in his 2002 and 2015 publications.[285] Coleman begins, relative to Key, with the legacy of the Federalists surrounding music. The Federalists, he says, saw music as a "public catalyst of true patriotic feeling."[286] In their endeavors to "theorize a place for music in America's early political culture… Federalist elites formulated a top-down approach to popular patriotic music that spoke to their hope of persuading… the public to defer to the views of an elite-born class of Federalist leaders."[287] Key and his poetry are placed in line with this agenda.

In so aligning Key and "The Defense of Fort M'Henry," Coleman suggests deliberation in the composition of the poem; that "Key's moment of patriotic inspiration occurred within a particular partisan context… its composition built on a longer legacy of

[285] Coleman, William. *Harnessing Harmony: Music, Politics, and Power in the United States, 1788-1865*. Chapel Hill. University of North Carolina Press, 2002; "The Music of a well tun'd State": "The Star Spangled Banner" and the development of a Federalist Musical Tradition." *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol.35, No.4, pp.599-629, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Winter 2015

[286] Coleman (2002, p.5)

[287] Coleman (2015, pp.600-601)

Federalist musical thought and action…"[288] This implies: "Key's wish was never to express his patriotism as part of a historically distinct experience; it was rather to project his particular patriotic ideals as a universal, timeless impulse," and that

> Accounts of the song which focus on the single moment "have missed the broader political context in which a southern federalist lawyer like Key operated, and… obscure his connection to this longer tradition of Federalists who had theorized and used music as part of a political strategy to define the nation on their terms."[289]

The argument is an interesting one, and has some merit to it, which will be discussed, but the intuition that the song was penned expressly for, or with notably heavy influence from the Federalist tradition seems to warrant more support. Key, as noted above, was rather reluctant to engage in politics. At the same time, his being associated with the Federalists, even loosely (leaving aside what we know about his own convictions), would direct him away from war, but the song itself is a patriotic composition on a successful, rallying defense against the British Navy; a defiant war song, a little counter to the motives of the party.

There is a comment Coleman makes which buoys the theory: that "The Star Spangled Banner" represented a culmination of Federalist orchestrated efforts to use music as a way of convincing the public to unify through common consent to government power."[290] The publication of the tune in line with a Federalist agenda to unify the public is quite plausible. Key himself did not first publish the tune, but brought it to the Captain,

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[288] Coleman (2002, p.5)
[289] Coleman (2015, pp.600, 602
[290] Ibid.

Judge Joseph Nicholson, who had been at Fort McHenry through the night.[291] It was Nicholson who, impressed with it, brought it to the press and saw it distributed. This could make the assumed agenda more or less possible, depending on whether one wants to assume it on behalf of the Federalist party or of Key. That Key penned the song, in the heat of the moment, during a siege, either outcome of which could have ended his life entirely or as he knew it (a ship sunk or a nation further humiliated, if not completely lost), for the express purpose of benefitting the Federalist cause into which he had refused to fully insert himself is a little far-fetched.

That the song was penned to capture and express patriotism about this historically distinct event and experience, I think, is easily acceptable, as is an intention to project those ideals contained within the song, about the incident, "as a universal, timeless impulse."[292]Along the same lines, that Key intended the song, if published, as a remedy to partisanship[293] is also plausible, regardless of the fact that any person who had just nearly seen their country laid waste might just as easily be inclined toward such an effort.

Coleman's points about the tradition of music and its power in America, nevertheless, seem solid. That "[s]ong clearly gave these early Americans an accessible and explosive medium through which to hash out their differences," and that "[t]he accessibility of the form made the power to control it all the more alluring"[294] is quite agreeable. And that members of the Federalist party (perhaps Key himself), elites of the nation who would have been well-read, if not quite so well as Key, thought song a strong

[291] Weybright (1935, pp.148-150)
[292] Coleman (2015, p.600)
[293] Ibid. (p.623)
[294] Coleman (2002, pp.2-3)

tool for the persuasion of the masses makes perfect sense. A reading in Plato[295] (which Key, at least, had), absent of any actual real-world experience, may be enough to reach the same conclusion.

While pinning him as a die-hard Federalist, let alone one who was politically active, is more whimsical a task, if at all possible, applying Key's other collective life experiences to his compositions is an easy matter. Key's choice of tune for his songs, the banquet "Song" on the Barbary Wars and "The Star-Spangled Banner," is representative of his upbringing.

Key's songs, those two we are concerned with here, come from a lyrical tradition that dated back at least to the 1770s. Weybright covers in brief the tradition of "To Anacreon in Heaven," or the "Anacreontic Song" of the Anacreontic Society.[296] The eighteenth-century gentleman's club was apparently quite well known, and its tune was common in gentlemen's clubs like the Anacreontic Society and the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks. The song allegedly proves to other societies the cleverness of the Anacreontic in both composing and naming for themselves. "Richard S. Hill's rigorous study… brought the number of parodies up to that time to eighty-four, and the work of later scholars increased that number."[297] The beginnings of the tune in Greek-learned gentlemen's societies and its continuation among the elite of the time meant that Key's composition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" to it was to be expected. We have evidence that Key was fully aware of it, not the least of which is his lesser-known martial tune.

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[295] *Republic* 3.398e-399e

[296] Weybright (1935, pp.137-148)

[297] Hildebrand, David K. "Bicentenary Essay: Two National Anthems? Some Reflections on the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the "Star Spangled Banner" and its Forgotten Partner, "The Battle of Baltimore." *American Music*, Vol.32, No.3, pp.253-271, Champaign: University of Illinois Press, Fall 2014 (p.259)

> This song, pedestrian as it now seems, carried the tune of "To Anacreon in Heaven" down the Ohio and the Mississippi, to every army post west of the Alleghanies… Key heard it during his summer holiday at Terra Rubra in 1798, and within five years was himself to employ the tune in a song.[298]

"The Star-Spangled Banner," Key's own arrangement, would be the one which cemented this product of the classical tradition in American history to the present. The other of Key's few martial poems follows the same cadence as the National Anthem written about American engagements in the Mediterranean. It goes so far as to exult having "stained the blue waters with infidel blood."[299] Its violent streak is probably best explained by this very line sampled; Key's acceptance of war and violence into his code of virtues was dependent on the spring whence they came, which was for him, as it was for many early Americans, two sided. One side drew from the learned elite society which was taught to read in the classical tradition, the other from the Christian tradition; and Key's God was an angry God.

This intermediary between the Anacreontic tradition and "The Star-Spangled Banner" actually contains more references to the classical world than most of Key's other compositions, in the refrain: "mixed with the olive, the laurel shall wave, / and form a bright wreath for the brows of the brave."[300] The line, cleverly written, brings the song each time back to a fitting place for Key, one where the olive is twined with the laurel,

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[298] Weybright (1935, p. 145)

[299] Key, Francis Scott. "Song" in *The Poems of Francis Scott Key*, ed. David B. McCoy Massillon: Spare Change Press (Stanza 4)

[300] Ibid.

where peace is with glory. Before this came the more directly classical song arranged for the tune by Robert Treat Paine, “Adams and Liberty,” which includes the stanzas below:

Ye sons of Columbia, who bravely have fought
For those rights which unstained from your sires have descended,
May you long taste the blessings your valor has bought,
And your sons reap the soil which their fathers defended.
Mid the reign of mild peace,
May your nation increase,
With the glory of Rome and the wisdom of Greece;
And ne’er shall the sons of Columbia be slaves,
While the earth bears a plant, or the sea rolls its waves.

And…

Let fame to the world sound America’s voice;
No intrigue can her sons from their government sever;
Her pride is her Adams; her laws are his choice,
And shall flourish till Liberty slumbers forever.
Then unite heart and hand,
Like Leonidas’ band,
And swear to the god of the ocean and land
That ne’er shall the sons of Columbia be slaves
While the earth bears a plant, or the sea rolls its waves.[301]

[301] Key, “Adams and Liberty” Stanzas 1&9, in Weybright (1935, p.144)

These lines, along with the entirety of the "Star-Spangled Banner" and the contents of stanzas two and four of the "Song":

To a far distant shore, to the battle's wild roar,

They rushed, your fair fame and your rights to secure.

And

Our fathers, who stand on the summit of fame,

Shall exultingly hear of their sons the proud story:

How their young bosoms glow'd with the patriot flame,

How they fought, how they fell, in the blaze of their glory…[302]

do set a trend which culminated in the United States National Anthem, the song preserved to immortalize the night it sings: that is, the insistence upon the fame and the endurance of the nation. For the message to endure, so must the song as well. This raises a question: How did a song of the elite become the favorite of the entire nation, to the extent that it became a national anthem? David Hildebrand has explored this in examination of "The Star-Spangled Banner" beside another song: "The Battle of Baltimore."

"The Battle of Baltimore," written at the same time, served the same purpose as "The Star-Spangled Banner." Both tunes were meant to celebrate "the decisive turning

[302] Key "Song" Stanzas 2 & 4 In McCoy (pp.2-5)

point in the war: the preservation of Baltimore from capture and certain devastation."[303] The same class conflicts and divisions existed in song as they did in poetry at the time. One is a lower-class ballad which was mildly popular in its time. The other is an upper-class song which was highly successful and widespread in space and time.

One way Key's carried so well is that, in part, as Weybright attested (above), it was already somewhat well-known. The two were a part of a tradition of *contrafactum* which had existed at least since the Middle Ages,[304] which saw the parodying of songs practically into the age of copyright. Essential to understanding "The Star-Spangled Banner," says Hildebrand, is to consider it as it was, a song to a known melody, to be sung aloud, not read to oneself, even aloud. And the two examples he uses were "perhaps the two most frequently parodied tunes of the years between 1770 and 1820." In fact, "Yankee Doodle" was probably more widespread. How then was "The Battle of Baltimore" beaten out? "The choice of tune is often essential to the meaning of new lyrics."[305]

In a list of other songs, the most successful are typically those which are best fitted to the tune and the occasion, that is, those which best positively or negatively relate the events of the parody to the original lyrics. "John Anderson, My Jo," for example turned to "James Madison, My Jo." The singer of the song is an old woman, recalling falling in love with a man in his prime, compared to Americans' state, being "married" to "the petite, elderly, acquiescent Madison." "St. Patrick's Day in the Morning" changed

[303] Hildebrand (2014, p.255)
[304] Ibid. (p.256)
[305] Ibid.

into the similar "September Tenth in the Morning."[306] "The Irish Jaunting Car" became "The Irish Volunteer:" from a song which putters around the county, sputtering lyrics here and there at the expense of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, to a battle tune which the Union and Confederate Irish used to spite their enemies. "Johnny I Hardly Knew Ye" underwent hardly any change into "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," and "Whiskey in the Jar" took on a slightly more serious tone in "We'll Fight for Uncle Sam."

When it comes to a memorable parody, one needs highly memorable lyrics which are relatable to the original, and likely an equally memorable lyricism to it. Successful songs which were preserved well enough to gain popularity and to survive the tradition to the present took on similar lyrical compatibility to the original parodied song. "The Irish Volunteer," a Union song, was set to the tune of "The Irish Jaunting Car." It bears slight modifications to the scale progression, where the refrain of "The Irish Volunteer" alters the original's step-by-step slide down the scale in the first two bars ("Then if you want to hire me, step into Mickey Mar's / And ask for Larry Doolan and his Irish Jaunting Car") to the rising "horn-calls" of the vocals, moving up and down in fifths, resembling a battle trumpet or hunting horn. The change is natural considering the tune's history in the field in America. The later song also adopts more repetitive but changing lyrics in its refrain.

[306] Ibid. I searched, out of curiosity, for this tune, on a hunch it would be the same or similar to another Irish tune I know, "Christmas Day in the Morning," (it is not the same, but in a family of very "set-able" tunes, including the two above and the "St. Patrick's Day Reel") and found by a touch of serendipity a YouTube video of it, which tickled my wife and me to death: that the jaunty, upbeat march was set to play over a slideshow of battlefield paintings of the Civil War, where it had seen some play time. The effect of the bouncy tune was that the otherwise gallantly portrayed American soldiers consequently looked something more out of a Pythonesque parody, as if they were charging foolishly to the edge of a cliff (perhaps there is a metaphorical lesson of civil wars to be learned here…)

Both songs are about a native Irishman, one still there and one (the volunteer) having made the move to America, where he enlisted. “The Irish Jaunting Car” begins a lively enough song, telling of Larry Doolan and his profession, but quickly moves on to the visit of Queen Victoria to Ireland “for her health,” a latent metonymic reference through the Crown, the Queen, visiting Ireland, literally for her health, more seriously as a representative of her people, who conscripted the Irish to fight in their wars, including the Crimean. It follows up with direct references to the war, the Russian bear, the Connaught Rangers (whom the singer imagines bringing home the Russian Czar), a hopeful thought of the end of all wars, and a final note in the last stanza:

> They say they are in want of men, the French and English too,
>
> And it’s all about their commerce now they don’t know what to do,
>
> But if they come to Ireland Our jolly sons to mar,
>
> I’ll drive them to the devil in my Irish jaunting car.[307]

“The Irish Volunteer,” part of two heavily researched albums of David Kincaid, reproducing Irish American music from before and during the Civil War, follows another native Irishman who made the trip to America. It begins its forays into war-poetry with the singer’s father who died on Vinegar Hill in 1798, with the refrain raising the “the harp of Erin,” the flag under which the singer will fight and fall “like Irish volunteers.” It moves on through the events of the Civil War with “the traitors of the South,” the

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[307] Kenedy, Patrick John. *The Universal Irish Song Book: A Complete Collection of the Songs and Ballads of Ireland*. New York: Forgotten Books 1898, 2018 (pp. 13–14)
Irish Jaunting Car. theyoungwolfetones. YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yFhm9A1anA Accessed 04/22/2023

singer's enlistment, and the refrain: "Then fill the ranks and march away, no traitors do we fear. / We'll drive them all to blazes, says the Irish volunteer." Among the later stanzas it includes on comparable to the "Irish Jaunting Car" above:

> Now when the Prince of Wales came over here and made a hubbabboo,
>
> Oh Everybody turned out, you know, in gold and tinsel too.
>
> But then the good old Sixty-Ninth didn't like these lords or peers.
>
> They wouldn't give a damn for kings, the Irish volunteers.[308]

The same dismissiveness of the enemy and the noble or bourgeois powers that would send the lower-classes to war exists in both, creating a pair of songs with a remarkable synergy.

The songs "Johnny I Hardly Knew Ye" and "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" are similarly comparable. The tunes are unchanged, unlike the previous example, but the lyrics have subtle, potent alterations. They nevertheless synthesize with the same efficacy. The Irish original laments the fact that Johnny has gone abroad and come home without most of his limbs. The American parody begins hopefully anticipating Johnny's return from war, with laurels and gaiety, but turns desperate as this becomes less and less likely; "and we'll all drink stone wine when Johnny comes marching home," the

[308] The Irish Volunteer. David Kincaid. YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJf0hgcJavo&list=PLYmzDSE77EXe8jNPT75TqmQltripe98HB&index=4 Accessed 04/22/2023

implication being that, one way or another, there will be a celebration of Johnny's life when he comes home.[309]

These two American songs were preserved in their lyrical traditions because their words fit the original well. "The Star-Spangled Banner," departs somewhat from the original "To Anacreon in Heaven," but seems to have had some preservational assistance from the highly used and varied tradition, by that time, and by the events themselves and the timing of the song's publication. Marc Ferris suggests that the combination of divine providence, praise for the valor of the defenders, and subtle touches like "inclusive pronouns like "ours," "us," and "we" when referring to the nations," or "catchphrases "freemen" and "peace.""[310]

The Anacreontic Society's song was well-known - in particular known to Key - and the metrical and lyrical complexity offered by "The Star Spangled Banner" was more preferable, and more fruitful to Key than that of "Yankee Doodle" to the anonymous author of the sister parody, contributing to both its selection and its continuation: Key was more likely to select the more complex metrics, but the already widespread status of the tune made those more complex lyrics more comfortable for those first encountering the new words for the tune. And, "Unlike the thoughtful, reflective verses by Key, "The Battle of Baltimore" is descriptive, unfolding chronologically through its inner eleven verses, each much shorter than Key's four. They are crammed with blunt factual

[309] When Johnny Comes Marching Home – A Song of the American Civil War. Alamo YTC Germany. YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tIsXLyZcWI&list=PLYmzDSE77EXe8jNPT75TqmQltripe98HB&index=12, Accessed 04/22/2023. (Music by Mitch Miller and Chorus).

The Irish Rovers- Johnny I hardly knew ye. Mahaim13. YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFUTHcjiZGo, Accessed 04/22/2023

[310] Ferris, Marc. *Star Spangled Banner: The Unlikely Story of America's National Anthem*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014 (pp.19-20)

information, rather than descriptive imagery."[311] I would also argue that the slow, steady, rising and falling of "The Star-Spangled Banner," directly in line with the thirds in the chords' octaves, versus the step-by-step, jolting rise and fall of "Yankee Doodle" and "The Battle of Baltimore" made the pensive lines of Key all the more effective.

The "Anacreontic Song," its melody, and its society were apparently well liked and known enough to attract a visit from Franz Joseph Haydn. And, as has been suggested above, Ferris corroborates that the tune, despite its allegedly difficult meter and range (which I maintain are not quite so inaccessible as scholars suggest) was wildly popular in the United States by the time Key was composing, "undergirding at least eighty-four other compositions written before 1820. In addition to the well-known 1798 campaign song, *Adams and Liberty*, other parodies included *The Fourth of July, Union of the Gods*, and a lyric that began "To the Gods who preside, o'er the nation below."[312]

The oddity of using a "British drinking song" for the United States National Anthem, "a bawdy, boozy ballad written around 1775,"[313] is (lyrically) more harmoniously resolved than it seems. In the first place, the use of a "British drinking song" is not at all far-fetched, insulting, or in any way untoward for a nation which was originally comprised of (or at least represented by) primarily former British citizens. The song was a part of their musical culture from the beginning and, even despite the desperate desires of mainly elite members of the nation to distance themselves from the culture of the Old World, even they could not deny their love for certain tunes, especially any so popular as the inspiration of the "Star-Spangled Banner."

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[311] Ibid. (259-261)
[312] Ibid. (pp.21-22)
[313] Ibid. (pp.20-21)

The song was also, as Ferris notes,

> the anthem, or the "constitutional song," of the convivial gentlemen's club known as the Anacreontic Society… The original lyrics of *The Anacreontic Song* concocted a fable populated by Greek and Roman gods to justify the club's stated passion for bending the elbow and bellowing lusty songs.[314]

The stanzas of the original song are ultimately dedicated to the justification of the club's existence (including those of its practices which one might censure), with assistance from various deities who join in the revelry themselves. Thus, the altered form of the tune with the lyrics of "The Star-Spangled Banner," ultimately testifying and looking forward to the continued endurance of the United States, is most fitting for the original application of the "Anacreontic Song" it parodies. "The Star-Spangled Banner," then, constitutes an apt parody of the original song, a familiar tune with a memorable, but known melody, and a timely, stirring, and encouraging anthem for a hopeful nation which had just recently been humbled.

Furthermore, "The Battle of Baltimore" relies more on mockery of the enemy than the contemplation of the glory which was snatched from the moment of peril.[315] Key was apparently, like Brackenridge who felt a little guilty about slandering General Carleton, too gentlemanly to insult in the lines of his parody the same general and admiralty with whom he had just dined – during the battle.[316] His song contains material within its stanzas on the British as they were driven from the fort and back onto their

[314] Ibid. (p.21)
[315] Hildebrand (2014, pp.259-261)
[316] Ibid. (262)

ships. He reserves for these the appellations “hireling and slave,” their mercenary nature or servile dispositions under their monarchy, which were either ignoble, slavish, or both. By nature, and by action, they lay outside the scope of what Key perceived to be American existence, one of noble, free, republican men. His reluctance to insult the Admiralty and the Generals, aside from the statements above, probably stems also in part from the fact that these men were indeed of a similar privilege to himself. They were in large part freer than their countrymen whom they sent to fight and die on another nation’s soil. Nevertheless, Key did pick out members of the British Navy to chastise, and he had attempted to use the far more ruthless Rear Admiral Cockburn as a negative figure to unify Americans against the British.

All of these add up to the resolution between the two parody songs, and in the process tell us about both Key and American society at the time. There were indeed specific reasons why Key selected the tune to which he set his song. It was a song typically known to the elite, from an elite tradition in the gentlemen’s clubs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, tracing back to the song of Anacreon, born of the elite classical education. There were also specific reasons why that song became so popular. Among these, important is the continually growing fame of the *tune,* to which the *song* was set, in America. Key was penning “The Star-Spangled Banner” in 1814, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Around this time, a few things were happening to the classes of America and their values. As Leverenz states, the patrician and the artisan were coming into conflict with the new emerging middle-class entrepreneur. In a class conflict in a democratic society like that in the United States of the time, social mobility was a possibility, increasingly as elements of the upper classes, like the “Anacreontic

Song" or classical texts became more accessible. At the same time, as Key's own virtues show, some of the more physical, martial elements of the standards of manhood for the elite were beginning to die out, perhaps narrowing the gap. On top of being an icon of United States patriotic literature, "The Star-Spangled Banner" functions by its preservation as a mark of changes occurring in the social order of the United States, in which Key himself seems to have been taking part.

Key, then, is an important and unfortunately understudied literary figure of America. His poetry falls in line with the increasingly prevalent trend of the time in the perception of a man, and his receptive interactions with Classics are a testament to this. Key stood on the edge of the societal and literary paradigmatic shift, especially among male authors, which Leverenz was preoccupied with. Many of even the elite educated men, who previously had reservations about failing to voluntarily enlist *early* in conflict, were now more receptive to the idea of participation if/when absolutely necessary, and the lesser pursuit of the more masculine pastimes and character foci was becoming more acceptable. Nevertheless, certain core aspects of especially the Roman mindset as it was known to the men of the age were retained and maintained. Hence the expectation of participation if/when it was *absolutely necessary*. The appreciation for those who served in one's stead, as it was preserved afterward, through to the works of Longfellow, Emerson, and Whitman, is also strong. These were no more above propagandic compositions than Key, and demonstrated the same persistence of a "grown" classical tradition as did Key.[317]

[317] Longfellow's work included "The Cumberland," "Decoration Day," "Killed at the Ford," "Nameless Grave," and "Paul Revere's Ride," which feature a shame at non-participation before the dead,

Now Key comes to us as less of a conundrum in the face of his contemporaries, and more of a crucial character in the study of the changing literary customs of the times. Key's compositions nearer the middle of the paradigm shift make his work in the face of Brackenridge, Barlow, and their contemporaries less anomalous and more a calculable occurrence in scope of the changing literary zeitgeist.

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appreciation for death in defense of the homeland "which bore" the soldier, and an emphasis on the militia formation, which the educated American of the time was enamored with for its romanticism, if not for its practicality. Emerson produced the "Concord Hymn" and "Voluntaries," which commemorate the battle-dead and hope their memory would help to influence later generations to remember the fount of their liberties, and which aim to recruit and steel the courage of youth, even praising the dead in battle as demigods. Whitman contains fewer of classical references, but does demonstrate some latent in "The Centenarian's Story," "Weave in weave in, my hardy life," "Race of Veterans," and "The Veteran's Vision."

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The authors examined above are examples of the various "types" of elite gentlemen of early America. As was covered in the introductory chapter, there was a two-sided, variable standard of expectations for manly virtues among the learned elite, which required that one be constantly aware and observant of genteel manners, politeness, and activities; and pursuits displaying physical competence and superiority. The interplay of these standards produced a spectrum of manhood which each individual interacted with, producing famed military leaders like George Washington and pacifistic lawyer poets like Francis Scott Key. A man balanced his life according to interactions between his own sensibilities, those he grew up around and developed as he grew; and those of the collective elite, inside which he was expected to fit his own.

These sensibilities were informed in large part by a few traditions: one, the secular European, with vestiges of nobility and class divisions; another, the European Christian, which laid down a plurality of morals and religious virtues; and also the Classical, which provided some moral guidance, ethical and political models, and martial or physical expectations. An elite man was expected to be well-read, well-spoken (in turn), well mannered; and competent in certain masculine physical activities like hunting, riding, and drinking, and willing to do his part for the protection of the home, the family, and the country.

A considerable majority of the elite being relatively deeply acquainted with classical literature, they informed a part of their standards of manhood using it alongside Christian virtues. Different individuals balanced these to different degrees as they did

their gentlemanly and physical standards. For those who composed poetry, this can become evident in composition, yielding insight into the character of the man, how he perceived himself among his peers and his rivals, and how he chose to balance his life according to the standards laid out before him.

In Chapter Two, we examined Hugh Henry Brackenridge, known to some better extent for his time as a judge than his time as a poet. This is due in large part to his growing disillusionment with the society around him, in particular the membership of the citizenry, his constituency, who fell outside the elite class and its standards. He spent his efforts as a poet displaying his fellow upper-class Americans like Generals Warren and Montgomery as the paragons of Classical virtue: Leonidas and his personal guard at Thermopylae, Achilles and Patroclus, etc. He emphasized the manner of their deaths as it was virtuous – in battle, willing, and patriotic, and used particular forms of presentation of these to affect patriotism and hatred in his audience. These characters and the events they relived in dramatic performance were intended to satisfy the sensibilities of the refined gentleman, those Brackenridge esteemed closest to himself. They were also given generous Christian virtues like selflessness and piety and were juxtaposed with enemies which were depicted nearly satanically, just as elsewhere they were made enemies of the Romans and Greeks.

He also lectured to his peers in verse, in hopes of stirring them to great things within the scope of virtue. He hailed the rising of the American colonies as a successor and a replacement of the Old World, destined to outstrip their cousins across the sea in all things moral, ethical, and scientific. The timing of the delivery of *The Rising Glory of America* is of great importance, as is the timing of his dramatic productions. The

commencement address was delivered as the colonies were headed precipitously to violent conflict and revolution with their motherland, making its encouragement to rise up morally and commercially a latent call to rise up politically – in rebellion. The dramas were deliberately produced in the moment, as their events occurred, so that their contents would be fresh in the minds of the audience and more efficiently stoke their passions.

The three of them in concert demonstrate Brackenridge's perception of the state of affairs, namely that, as he was concerned, the colonies and their inhabitants had become morally superior to their homeland and her inhabitants. It was the duty, then, of honorable and virtuous men to do what was right and good for their country, which had become increasingly their own. They also demonstrate the relatively even balance that Brackenridge held of his gentlemanly standards: He was split relatively evenly between Christian and Classical virtues and literary influences; he was certainly not averse to just war – one might even suggest he was rather eager; but he still required justification to drag the name of someone he perceived his equal or better through the mud; he also, by his adamant efforts to stoke the fires of war at home, through the medium of literature, in place of the military service he left, indicates that, while he was apparently reluctant to be on the battlefront, he still held strong convictions about every man's obligation to serve, including himself. He had a goal of producing his same standards in the American citizenry, intent on educating them through use of his literature, to which end he founded *United States Magazine*. Its failure was the beginning of the disappointment of his expectations and his move to the cynical judge of the frontier he eventually came to be.

Joel Barlow was more even-handed and levelheaded than Brackenridge in his dealings with the physical side of manhood in eighteenth and nineteenth century

America. Somewhat paradoxically, his greater parity in dealing with his personal and public affairs places him slightly off-balance, compared to Brackenridge's more neutral position. Barlow drew his ideals in virtue and manhood more from the Christian tradition, where martial affairs were concerned. While not so near pacifism as Francis Scott Key, he still found war quite disagreeable to him, though he spent far longer in his chaplaincy than Brackenridge did. Where Brackenridge lectured on the Rising Glory, Barlow spoke about peace. He was not ignorant of the cost of the peace's achievement by any means, and while he thanked the providence of God for the fact of peace, he appreciated the men who were involved in and who were lost in bringing it about, wishing or conferring upon them immortality.

Where Brackenridge made his forays into martial poetry via tragic drama, Barlow tried his hand at epic. He was a pioneer of the American epic tradition, working within a new historic, characteristic, and temporal framework, departing thus from the old European tradition, while maintaining schematic elements of Milton and Homer. He used this selective departure from the Old-World epic tradition to separate the whole of America culturally and morally from Europe, and to elevate the New World to the height of civilization. He fabricated historical events to this effect, in effort to create a palatable equivalent to the ancient models of Europe, fashioning a parallel leader and nation for Washington and the United States. The exploits of Manco Capac were prime generative material for this, as the legend of Manco Capac entailed his playing at divinity or divine favoritism to attain his goals, a course of action which fit well into the ways of the poet.

Joel Barlow took his intellectual virtues from the philosophical tradition of the Classical world and of Europe, which had converged in a rationalization of mythology

and religion. Certainly not an atheist, he drew his more pacifistic tendencies from his Christian background, where his Enlightenment education more informed his religious views, and the Classical education he received informed his heavily republican politics. All of these are observable in the epic of Joel Barlow, as his first leader is a platonic philosopher king, his second the leader of a republic; his ideal leaders are capable warriors intermittently with sensible and gentle rulership, and his entire epic is a contrived myth toward the purpose of elevating his country on the global stage, where he would have seen it become a model for the rest of global society. Despite his best efforts as a diplomat, interacting with men like himself in multiple countries, as we know today, this dream of a global republic was unrealized. Yet, Barlow remained undaunted in his efforts until his retirement.

Finally, Francis Scott Key was probably the least balanced of our examples as he fell on the spectrum of manhood. Nearly entirely a pacifist, Key could be convinced into the war effort when the enemy was near, but did not make a good soldier. His strong faith prevented him from engaging some of the Enlightenment or Classical intellectual literature, but he was just as educated in the classical tradition as any of our other examples, and more so than some. He was learned enough that he was able to make subtle references to the material in his poems, which he wrote for the patriotic uplifting of the nation. The intent of these songs, particularly the “Star-Spangled Banner,” might still be debatable as the political intentions of Federalists are concerned, but they do demonstrate, alongside his willingness to enter military service, an appreciation for those who go into war, especially when they are closer to the front lines than the artillery line.

Key falls last, chronologically, of all our selected poetic examples. Naturally, he is the one who is least concerned with the greatest extent of physical manly virtues, that is, in martial exploits. This is natural considering Key's personal temporal position. Key comes to us during the turning of the centuries, at a time when the class conflict of the United States was beginning to produce dissidents in the elite class at the same time as their patrician status was being challenged by up-and-coming entrepreneurs at the height of the Industrial Revolution. Key was a transitional figure in the American literary tradition, between the first Revolutionaries and the revolutionary transcendentalists. And among the shuffling of the times, he managed to make his mark on American history.

Each of these men interacted with their genteel world and peer groups in different ways. Each of their methods of reception balanced different traditions which contributed to the establishment of an elite spectrum of manly standards and virtues but, while they maintained various concentrations in each of these, they were still considered proper gentlemen by the current standards. While they differed in their concentration on these various standards and traditions, they still maintained something of each. They each, for example, maintained some level of requirement for the martial sphere, whereby a man must become willingly involved in the war effort, though this consisted of a different moment for every man. They tailored their work according to the times and according to their own sensibilities, ideals, and desires for their peers, their country, and their world.

There is a point of transfer here, at the end of this study, where one, especially a traditional American, might ask "why?" or "what is the use, the utility, of this project." If nothing else, it may serve as an experiment in empathy, in the observation of another's way of life, and their personal standards. The personal standards for the elite of the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were not monolithic, and the standards across classes were even more varied, even in the constituency of a single nation. There is no reason at all, in such a connected, global world as the one we inhabit today, that any single standard ought be striven for. Rather, we ought to strive for understanding and brotherhood, for the betterment of our world and the preservation of our species.

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APPENDIX OF TRANSLATED TEXTS

AESCHYLUS. *Persians*.

717-719 (p.62)

Δαρεῖος

τίς δ' ἐμῶν ἐκεῖσε παίδων ἐστρατηλάτει; φράσον.

Ἄτοσσα

θούριος Ξέρξης, κενώσας πᾶσαν ἠπείρου πλάκα.

Δαρεῖος

πεζός ἢ ναύτης δὲ πεῖραν τήνδ' ἐμώρανεν τάλας;

750-751 (p.62)

Δαρεῖος

... πῶς τάδ' ὀυ νόσος φρενῶν

εἶχε παῖδ' ἐμόν;

HORACE. *Odes*.

3.3 (pp.127-128)

Iustum et tenacem propositi virum

Non civium ardor prava iubentium,

Non voltus instantis tyranni

Mente quatit solida neque Auster,

Dux inquieti turbidus Hadriae,

Nec fulminantis magna manus Iovis:

Si fractus inlabatur orbis,

Inpavidum ferient ruinae.

Hac arte Pollux et vagus Hercules

Enisus arces attigit igneas,

Quos inter Augustus recumbens

Purpureo bibet ore nectar;

Hac te mercentem, Bacche pater, tuae

Vexere tigres indocili iugum

Collo trahentes; hac Quirinus

Martis equis Acheronta fugit,

Gratum elocuta consiliantibus

Ionone divis: “Ilion, Ilion

Fatalis incestusque iudex

Et mulier peregrina vertit

In pulverem, ex quo destituit deos

Mercede pacta Laomedon, mihi

Castaeque damnatum Minervae

Cum populo et duce fraudulento.

Iam nec Lacaenae splendet adulterae
Famosus hosped nec Priami domus
Periura pugnaces Achivos
Hectoreis opibus refringit

Nostrium ductum seditionibus
Bellum resedit. Protinus et gravis
Irae et invisum nepotem
Troica quem peperit sacerdos,

Marti redonabo; illum ego lucidas
Inire sedes, discere nectaris
Sucos et adscribi quietis
Ordinibus patiar deorum.

Dum longus inter saeviat Ilion
Romamque pontus, qualibet exules
In parte regnato beati;
Dum Priami Paridisque busto

Insultet armentum et catulos ferae
Celae inultae, stet Capitolium
Fulgens triumphatisque possit

Roma ferox dare iura Medis.

Horrenda late nomen in ultimas
Extendat oras, qua medius liquor
Secernit Europen ab Afro,
Qua tumidus rigat arva Nilus;

Aurum inrepertum et sic melius situm,
Cum terra celat, spernere fortior
Quam cogere humanos in usus
Omne sacrum rapiente dextra,

Quicumque mundo terminus obstitit,
Hunc tanget armis, visere gestiens,
Qua parte debacchentur ignes,
Qua nebulae pluviique rores.

Sed bellicosis fata Quiritibus
Hac lege dico, ne nimium poo
Rebusque fidentes avitae
Tecta velint reparare Troiae.

Troiae renascens alite lugubri

Fortuna tristi clade iterabitur,

Ducente victrices catervas

coniuge me Iovis et sorore.

Ter si resurgat murus aeneus

Auctore Phoebo, ter pereat meis

Excisus Argivis, ter uxor

Capta virum puerosque ploret.

Non hoc iocosae conveniet lyrae;

Quo, Musa, tendis? Desine pervicax

Referre sermones deorum et

Magna modis tenuare parvis.

1.29 (pp.127-128)

Icci, beatis, nunc Arabum invides

Gazis et acrem militam parabas

Non ante devictis Sabaeae

Regibus horribilique Medo

Nectis catenas? Quae tibi virginum

Sponso necato barbara serviet,

Puer ques ex aula capillis

Ad cyathum statuetur unctis

Doctus sagittas tendere Sericas

Arcu Panaeti Socraticam et domum

Mutare loricis Hiberis,

Pollicitus meliora, tendis?

3.2 (pp.127-128)

Angustam amice pauperiem pati

Robustus acri militia puer

Condiscat et Parthos ferocis

Vexet eques metuendus hasta

Vitiam sub divo et trepidis agat

In rebus. Illum ex moenibus hosticis

Matrona bellantis tyranni

Prospiciens et adulta virgo

Suspiret “eheu ne rudis agminum

Sponsus lacessat regius asperum

Tactu leonem quem cruenta

Per medias rapit ira caedes.”

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori:

Mors et fugacem persequitur virum

Nec parcis inbellis iuventae

Poplitibus timidoque tergo.

Virtus, repulsae nescia sordidae,

Intaminatis fulget honoribus

Nec sumit aut ponit securis

Arbitrio popularis aurae.

Virtus, recludens inmeritus mori

Caelum, negata temptat iter via

Coetusque volgaris et udam

Spernit humum fugiente penna.

Est et fideli tuta silentio

Merces: vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum

Volgarit arcanae, sub isdem

Sit trabibus fragilemque mecum

Solvat phaselon; saepe Diespiter

Neglectus incesto sddidit integrum,

Raro antecedentem scelestum

Deseruit pede Poena claudo.

LUCAN. *Pharsalia.*

6.420-432 (p.96)

Sextus erat, Magno proles indigna parente,

Qui mox, Scyllaeis exul grassatus in undis,

Polluit aequoreos Siculus pirata triumphos.

Qui stimulante metu fati praenoscere cursus,

Impatiensque morae, venturisque omnibus aeger,

Non tripodas Deli, non Pythia consulit antra,

Nec quaesisse libet, primis quid frugibus altrix

Aere Iovis Dodona sonet, quis noscere fibra

Fata queat, quis prodat aves, quis fulgera coeli

Servet, et Assyria scrutetur sidera cura,

Aut si quid tacitum, sed fas, erat. Ille supervis

Detestanda deis saevorum arcana magorum

Noverat, et tristes sacris feralibus aras,

VIRGIL. *Aeneid*.

6.756-759 (p.51)

“Nunc age, Dardaniam prolem quae deinde sequatur

Gloria, qui maneant Italia de gente nepotes,

Inlustris animas nostrumque in nomen ituras,

Expediam dictis, et te tua fata docebo.

10.449-451 (p.75-76)

“Aut spoliis ego iam raptis laudabor opimis

Aut leto insigni: sorti pater aequus utrique est.

Tolle minas.”

10.505-509 (p.75-76)

At socii multo gemitu lacrimisque

Impositum scuto referunt Pallanta frequentes.

O dolor atque decus magnum rediture parenti

Haec te prima dies bello dedit, haec eadem aufert,

Cum tamen ingentis Rutulorum linquis acervos.